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Description of document: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)  
Communications Plan 2014

Request date: 17-August-2014

Released date: 04-December-2014

Posted date: 19-October-2015

Source of document: FOIA Officer  
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# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT  
WASHINGTON, DC 20240-001

381 Elden St, HM-3127  
Herndon, VA 20170

Telephone (703) 787-1818  
Facsimile (703) 787-1209

December 4, 2014

## **Via Electronic Mail to**

RE: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request No. BOEM-2014-00081

This letter provides you with our response to your FOIA request dated August 17, 2014 and received in the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM's) Headquarters FOIA Office on August 18, 2014.

### **Description of the Requested Records**

You requested a "digital/electronic copy of the most recent BOEM Communications Plan," specifically, a "press/external relations plan." In response to our September 8, 2014 letter requesting that you clarify the scope of your request because the Bureau does not have an approved communications plan, on September 16, 2014, you limited the scope of your request to only include the draft communications plan.

### **The Bureau's Response**

We are writing today to respond to your request on behalf of the BOEM. We have enclosed one file consisting of 24 pages which is being released to you in its entirety.

Some of the information enclosed is subject to Exemption 5 of the FOIA but is being released to you as a matter of agency discretion. We retain the right to withhold similar information in the future if we determine its release could foreseeably harm BOEM's deliberative process.

This decision was made by Natasha Alcantara in consultation with Pedro Meléndez-Arreaga, Attorney Advisor, Office of the Solicitor.

## Fees

We have classified you as an “other-use” requester. Requesters in this category are not charged for review costs and are entitled up to 2 hours of search time and 100 pages of photocopies (or an equivalent volume) for free. *See* 43 C.F.R. § 2.39. We do not bill FOIA requesters for processing fees when their fees are less than \$50.00, because the cost of collecting the fee would be greater than the fee itself. *See* 43 CFR § 2.49(a)(1). Therefore, there is no billable fee for the processing of this request.

## Appeal Rights and Mediation Services

If you consider this response to be a denial of your request, you may appeal it to the Department’s FOIA/Privacy Act (PA) Appeals Officer. If you choose to appeal, the FOIA/PA Appeals Officer must receive your FOIA appeal no later than 30 workdays from the date of this letter. Appeals arriving or delivered after 5 pm Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, will be deemed received on the next workday.

Your appeal must be made in writing. You may submit your appeal and accompanying materials to the FOIA/PA Appeals Officer by mail, courier service, fax, or email (see below for contact details). All communications concerning your appeal should be clearly marked with the words: “FREEDOM OF INFORMATION APPEAL.” You must include an explanation of why you believe BOEM’s response is in error. You must also include with your appeal copies of all correspondence between you and BOEM concerning your FOIA request, including your original FOIA request and BOEM’s response. Failure to include with your appeal all correspondence between you and BOEM will result in the Department’s rejection of your appeal, unless the FOIA/PA Appeals Officer determines that, in the FOIA/PA Appeals Officer’s sole discretion, good cause exists to accept the defective appeal.

Please include your name and daytime telephone number (or the name and telephone number of an appropriate contact), email address and fax number (if available) in case the FOIA/PA Appeals Officer needs additional information or clarification of your appeal. You may submit your appeal to:

Department of the Interior  
Office of the Solicitor  
1849 C Street, NW, MS-6556 MIB  
Washington, DC 20240  
Attn: FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Office

Telephone: (202) 208-5339  
Fax: (202) 208-6677  
Email: [FOIA.Appeals@sol.doi.gov](mailto:FOIA.Appeals@sol.doi.gov)

Also, the 2007 FOIA amendments created the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road - OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

E-mail: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov)  
Web: <https://ogis.archives.gov>  
Telephone: (202) 741-5770  
Fax: (202) 741-5769  
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

Please note that using OGIS services does not affect the timing of filing an appeal with the Department's FOIA/PA Appeals Officer.

### **Conclusion**

This concludes our response to your request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us by email at [boemfoia@boem.gov](mailto:boemfoia@boem.gov); by phone at (703) 787-1818; or by postal mail at: FOIA Office; Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; Atrium Building, MS: HM-3127; 381 Elden Street; Herndon, VA 20170. You may also contact the Bureau's FOIA Public Liaison, Rosemary Melendy, at 703-787-1315.

