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AOGA: Today's announcement about leasing in the Outer Continental Shelf sends mixed signals on Alaska's Arctic offshore development

Anchorage- March 15, 2016- Alaska Oil and Gas Association (AOGA) President and CEO Kara Moriarty today issued the following statement on the Department of Interior's announcement about leasing in the Outer Continental Shelf.

“It is good news that DOI's proposal includes the same three sales offshore of Alaska (Beaufort, Chukchi, and Cook Inlet) that were in the draft plan. These proposed sales retain future opportunities, and reflect a rejection of demands that DOI prohibit OCS oil and gas development adjacent to Alaska and in the Arctic.

Nevertheless, we are receiving mixed messages from the federal government on this issue. OCS exploration and development still faces very serious challenges as a result of burdensome and, in some instances, impracticable regulatory requirements, as well as Federal efforts to designate vast areas of the Arctic as critical habitat for currently healthy and abundant Arctic species. Substantial regulatory reform is necessary before responsible OCS oil and gas exploration and development is fostered as intended by Congress in the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. After all, companies that are considering multi-billion dollar investments are unlikely to take such a high level of risk when there are inconsistent and unreasonable rules of the game.

We are still hopeful that the Arctic OCS's vast oil and gas resources will be developed. With 27 billion barrels of oil, and 132 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, the Arctic Offshore represents Alaska's next generation of oil and gas development.

Finally, the decision to omit the Atlantic OCS from future lease sales suggests the federal government does not intend to jumpstart the economy and achieve real energy independence in the United States.”

AOGA is a professional trade association whose mission is to foster the long-term viability of the oil and gas industry in Alaska for the benefit of all Alaskans. More information about the organization can be found at www.aoga.org.

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