



SOURCE: International Association of Geophysical Contractors



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IAGC: Best Available Science Should Prevail in BOEM Gulf of Mexico Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

HOUSTON, TX --(Marketwired - November 30, 2016) - *International Association of Geophysical Contractors (IAGC) President Nikki Martin issued the following statement after BOEM closes Comment for the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Gulf of Mexico Geological and Geophysical Activities.*

"As the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management moves toward a final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the Gulf of Mexico (GOM), the IAGC urges the agency to fix the deficiencies found in its current draft and modify [the current overly precautionary approach](#) to reflect and support science and risk-based regulations consistent with existing practices which are both effective and operationally feasible. The DPEIS's marine mammal effects analysis for seismic activities is seriously flawed and unsupported by best available information, thus leading to proposed alternatives which pose non-scientific and unnecessary restrictions on geophysical surveys.

"Mitigation measures for the sake of "precaution" are based on unsubstantiated claims from anti-energy development interests and have no backing in U.S. statute or regulation. For more than 50 years, we've been exploring the U.S. Gulf of Mexico and have done so in the midst of a thriving region. Marine life, commercial fishing and seafood production have thrived in the GOM for decades alongside the geophysical industry as seismic surveys have occurred in the presence of healthy, stable or growing populations of marine mammals, turtles and other marine life. After examining decades of scientific research, the conclusion remains that there is no documented scientific evidence of exploration adversely affecting marine animal populations or coastal communities.

"Speculative and anecdotal claims of what may, might, or possibly occur, but never has occurred in the more than 50 years of Gulf survey activity, have no place in the PEIS. BOEM's considerations should be factual and provide an accurate analysis based on scientific record and verifiable data from operational experience.

"At a time when 87% of the federal outer continental shelf is off limits, seismic surveying in the Gulf of Mexico is a critical part of safe domestic offshore energy development that is necessary to meet growing global energy demand and provide continued job creation and economic growth in the United States.

"The IAGC remains opposed to any undue measures that are not supported by fact, science, or law. In light of this, we find that Alternative A is the most appropriate option. Alternative A provides the proper framework to guide subsequent agency decisions on future exploration in the Gulf of Mexico and terms by which we can continue exploration in the Gulf of Mexico.

"We also urge the Bureau to act expeditiously to meet the *NRDC v. Jewell* Settlement Agreement deadline of September 2017."

The IAGC along with API, NOIA and OOC submitted [comments](#) to the BOEM on Tuesday, November 29th.

About the IAGC

The IAGC represents more than 125 member companies worldwide from all segments of the geophysical industry and is the only trade organization solely dedicated to representing the industry. It is the leader in geophysical technical and operations expertise and for more than 45 years, the IAGC has worked to optimize the business and regulatory climate and enhances public understanding to support a strong, viable geophysical industry essential to discovering and delivering the world's energy resources.

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[Comments on Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Geological & Geophysical Activities on Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact:
Gail Adams
Vice President, Communications & External Affairs
gail.adams@iagc.org
713-957-8080 - office
281-702-4201 - mobile



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