

# PUBLIC NOTICE

March 18, 2013

United States Army  
Corps of Engineers  
New Orleans District  
Regulatory Branch  
Post Office Box 60267  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160-0267

(504) 862-1217  
Project Manager  
Kenny Blanke  
Permit Application Number  
MVN 2011-0237-CQ

Interested parties are hereby notified that a permit application has been received by the New Orleans District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to: [X] Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151; 33 USC 403); and/or [ ] Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (86 Stat. 816; 33 USC 1344).

## **EXPANSION OF 3-D SEISMIC SURVEY TO OBTAIN SUBSURFACE HYDROCARBON IMAGERY WITHIN JEFFERSON AND PLAQUEMINES PARISHES**

**NAME OF APPLICANT:** Global Geophysical Services, Inc., Attn: Marc Lawrence, 13927 South Gessner Road, Missouri City, Texas 77489

**LOCATION OF WORK:** Within a 68.227 square mile area, south of Grand Isle, Louisiana, in JEFFERSON AND PLAQUEMINES PARISH, as shown on the enclosed drawings.

**CHARACTER OF WORK:** Proposed 2nd expansion and modification to an existing authorization issued September 20, 2011, to conduct the Global Geophysical Services, Inc. Bay Marchand-South Timbalier Reservoir Grade Three Dimensional seismic survey. The original 3-D seismic survey covered approximately 276 square miles, of which approximately 95 square miles of the seismic survey are located inland and out to the State-Federal waters boundary line and approximately 181 square miles of the project are located in federal waters. The first expansion of the project covered approximately 83.076 square miles located within Timbalier Bay inside State waters.

The currently proposed modification incorporates an additional 146.029-square mile area located to the east of the existing seismic survey area. The additional area is located in the waters of Jefferson and Plaquemines Parishes, in the open waters south of Grand Isle, Louisiana. Approximately 77.802 square miles of the project are located in Federal waters and outside of the Corps' section 10 jurisdiction. Approximately 68.227 square miles are located within the Corps' jurisdiction and inside State waters. The purpose of this survey is to provide a high-resolution image of the subsurface geological features to evaluate potential hydrocarbon reserves underlying the project area. The entire proposed expansion area will be located in the Gulf of Mexico. Ocean Bottom Cables (OBC) will be placed on the gulf floor with spacing between receiver lines of 1,640 feet and connected to the recording vessel (Jack-Up Rig) located in State and Federal waters. The survey design will incorporate air gun energy sources (no explosives will be used), which will be shot at 164 foot intervals in the Gulf of Mexico. In open water, there will be approximately 656.2 feet between source lines. The attached maps show the location of the project area, as well as source and receiver point locations.

The comment period for the Department of the Army Permit will close **15 days** from the date of this public notice. Written comments, including suggestions for modifications or objections to the proposed work, stating reasons thereof, are being solicited from anyone having interest in this permit must be mailed so as to be received before or by the last day of the comment period. Letters concerning the Corps of Engineers permit application must reference the applicant's name and the Permit Application Number, and be mailed to the Corps of Engineers at the address above, **ATTENTION: REGULATORY BRANCH**. Individuals or parties may request an extension of time in which to comment on the proposed work by writing to the project manager or clicking on the project manager's name on the public notice grid on the web page. Any request must be specific and substantively supportive of the requested extension, and received by this office prior to the end of the initial comment period. The Section Chief will review the request and the requestor will be promptly notified of the decision to grant or deny the request. If granted, the time extension will be continuous to the initial comment period and, inclusive of the initial comment period, will not exceed a total of 30 calendar days.

### **Corps of Engineers Permit Criteria**

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public, federal, state, and local agencies and officials, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether to make, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

No properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are near the proposed work. The possibility exists that the proposed work may damage or destroy presently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistorical, historical sites, or data. Copies of this notice are being sent to the State Archeologist and the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Our initial finding is that the proposed work would occur in areas that are utilized by the endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), Hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*), and Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermodochelys coriacea*), and the threatened Green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), and Loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*).

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal would result in the destruction or alteration of 43,665 acres of EFH utilized by various life stages of red drum and penaeid shrimp. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

The applicant has certified that the proposed activity described in the application complies with and will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program. The Department of the Army permit will not be issued unless the applicant received approval or a waiver of the Coastal Use Permit by the Department of Natural Resources.

You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.

JOHN M. HERMAN  
Chief, Central Evaluation Section  
Regulatory Branch