



Rigs-to-Reefs Policy

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

Artificial Reefs on the Outer Continental Shelf: Rigs-to-Reefs Program and Enhanced Coordination Efforts





Rigs-to-Reefs Policy

BOEM and BSEE support and encourage the reuse of obsolete oil and gas facilities as artificial reefs and will grant a lessee/operator a departure from removal requirements under 30 CFR §250.1725(a) and applicable lease obligations provided that:

- the structure becomes part of a State artificial reef program that complies with the criteria in the National Artificial Reef Plan;
- the responsible State agency acquires a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and accepts title and liability for the reefed structure once removal/reefing operations are concluded;
- the operator satisfies any U.S. Coast Guard navigational requirements for the structure; and
- the reefing proposal complies with Gulf of Mexico Region engineering, stability, and environmental reviewing standards and reef-approval guidelines.





Rigs-to-Reefs Policy

Engineering, Stability, and Environmental Reviewing Standards:
BSEE GOMR will review each decommissioning application proposing Rigs-to-Reef to ensure that problematic engineering and/or environmental uncertainties are eliminated and that the BSEE Rigs-to-Reefs Policy does not give the impression of a disposal program. The following set of standards will apply:

- **Reef material must be stable and not endanger nearby infrastructure and/or protected resources:**
 - no debris piles, debris fields, or reef baskets will be allowed under OCSLA regulatory permitting;
 - reef sites will not be permitted in areas of seafloor instability or known mudslide activity; and
 - reef material must be established in the most stable orientation in its final disposition.





Rigs-to-Reefs Policy

- As per national guidance from the USEPA, Reef sites must be free from all potentially hazardous and nonstructural material
 - **Standing Decks** – All nonstructural components must be removed (i.e., equipment, vessels, piping/tubing, wiring, etc.) and a facility inspection must be conducted/documentated by BSEE or a third-party prior to reefing.
 - **Submerged Decks** – All decks and their separated components and equipment must be removed.



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency U.S. Maritime Administration

National Guidance: Best Management Practices for
Preparing Vessels Intended to Create Artificial Reefs

