

minerals; or the area covered by that authorization.

*Lessee* means the person authorized by a lease, or an approved assignment thereof, to explore for and develop and produce the leased deposits in accordance with the regulations in this chapter. The term includes all parties holding that authority by or through the lessee.

*Major Federal action* means any action or proposal by the Secretary which is subject to the provisions of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (i.e., an action which will have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment requiring preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA).

*Marine environment* means the physical, atmospheric, and biological components, conditions, and factors which interactively determine the productivity, state, condition, and quality of the marine ecosystem, including the waters of the high seas, the contiguous zone, transitional and intertidal areas, salt marshes, and wetlands within the coastal zone and on the OCS.

*Minerals* includes oil, gas, sulphur, geopressured-geothermal and associated resources, and all other minerals which are authorized by an Act of Congress to be produced from "public lands" as defined in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

*OCS mineral* means any mineral deposit or accretion found on or below the surface of the seabed but does not include oil, gas, or sulphur; salt or sand and gravel intended for use in association with the development of oil, gas, or sulphur; or source materials essential to production of fissionable materials which are reserved to the United States pursuant to section 12(e) of the Act.

*Operator* means the individual, partnership, firm, or corporation having control or management of operations on the lease or a portion thereof. The operator may be a lessee, designated agent of the lessee, or holder of rights under an approved operating agreement.

*Outer Continental Shelf* means all submerged lands lying seaward and outside of the area of lands beneath navigable waters as defined in section 2 of Submerged Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1301) and of which the subsoil and seabed appertain to the United States and are subject to its jurisdiction and control.

*Person* means a citizen or national of the United States; an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residency in the United States as defined in 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(20); a private, public, or municipal corporation organized under the laws of the United States or of any State or territory thereof; an association of such citizens, nationals, resident aliens or private, public, or municipal corporations, States, or political subdivisions of States; or anyone operating in a manner provided for by treaty or other applicable international agreements. The term does not include Federal Agencies.

*Secretary* means the Secretary of the Interior or an official authorized to act on the Secretary's behalf.

*Testing* means removing bulk samples for processing tests and feasibility studies and/or the testing of mining equipment to obtain information needed to develop a detailed Mining Plan.

#### § 282.4 Opportunities for review and comment.

(a) In carrying out MMS's responsibilities under the Act and regulations in this part, the Director shall provide opportunities for Governors of adjacent States, State/Federal task forces, lessees and operators, other Federal Agencies, and other interested parties to review proposed activities described in a Delineation, Testing, or Mining Plan together with an analysis of potential impacts on the environment and to provide comments and recommendations for the disposition of the proposed plan.

(b)(1) For Delineation Plans, the adjacent State Governor(s) shall be notified by the Director within 15 days following the submission of a request for approval of a Delineation Plan. Notification shall include a copy of the proposed Delineation Plan and the accompanying environmental information. The adjacent State Governor(s) who

wishes to comment on a proposed Delineation Plan may do so within 30 days of the receipt of the proposed plan and the accompanying information.

(2) In cases where an Environmental Assessment is to be prepared, the Director's invitation to provide comments may allow the adjacent State Governor(s) more than 30 days following receipt of the proposed plan to provide comments.

(3) The Director shall notify Federal Agencies, as appropriate, with a copy of the proposed Delineation Plan and the accompanying environmental information within 15 days following the submission of the request. Agencies that wish to comment on a proposed Delineation Plan shall do so within 30 days following receipt of the plan and the accompanying information.

(c)(1) For Testing Plans, the adjacent State Governor(s) shall be notified by the Director within 20 days following submission of a request for approval of a proposed Testing Plan. Notification shall include a copy of the proposed Testing Plan and the accompanying environmental information. The adjacent State Governor(s) who wishes to comment on a proposed Testing Plan may do so within 60 days of the receipt of a plan and the accompanying information.

(2) In cases where an EIS is to be prepared, the Director's invitation to provide comments may allow the adjacent State Governor(s) more than 60 days following receipt of the proposed plan to provide comments.

(3) The Director shall notify Federal Agencies, as appropriate, with a copy of the proposed Testing Plan and the accompanying environmental information within 20 days following the submission of the request. Agencies that wish to comment on a proposed Testing Plan shall do so within 60 days following receipt of the plan and the accompanying information.

(d)(1) For Mining Plans, the adjacent State Governor(s) shall be notified by the Director within 20 days following the submission of a request for approval of a proposed Mining Plan. Notification shall include a copy of the proposed Mining Plan and the accompanying environmental information. The adjacent State Governor(s) who

wishes to comment on a proposed Mining Plan may do so within 60 days of the receipt of a plan and the accompanying information.

(2) In cases where an EIS is to be prepared, the Director's invitation to provide comments may allow the adjacent State Governor(s) more than 60 days following receipt of the proposed plan to provide comments.

(3) The Director shall notify Federal Agencies, as appropriate, with a copy of the proposed Mining Plan and the accompanying environmental information within 20 days following the submission of the request. Agencies that wish to comment on a proposed Mining Plan shall do so within 60 days following receipt of the plan and the accompanying information.

(e) When an adjacent State Governor(s) has provided comments pursuant to paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, the Governor(s) shall be given, in writing, a list of recommendations which are adopted and the reasons for rejecting any of the recommendations of the Governor(s) or for implementing any alternative means identified during consultations with the Governor(s).

**§ 282.5 Disclosure of data and information to the public.**

(a) The Director shall make data, information, and samples available in accordance with the requirements and subject to the limitations of the Act, the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), and the implementing regulations (43 CFR part 2).

(b) Geophysical data, processed G&G information, interpreted G&G information, and other data and information submitted pursuant to the requirements of this part shall not be available for public inspection without the consent of the lessee so long as the lease remains in effect, unless the Director determines that earlier limited release of such information is necessary for the unitization of operations on two or more leases, to ensure proper Mining Plans for a common orebody, or to promote operational safety. When the Director determines that early limited release of data and information is necessary, the data and information shall be shown only to persons with a