

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR-4740-N-04]

Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Comment Request; Commitment to Guarantee Mortgage-Backed Securities**AGENCY:** Office of the President of Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae), HUD.**ACTION:** Notice.**SUMMARY:** The proposed information collection requirement described below will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act. The Department is soliciting public comments on the subject proposal.**DATES:** *Comment Due Date:* August 2, 2002.**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments regarding this proposal. Comments should refer to the proposal by name and/or OMB Control Number and should be sent to: Sonya Suarez, Office of Program Operations, Department of Housing & Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Room 6206, Washington, DC 20410.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sonya Suarez, Ginnie Mae, (202) 708-2884 (this is not a toll-free number) for copies of the proposed forms and other available documents.**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Department will submit the proposed information collection to OMB for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended).

The Notice is soliciting comments from members of the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information to:

- (1) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- (2) evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information;
- (3) enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (4) minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

This Notice also lists the following information:

Title of Proposal: Commitment to Guarantee Mortgage-Backed Securities.
OMB Control Number, if applicable: 2503-0001.

Description of the need for the information and proposed use: This form is used by Mortgage-Backed Securities issuers to apply for Ginnie Mae commitment authority to guarantee mortgage-backed securities.

Agency form numbers, if applicable: HUD Form 11704.

Members of affected public: For-profit business (mortgage companies, thrifts, savings & loans, etc.),

Estimation of the total number of hours needed to prepare the information collection, including number of respondents, frequency of response, and hours of response:

Number of respondents—297 (end of 2001)

Frequency of responses—4 (per year)

Total annual responses—1,188

Hours per response—.25 (15 minutes)

Total burden hours—297

Status of the proposed information collection: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Authority: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended.

Dated: May 27, 2002.

George S. Anderson,

Executive Vice President, Ginnie Mae.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Minerals Management Service****Preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Exploration Activities in the Sale Area of the Eastern Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf****AGENCY:** Minerals Management Service, Interior.**ACTION:** Preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Assessment.

SUMMARY: The Minerals Management Service (MMS) is preparing a programmatic environmental assessment (EA) for exploration drilling and associated activities in the sale area of the Eastern Planning Area (EPA) on the Gulf of Mexico outer continental shelf (OCS). The MMS will receive Exploration Plans (EP) from industry operators with valid leases within the 256-block area that was offered in Lease Sale 181 (December 2001), from operators with valid leases acquired prior to Lease Sale 181, or from

operators with valid leases that may be issued in any subsequent lease sales held in this area. This programmatic EA is intended to consider the areawide environmental impacts of exploration drilling in this area. Subsequent site-specific EA's prepared by MMS for an operator's EP can then be tiered from the programmatic EA and the analyses can be focused on the specific activities proposed. Three mitigation measures in the form of lease stipulations are included in the leases issued as result of Lease Sale 181.

This programmatic EA implements the tiering process outlined in 40 CFR 1502.20, which encourages agencies to tier environmental documents, eliminating repetitive discussions of the same issue. This programmatic EA will be tiered from the recent final environmental impact statement (EIS) for Gulf of Mexico OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sale 181 (MMS 2001-051) and the EA (MMS 2001-083) prepared for the reduced area proposed for Lease Sale 181.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394, Mr. Thomas W. Bjerstedt, telephone (504) 736-5743.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In July 2001, the MMS released the final EIS for proposed Eastern Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 181. The final EIS evaluated three sale-area configurations and a no action alternative, as well as eleven mitigation measures in the form of lease stipulations. The Revised Proposal for Eastern Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 181 was not one of the alternatives evaluated in the final EIS because the Revised Proposal was developed after publication of the final EIS. An EA was prepared to evaluate potential impacts within the area of the Revised Proposal and a finding of no new significant impacts was made on September 26, 2001. Only three of the eleven proposed lease stipulations evaluated in the final EIS were applicable to the reduced area for Lease Sale 181.

The issues and resources identified for and addressed in the final EIS (MMS 2001-051) that were applicable to the Revised Proposal were evaluated in the EA (MMS 2001-083). The programmatic EA that is the subject of this Notice is being prepared to evaluate the issues and potential environmental impacts related to exploratory drilling and associated activities in the EPA sale area.