Sincerely,

X



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Natasha Alcantara  
BOEM Government Information Specialist  
Signed by: NATASHA ALCANTARA



# Communications Plan

2014

**For internal planning use only. Do not distribute.**

## INTRODUCTION

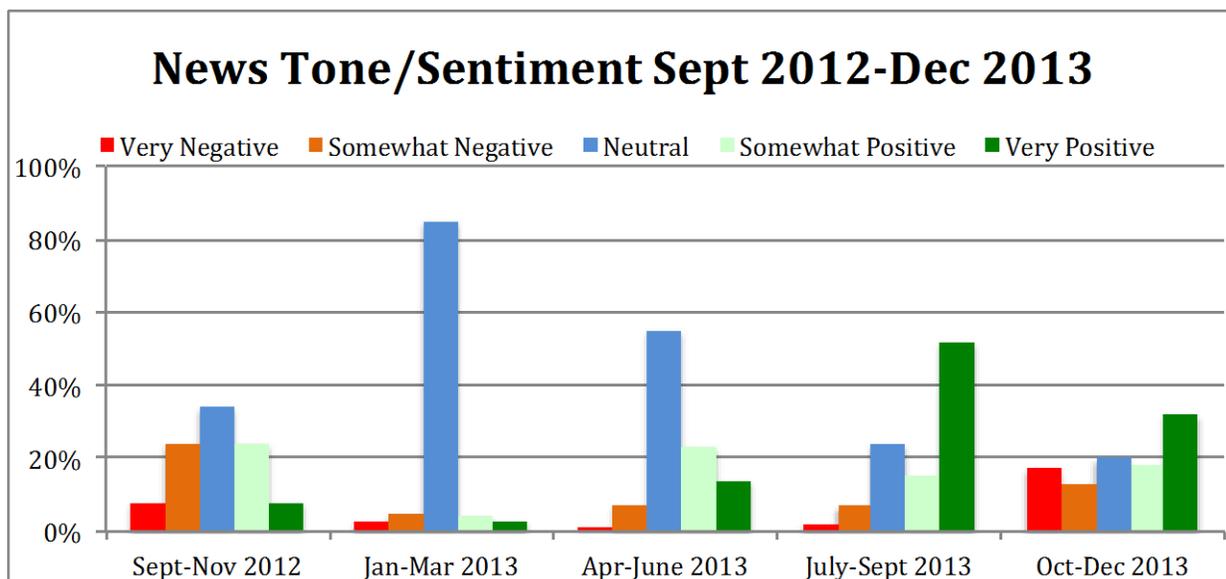
This document follows on to previous BOEM outreach to position the bureau as a science-based organization that oversees development of the Nation's offshore energy and mineral resources in an environmentally responsible way. It is to be considered general and a draft or living document. No decisions are final on communications until activities or events actually take place.

## BACKGROUND & SUMMARY OF 2013 ACTIVITY

As part of our planning process, BOEM OPA prepared a summary below of how the bureau has been perceived over the past year. This analysis also highlights who is paying attention to BOEM news, who is accessing our website, and looks at which audiences are most interested in tools beyond traditional media outreach. Nontraditional outreach includes electronic outlets such as the BOEM Bulletin and Notes to Stakeholders products developed since 2012.

BOEM has worked hard to establish a new identity and brand over the past several years, though the bureau remains mindful of many lessons learned from the Deepwater Horizon tragedy of 2010. BOEM has moved forward in executing the important functions of providing appropriate access to regulated resources and managing responsible development of offshore resources and overall hopes to engender a sense of trust in our work.

Since August of 2012, BOEM OPA has measured the amount and frequency of stakeholder interest and the stories are getting attention. The tone of media coverage about BOEM, as calculated by CISION, greatly improved to include more positive stories throughout 2013, although the percentage spread between very negative and very positive toward the end of 2013 was not as great as earlier in the year. The chart below shows the trends since September 2012. Positive stories about renewable energy activities tended to account for most of the improved tone, and others on maritime archaeological and biological discoveries. The number of stories and their reach also increased.



<b>News Stories by Reach</b>		
Sept-Nov 2012	89 million reach	53 articles
Jan-Mar 2013	123 million	193
Apr-June 2013	258 million	161
July-Sept 2013	254 million	211
Oct-Dec 2013	533 million	340

Google Analytics results below show the BOEM.gov pages that were most frequently visited in 2012 and 2013. This year, offshore oil and gas development had slightly lower level of interest (29%) among Internet users visiting the BOEM site than the year before. During 2013, as expected, we saw an increase in the percentage of hits on the renewable energy sections of the site as we began lease sales for renewable energy. Revised OREP pages during 2013 have made them more readable and visually appealing. This will balance awareness of our “all of the above” energy strategy. Page views within Environmental Stewardship also increased by percentage of all visits to BOEM.GOV, though visits to studies were still less than 1% of the whole. Marine Minerals pages ranked 8<sup>th</sup> among the top 10 page views.