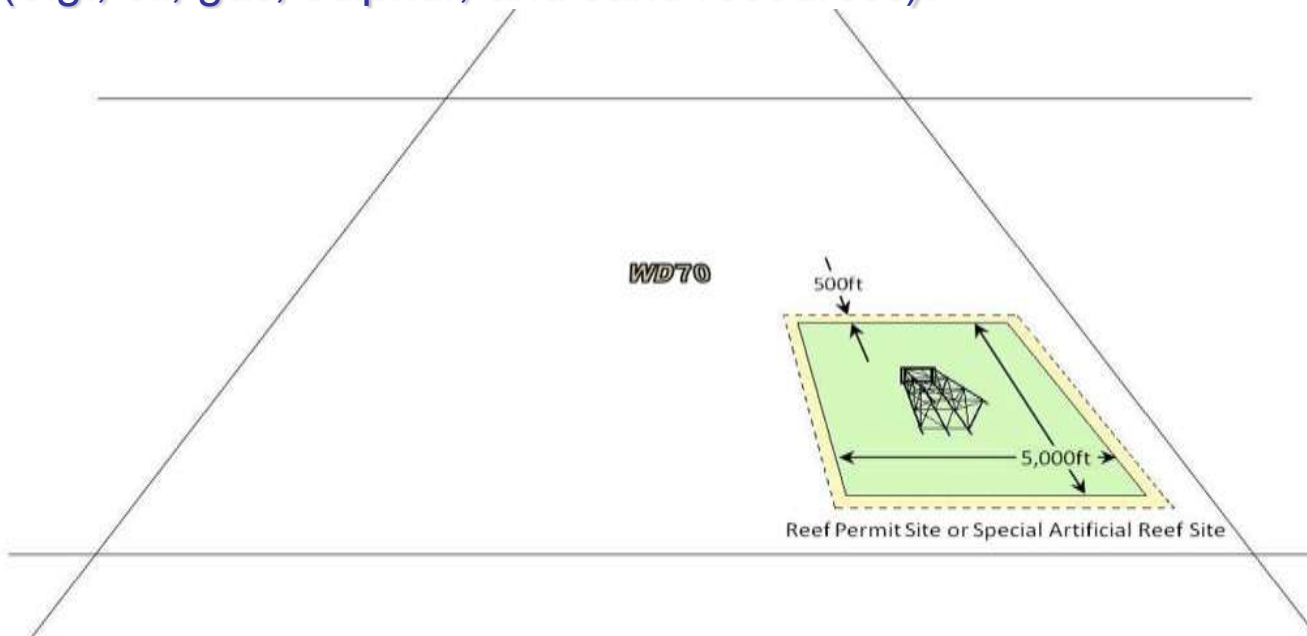
May 2006





Rigs-to-Reefs Policy

- Reef sites must not hinder future OCSLA oil and gas, marine mineral, and/or renewable energy/alternative activity operations:
 - future reef sites will not be allowed within 5 miles of established/pending reef locations to minimize impact to future pipeline operations; and
 - future reef sites will be reviewed for impact to future resource extraction (e.g., oil, gas, sulphur, and sand resources).





Rigs-to-Reefs Policy

- **Reef sites must not lead to avoidable space-use conflicts with other users of the GOM OCS:**
 - some proposals may require public review/commenting periods under NEPA (primarily a concern for abandonment-in-place); and
 - reef sites that fall within the administrative/Coastal Zone Management Act boundary of another state could require coordination/consistency review by both applicable agencies.





Rigs-to-Reefs Policy

Pending additional policy coordination between necessary State and Federal agencies and the opportunity for public participation, BSEE GOMR will only grant Rigs-to-Reef departures for platform-removal applications proposing the structure's siting within any of the following:

- new reef sites within the existing Texas General Reef Permit Area, Louisiana Artificial Reef Planning Areas, or Mississippi Artificial Reef Development Zone 4;
- existing/established artificial reef sites (i.e., previously reviewed and approved by BSEE GOMR) both within and outside of the areas previously mentioned; and





IDLE IRON

IDLE IRON UPDATE



CURRENT REGULATIONS

§ 250.1703 What are the general requirements for decommissioning?

When your facilities are no longer useful for operations, you must:

- (a) Remove all platforms and other facilities;

§ 250.1711 - When will BOEM order me to permanently plug a well?

BOEM will order you to permanently plug a well if that well:

- (a) Poses a hazard to safety or the environment; or
- (b) Is not useful for lease operations and is not capable of oil, gas, or sulphur production in paying quantities.



The NTL Defines “No longer useful for operations”
which is used in the regulations for:

- Wells
 - No production 5 years
 - No plans for future operations
- Platforms
 - Toppled
 - Has not been used in past 5 years for operations associated with exploration, development or production of oil/gas



NTL REQUIREMENTS

- Idle Wells must perform one of the following within 3 years:
 - PA the well in accordance 250.1712 - .1717; or
 - TA the well in accordance 250.1721; or
 - Provide the well with downhole isolation. Within 2 years of setting downhole plugs, they must either PA/TA the well
- Idle platforms must be removed as soon as possible, but not longer than 5 years after it became no longer useful.



