



June 21, 2023

Ms. Bridget Staples, MPH
Water Protection Division
U.S. EPA Region 4, NPDES
61 Forsyth Street SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Subject: Request for Extension of Comment Deadline - Notice of Draft National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for the Eastern Portion of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) of the Gulf of Mexico (GEG460000); Availability of Draft National Environmental Policy (NEPA) Categorical Exclusion (CatX)

Dear Ms. Staples:

The National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA) respectfully submits this request for a 30-day extension of the comment deadline for the draft general permit for the eastern portion of the OCS of the Gulf of Mexico. NOIA represents the interests of all segments of the offshore energy industry, including offshore oil and gas, offshore wind, offshore minerals, offshore carbon sequestration, and other emerging technologies. With regard to offshore oil and gas, our membership includes the various key operators and leaseholders with a direct interest in the draft National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) general permit for the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) of the eastern portion of the Gulf of Mexico (General Permit No. GEG460000).

NOIA members and the offshore industry in general request the additional time in the comment period in order to sufficiently and fully review and respond to the draft permit. The current deadline of July 10, 2023, is insufficient to conduct the review and fully respond. There are several factors in support of a comment deadline extension: (1) the draft permit is lengthy and substantive; (2) the Fourth of July holiday falls within the comment period; (3) many of our members are in the process of reviewing and submitting notices of intent (NOIs) for the recently issued general permit for the Central and Western GOM; and (4) the time is essential for the review of the permit by experts to ensure the mutual objective of ensuring water quality.

Thank you for considering this request. We would be happy to answer any questions.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erik Milito", is written in a cursive style.

Erik Milito
President
National Ocean Industries Association