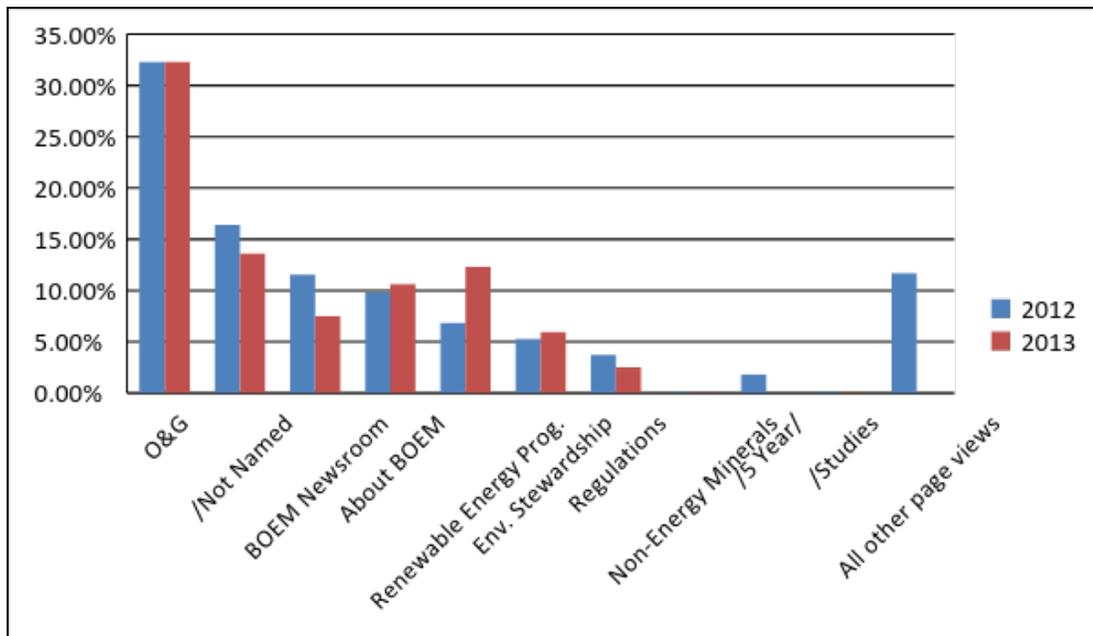
Other useful 2013 Web metrics:

- ï 385,790 visits in 2013, compared to 263,436 visits in 2012. That is a 51% increase.
- ï 197,947 unique visitors in 2013, compared to 117,175 in 2012. That is a 69% increase.
- ï In 2013, 49% of visitors to BOEM.GOV were new visitors; in 2012, 44% were new. OK
- ï In 2013, there were 1.4 million Page Views, compared to 2012 with 1.2 million Page Views. That is a 17% increase.
- ï Page views of Renewable Energy pages more than doubled, from 84,637 page views to 175,268. That is a 107% increase. (Looking at all BOEM web page views, OREP’s numbers grew from 7% to 12% of total page views for BOEM.GOV.)
- ï In 2013, average web traffic to BOEM.GOV increased to 35K per month, compared to an average 23K per month in 2012. (Excludes the slump from October’s government shutdown.)
- ï Environmental Stewardship page views increased from 5 % to 6 % from 2012 to 2013 of all page views on BOEM.GOV.
- ï Environmental studies page views still account for less than 1 % of all BOEM web traffic but moved up one notch to #9 among page views for the bureau.