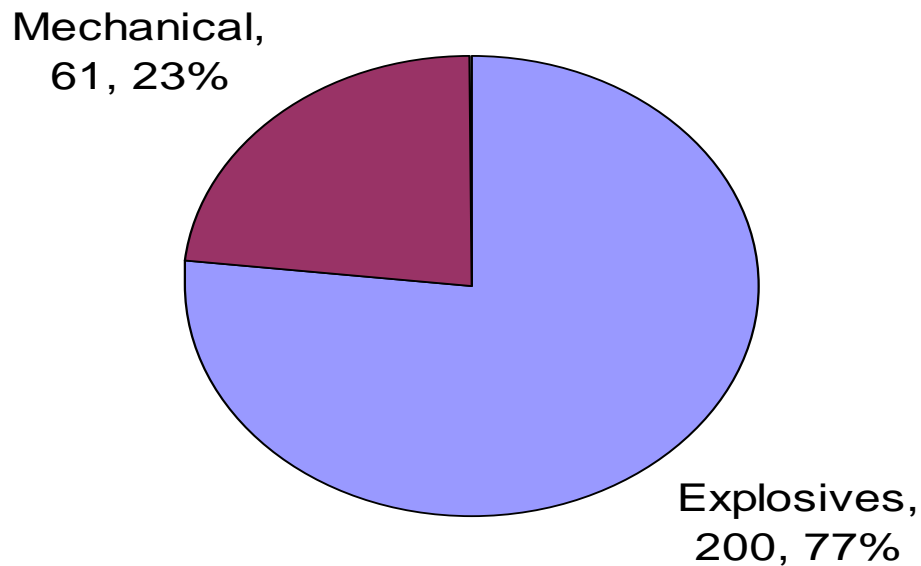
IMPLEMENTATION

- A total of 156 letters went out to operators
- BOEMRE received a total of 97 idle iron plans in response to October 2010 idle iron letters
- These 97 plans cover
 - 3092 idle wells (96 %) of 3233 total idle wells
 - 1056 expired wells (85 %) of 1246 total expired wells
 - 600 idle platforms (97 %) of 617 total idle platforms
 - 259 expired platforms (89 %) of 292 total expired platforms
- 37 of these plans request future use.
 - All future use plans have been sent to our Production and Development section for review



Platform Removal Permits

Platform Permits Approved Since 10/15/2010 (effective date of NTL)

