

Mr. Braxton Davis
Division of Coastal Management
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
400 Commerce Avenue
Morehead City, NC 28557-3421

Dear Mr. Davis:

CGG submitted a permit application (E14-005) to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to conduct a 2-Dimensional (2D) seismic survey in the federal waters of the south and mid-Atlantic Ocean region. The data acquired during the survey will be used to understand the composition, fluid content, extent and geometry of rocks in the subsurface. A permit for geophysical exploration for mineral resources on the outer continental shelf is classified as an unlisted federal permit activity.

Pursuant to §307(c) (3) (A) of the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 as amended and 15 C.F.R. Part 930, Subpart D. regulations, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has determined that the proposed project will have reasonably foreseeable effects on recreational and commercial fisheries. BOEM will approve CGG's survey permit application once all relevant states complete their federal consistency review and issue a decision.

On December 1, 2014, CGG requested the necessary information for the consistency review. North Carolina's DCM directed us to Subchapter 7M of 15A NCAC. We have identified the following enforceable policies as applicable to commercial and recreational fishing:

- 15A NCAC 07M .0801 DECLARATION OF GENERAL POLICIES

The proposed activity complies with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's approved management program and will be conducted in a manner consistent with such program. Additional data and information include a description of the proposed activity, effects upon North Carolina's commercial and recreational fisheries, and an evaluation of the proposed activity in light of applicable enforceable policies. CGG's permit application E14-005 is attached along with the survey area map.

CGG is requesting acknowledgement of the North Carolina DCM's concurrence with this consistency certification. Thank you in advance for your time and effort regarding this review.

Sincerely,



Amber Stooksberry
Environmental Compliance Specialist
North America Marine

CGG Data Library Multi-Client Services Certification of Consistency with the State of North Carolina Coastal Management Program

Necessary Data and Information

1.0 Project Overview

Operational details of CGG's proposed 2D Atlantic Seismic Program can be found in the attached CGG permit application E14-005.

The proposed 2D survey area within the scope of North Carolina's consistency review is geographically located near 31°-36°N and 72°-75°W and includes an estimated 21,015 kilometer-lines of area. Seismic activities will be carried out a minimum of 50 miles (84 kilometers) and extend to about 250 miles (402 kilometers) from North Carolina's coastline in water depths ranging between 100 meters (328 feet) to over 5,000 meters (16,404 feet). The survey will be conducted in the following protraction areas of the federal OCS blocks in the South Atlantic region:

- Cape Fear, Richardson Hillson, Harrington Hill, Taylor, Wittman, Tibbet, Lanier, Marmer, Russell, Beaufort, Hatteras Ridge, Evans, Lippold, Wraight, Manteo, Currituck Sound, Hyman, Wilmington Valley.

CGG's proposed 2D seismic survey in its entirety will take place in the federal waters of the south and mid-Atlantic Ocean region within the 350 nautical mile (nm) U.S Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) boundary. The proposed 2D seismic program consists of 53 lines in a 20 x 20 kilometer orthogonal grid totaling 31,117 line-kilometers of area coverage. Survey area details can be referenced in the attached map.

The proposed 2D survey will use a single seismic research streamer vessel, approximately 90 meters in length, to carry out the seismic acquisition operation. The seismic vessel is expected to stay in the survey area for the duration of the project. A supply vessel and escort vessel approximately 50 meters in length will be used for support and maintaining communications with vessels in the area. The support and escort vessels will make periodic port calls. The exact port(s) used will be determined during coordination with east coast state authorities.

The survey timing and duration is unknown due to multiple factors including the regulatory review timeline and market interest.

2.0 Potential Effects to North Carolina Coastal Resources

BOEM's Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement¹ (PEIS) indicates seismic survey activities are expected to have a negligible to minor impact on sea turtles when appropriate mitigation measure are in place. BOEM is required to conduct a National Environmental Protection Act

¹ Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. 2014. Atlantic OCS Proposed Geological and Geophysical Activities Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic Planning Areas Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

(NEPA) analysis prior to approving a federal permit. The analysis includes a site-specific environmental assessment indicating the mitigation measures required. We are not aware at this time of the project mitigations that will be included in the approved permit. BOEM has not communicated if this stage of the permitting process has been completed.