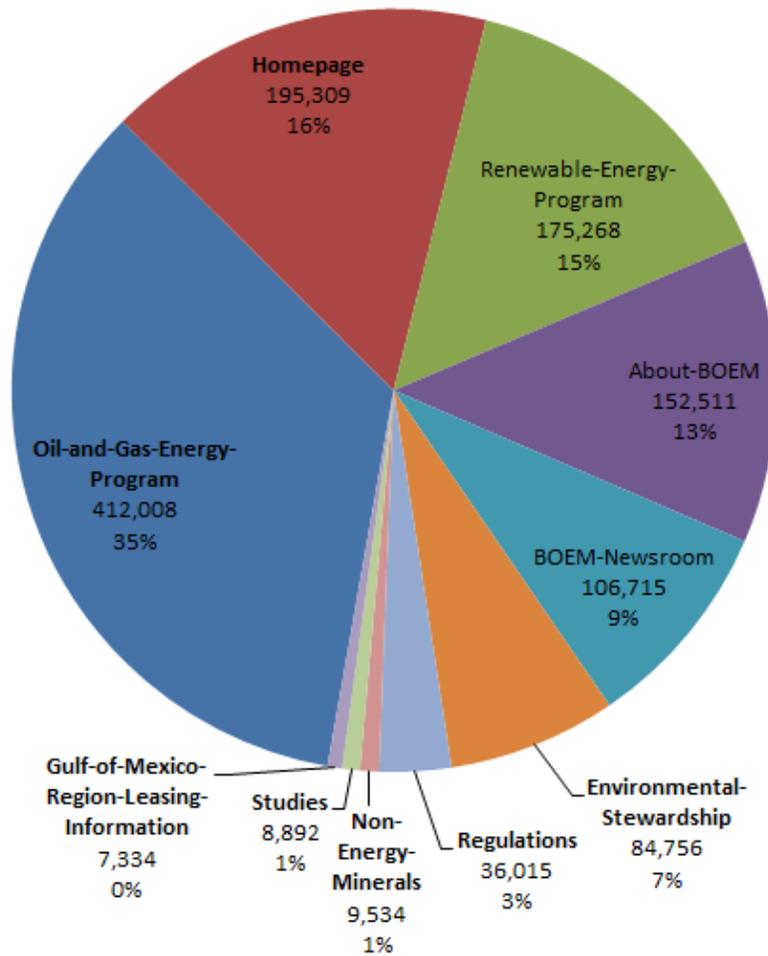
- ï For the ESP pages, we met or exceeded our target of 10 % growth in 2013 over 2012 for the number of page views, unique visitors and new visitors.
- ï New visitors accounted for about 38% of visitors to the ESP page. This is a 20% increase in new visitors over the previous year.
- ï For Environmental Assessment pages, 65% were new visitors.

For Constant Contact, BOEM issued 96 communications in 2013, mostly press releases and Notes to Stakeholders. We maintained a healthy average 25% open rate and increased the number of recipients in the database to more 7,000 names, not counting BOEM employees. People asked to be added to the email list throughout the year.

**BOEM Web Content Top 10 Page Views 2012 v 2013**



### BOEM Web Content - Top 10 Page Views in 2013



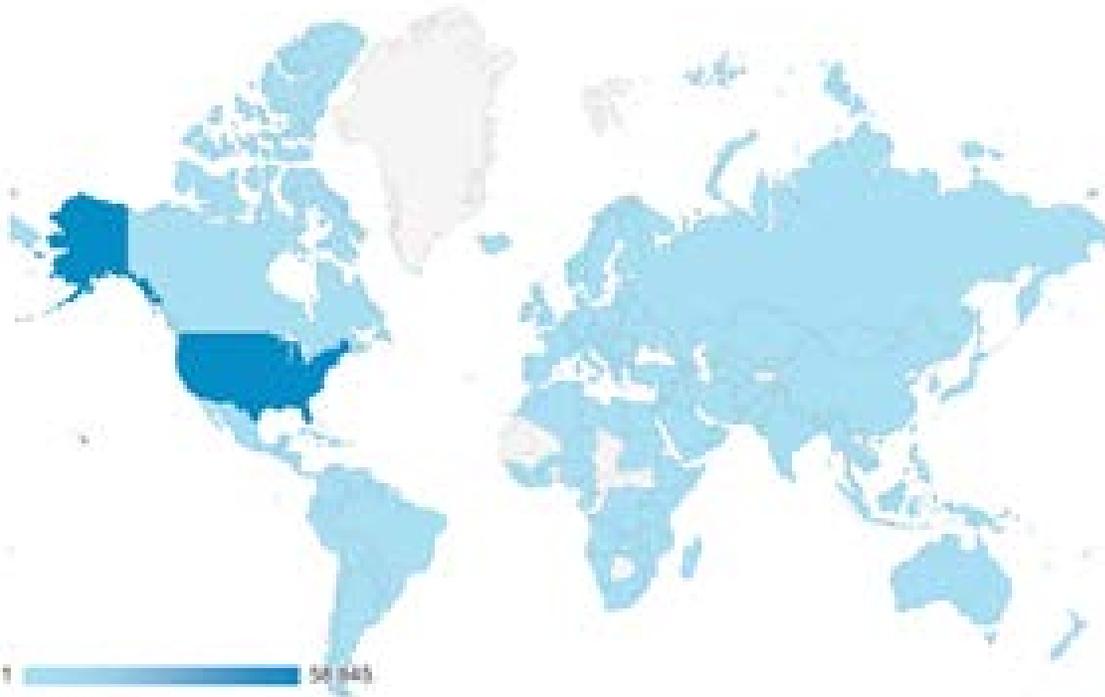
Web Content Area	Pageviews
Oil-and-Gas-Energy-Program	412,008
Homepage	195,309
Renewable-Energy-Program	175,268
About-BOEM	152,511
BOEM-Newsroom	106,715
Environmental-Stewardship	84,756
Regulations	36,015
Non-Energy-Minerals	9,534

