



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 21, 2007

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NHA comments to Minerals Management Service call for flexible regulation of ocean energy projects

WASHINGTON DC (May 21, 2007) – The National Hydropower Association today filed comments with the Minerals Management Service on its draft programmatic environmental impact statement in support of the proposed alternative energy and alternate use program for lands on the Outer Continental Shelf.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 provides MMS a role in the regulation of renewable energy development on the OCS, offshore areas that offer great potential for creating vast amounts of energy through ocean wave and tidal power.

“A recent report by the Electric Power Research Institute concludes that there are as many as 10,000 MW of power available from ocean energy technologies by 2025,” NHA stated in its comments. “Ensuring that an appropriate regulatory process is in place for these technologies is critical to seeing that potential realized.”

Among the points in its comments, NHA states that flexibility in the alternative energy use program is needed to accommodate the various forms of ocean and tidal technologies that may be deployed at any particular site, all of which have unique characteristics. Regulatory flexibility is also vital to allow for the continued innovation of the technologies.

MMS held several public hearings on its environmental impact statement, many of which were attended by NHA members who compose its Ocean, Tidal and New Technologies Council. The council consists of nearly 30 member companies who are actively pursuing potential development of waterpower resources, such as tidal, ocean and hydrokinetic instream systems, many of which have filed preliminary permits on proposed sites.

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NHA is a non-profit national association dedicated exclusively to advancing the interests of the U.S. hydropower industry. The association represents 61 percent of domestic, non-federal hydroelectric capacity in the U.S. Its membership consists of more than 140 organizations including public utilities, investor-owned utilities, independent power producers, equipment manufacturers, environmental and engineering consultants, and attorneys.