All activities will be conducted in accordance with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Bureau of Safety and Environment Enforcement (BSEE), National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS), and U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Notices to Lessees (NTLs) regulations and permit conditions. The proposed survey will take place well outside of any Areas of Concern in waters greater than 100 meters (328 feet) and at a distance no less than 50 miles (84 kilometers) from shore. International regulations including MARPOL 73/78², COLREGS³ and SOLAS⁴ will be strictly adhered to on the vessel. NTL's requirements will include Guidance to avoid disturbing special areas in surveys within the Area of Interest (AOI), and Guidance to prevent discharge of marine debris.

Activity planning and timing in specific areas will be based on coordination with the DCM and other relevant parties to ensure minimal impact on recreational and commercial fisheries events, activities, and fish populations. Coordination will begin upon CGG's consistency certification submission. Operational activity can be planned around local events and periods of high fishing activity. During the survey an escort vessel will communicate a mariners notice to ensure vessels in the area maintain a safe distance from the deployed seismic equipment. Pursuant to Regulation 19 of SOLAS Chapter V, all vessels will have automatic identification system (AIS) onboard for safe navigation.

Therefore, the negative impact on recreational and commercial fisheries is expected to be minimal based on the projects distance from shore, the minimal spatial overlap between seismic activities and fisheries, and the mitigations which will be incorporated into the operational plan.

3.0 Consistency Analysis

The North Carolina Coastal Management Program (NCCMP) goals are attained by enforcement of the policies of the State as codified in Chapter 07 of Title 15A of the North Carolina Administrative Code (T15A.07). CGG has identified the following enforceable policy of the NCCMP which is applicable to our unlisted federal activity:

- **15A NCAC 07M .0801 DECLARATION OF GENERAL POLICIES**

The waters of the coastal area are a valuable natural and economic resource of statewide significance. Traditionally these waters have been used for such activities as commercial and recreational fishing, swimming, hunting, recreational boating, and commerce. These activities depend upon the quality of the waters. Due to the importance of these activities to the quality of life and the economic well-being of the coastal area, it is important to ensure a level of water quality which will allow these activities to continue and prevent further deterioration of water quality. It is hereby declared that no land or water use shall cause the degradation of water

² Marine Pollution 73/78 regulations, International Maritime Organization (IMO)

³ Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972,

⁴ Safety Of Life At Sea, IMO

quality so as to impair traditional uses of the coastal waters. To the extent that statutory authority permits, the Coastal Resources Commission will take a lead role in coordinating these activities. (b) It is further recognized that the preservation and enhancement of water quality is a complex issue. The deterioration of water quality in the coastal area has many causes. The inadequate treatment of human wastes, the improper operation of boats and their sanitation devices, the creation of increased runoff by covering the land with buildings and pavement and removing natural vegetation, the use of outdated practices on fields and woodlots and many other activities impact the water quality. Activities outside the coastal area also impact water quality in the coastal area. Increases in population will continue to add to water quality problems if care is not taken in the development of the land and use of the public trust waters. (c) Protection of water quality and the management of development within the coastal area is the responsibility of many agencies. It is hereby declared that the general welfare and public interest require that all state, federal and local agencies coordinate their activities to ensure optimal water.

The proposed survey will operate in accordance with the regulations indicated in the approved G&G permit. Additional protection measures and coordination efforts as addressed in Section 2 of this consistency certification will be carried out. Therefore, the survey will be consistent with 15A NCAC 07M .0801.

4.0 Consistency Conclusion

The supporting documents, in accordance with 15 CFR 930.58 put forth the data necessary to assert the project is consistent with the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended and the enforceable policies of the North Carolina approved Coastal Management Program. We request that the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management concur with our consistency certification that the proposed activity complies with the enforceable policies of the North Carolina approved management program and will be conducted in a manner consistent with such program.

Pursuant to 15 CFR Section 930.54 (e), North Carolina is notified that it has three months from the receipt of this letter and accompanying information in which to concur with or object to CGG's certification. The State's concurrence, objection, or notification of review status shall be sent to:

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