

BOEM and Association of American State Geologists to Collaborate on Offshore Marine Minerals and Oil and Gas Information Sharing

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The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and the Association of American State Geologists (AASG) have signed an agreement to foster interaction, cooperation and coordination on marine minerals and oil and gas resources on the outer continental shelf (OCS).



Richard Desselles (left), representing BOEM's Office of Strategic Resources, before AASG President Jonathan D. Arthur adds his signature to the agreement between the two organizations.

Photo courtesy of Kenneth Taylor, North Carolina Geological Survey

Since the 1990s, BOEM and its predecessor agencies have worked with numerous state geological surveys on cooperative agreements to evaluate OCS sand resources for coastal resilience, restoration projects and planning. A national-level agreement will improve information exchange and the ability for BOEM, AASG and its members to communicate on national plans and issues with each other.

“As BOEM worked through extensive coordination with 13 Atlantic states following Hurricane Sandy, we realized that we could streamline operations even more through closer coordination with state geologists,” said Renee Orr, BOEM’s Chief of Strategic Resources. “They are important partners in helping us strengthen coastal resilience using OCS sand, as well as managing offshore oil

and gas activities in all four OCS regions -- the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico and offshore Alaska.”

Officials from BOEM and AASG finalized the agreement on June 17 during the AASG annual meeting in Flagstaff, Arizona. Richard Desselles, Division Chief for Resource Evaluation, represented BOEM’s Office of Strategic Resources, and Dr. Jonathan Arthur, AASG President, signed for the association.

"On behalf of the Association of American State Geologists, we welcome the enactment of this MOU with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's Office of Strategic Resources to ensure the continuation of information sharing between our Nation's state geological surveys and our federal colleagues," said AASG President Jonathan Arthur. "This MOU will serve us well as we work on items of mutual interest that affect the development and protection of our Nation's diverse coastal resources."

Under the agreement, BOEM’s Office of Strategic Resources may provide information to the association on appropriate BOEM permitting, research and planning activities for informal review and comment by the affected states. The AASG, through individual state geological surveys, may provide information to BOEM on appropriate state projects for informal review and comment. The purpose of these reviews is to facilitate information sharing that will foster mutually beneficial interaction, increase opportunities for cooperative BOEM-state geological survey activities and minimize conflicts and misunderstanding.

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BOEM promotes energy independence, environmental protection and economic development through responsible, science-based management of offshore conventional and renewable energy and marine mineral resources.