

wells within 200 to 400 meters of water depth be lower than those for deep wells in shallower waters. Regulations issued under this subsection shall be retroactive to the date that the notice of proposed rulemaking is published in the Federal Register.

**(c) Limitations**

The Secretary may place limitations on the royalty relief granted under this section based on market price. The royalty relief granted under this section shall not apply to a lease for which deep water royalty relief is available.

(Pub. L. 109-58, title III, §344, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 702.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, referred to in subsecs. (a)(1) and (b), is act Aug. 7, 1953, ch. 345, 67 Stat. 462, as amended, which is classified generally to subchapter III (§1331 et seq.) of chapter 29 of Title 43, Public Lands. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1301 of Title 43 and Tables.

**§ 15905. Royalty relief for deep water production**

**(a) In general**

Subject to subsections (b) and (c), for each tract located in water depths of greater than 400 meters in the Western and Central Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico (including the portion of the Eastern Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico encompassing whole lease blocks lying west of 87 degrees, 30 minutes West longitude), any oil or gas lease sale under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.) occurring during the 5-year period beginning on August 8, 2005, shall use the bidding system authorized under section 8(a)(1)(H) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337(a)(1)(H)).

**(b) Suspension of royalties**

The suspension of royalties under subsection (a) shall be established at a volume of not less than—

- (1) 5,000,000 barrels of oil equivalent for each lease in water depths of 400 to 800 meters;
- (2) 9,000,000 barrels of oil equivalent for each lease in water depths of 800 to 1,600 meters;
- (3) 12,000,000 barrels of oil equivalent for each lease in water depths of 1,600 to 2,000 meters; and
- (4) 16,000,000 barrels of oil equivalent for each lease in water depths greater than 2,000 meters.

**(c) Limitation**

The Secretary may place limitations on royalty relief granted under this section based on market price.

(Pub. L. 109-58, title III, §345, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 703.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is act Aug. 7, 1953, ch. 345, 67 Stat. 462, as amended, which is classified generally to subchapter III (§1331 et seq.) of chapter 29 of Title 43, Public Lands. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1301 of Title 43 and Tables.

**§ 15906. North Slope Science Initiative**

**(a) Establishment**

**(1) In general**

The Secretary of the Interior shall establish a long-term initiative to be known as the “North Slope Science Initiative” (referred to in this section as the “Initiative”).

**(2) Purpose**

The purpose of the Initiative shall be to implement efforts to coordinate collection of scientific data that will provide a better understanding of the terrestrial, aquatic, and marine ecosystems of the North Slope of Alaska.

**(b) Objectives**

To ensure that the Initiative is conducted through a comprehensive science strategy and implementation plan, the Initiative shall, at a minimum—

(1) identify and prioritize information needs for inventory, monitoring, and research activities to address the individual and cumulative effects of past, ongoing, and anticipated development activities and environmental change on the North Slope;

(2) develop an understanding of information needs for regulatory and land management agencies, local governments, and the public;

(3) focus on prioritization of pressing natural resource management and ecosystem information needs, coordination, and cooperation among agencies and organizations;

(4) coordinate ongoing and future inventory, monitoring, and research activities to minimize duplication of effort, share financial resources and expertise, and assure the collection of quality information;

(5) identify priority needs not addressed by agency science programs in effect on August 8, 2005, and develop a funding strategy to meet those needs;

(6) provide a consistent approach to high caliber science, including inventory, monitoring, and research;

(7) maintain and improve public and agency access to—

- (A) accumulated and ongoing research; and
- (B) contemporary and traditional local knowledge; and

(8) ensure through appropriate peer review that the science conducted by participating agencies and organizations is of the highest technical quality.

**(c) Membership**

**(1) In general**

To ensure comprehensive collection of scientific data, in carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary shall consult and coordinate with Federal, State, and local agencies that have responsibilities for land and resource management across the North Slope.

**(2) Cooperative agreements**

The Secretary shall enter into cooperative agreements with the State of Alaska, the North Slope Borough, the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, and other Federal agencies as appropriate to coordinate efforts, share