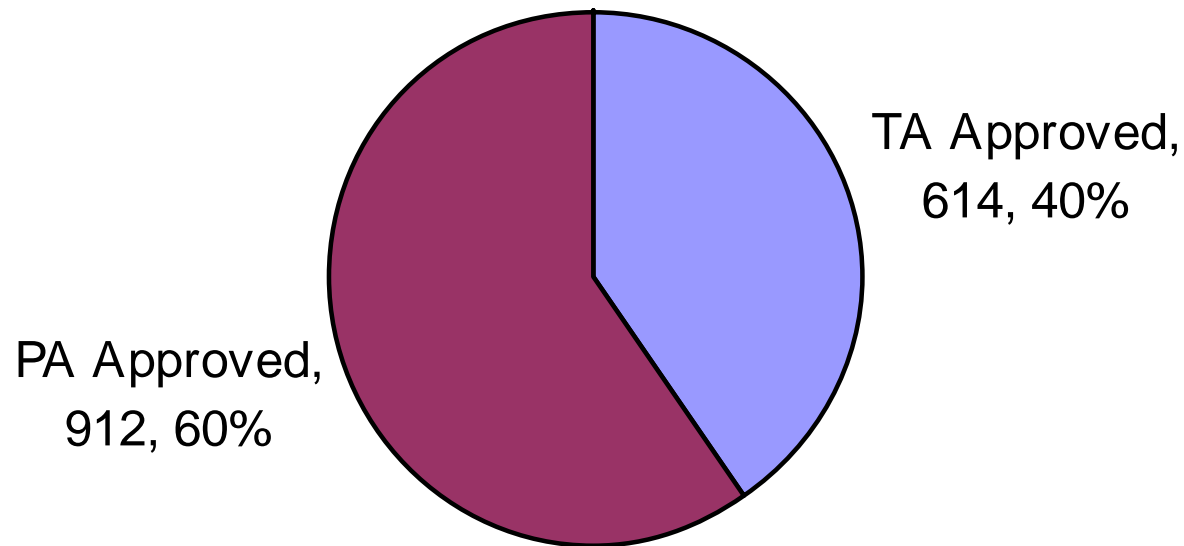


* 261 total platform removal permits approved



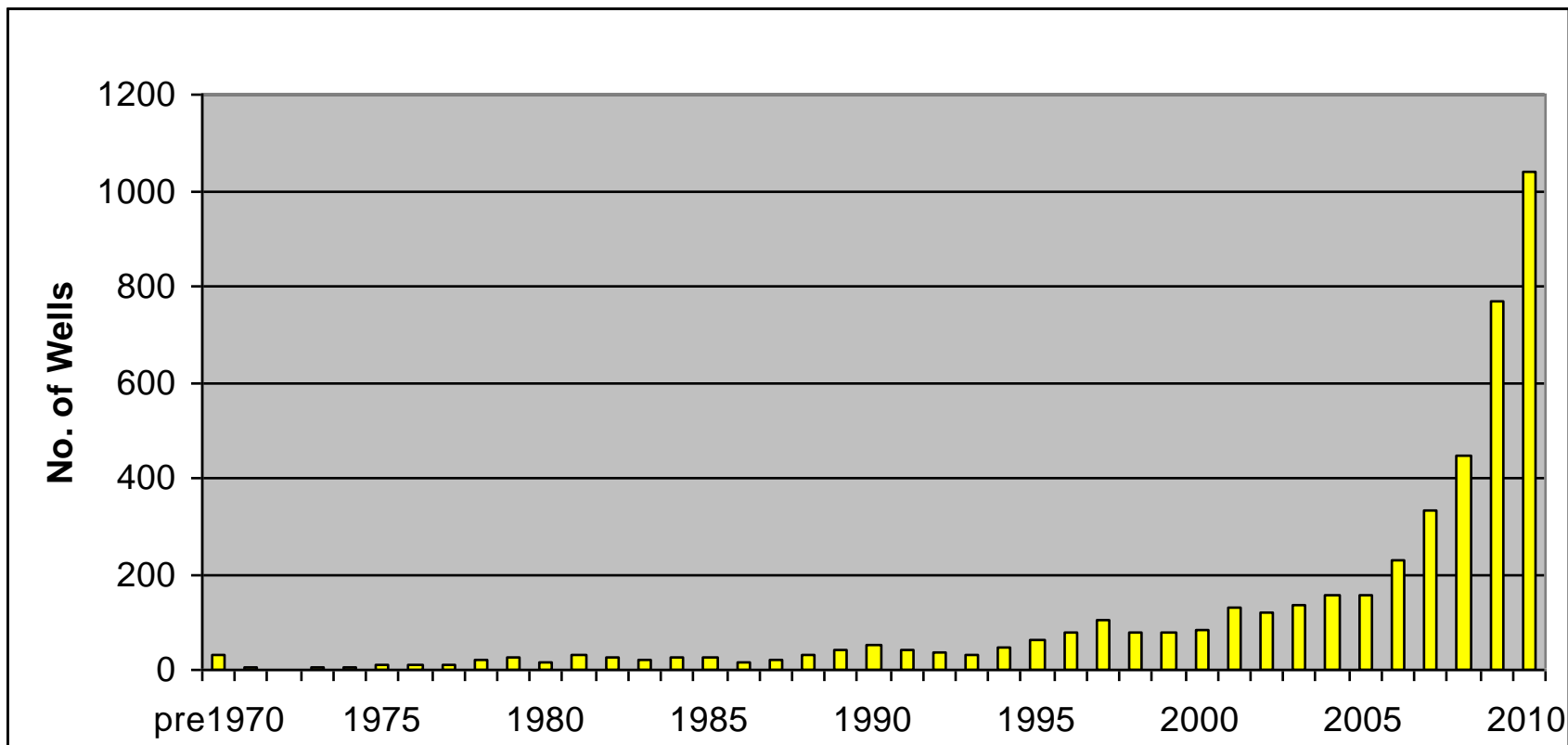
Well Abandonment Permits

APM Approved Since 10/15/2010





Total Wells TA'd





Total Wells PA'd