Studies	8,892
Gulf-of-Mexico-Region-Leasing-Information	7,334

<b>Date</b>	<b>Page Title</b>	<b>Page Views</b>
05/09/2013	BOEM and NMFS Propose Preparation of Gulf of Mexico Geological & Geophysical Environmental Impact Statement	341
10/03/2013	BOEM Seeks Competitive Interest in Proposed Wind Energy Project Site Offshore New York	179
03/01/2013	BOEM Completes Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Eastern Planning Area Lease Sales	168
05/16/2012	NOAA, BOEM: Historic, 19th century shipwreck discovered in northern Gulf of Mexico	164
12/12/2012	BOEM Seeks Industry Interest in Renewable Wind Energy Offshore North Carolina	147
03/14/2013	Milestone cleared for wind energy research lease offshore Virginia	139
12/16/2011	BOEM Issues Conditional Approval for Shell 2012 Chukchi Sea Exploration Plan	120
05/30/2012	BOEM Identifies Wind Energy Area Offshore Massachusetts for Potential Commercial Leasing	120
04/12/2013	North Carolina Completes Restoration of Coast Damaged by Hurricane Irene	99
05/07/2013	BOEM Announces \$11.7 Million for Hurricane Sandy Relief	91

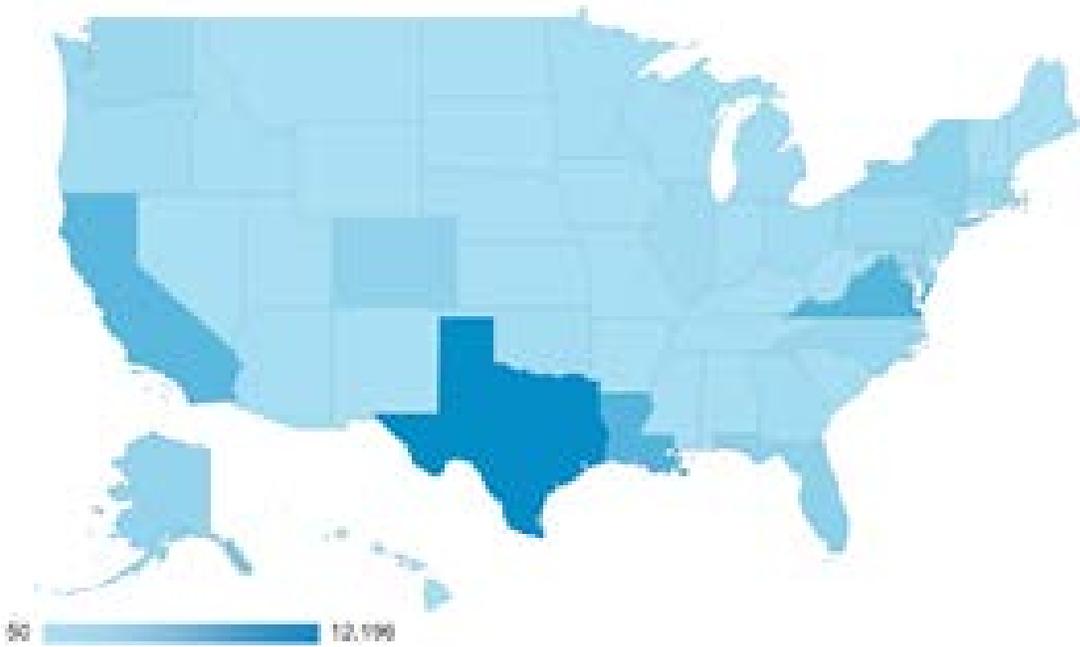
\*Four Press Releases from previous years (2012 and 2011) ranked in the top 10 press releases accessed on BOEM.GOV in 2013.

**International Footprint  
Top 10 Countries/Territories that Visited BOEM.GOV in 2013**



<b>Country / Territory</b>	<b>Page Views</b>
United States	325,698
United Kingdom	9,176
India	5,724
Canada	4,645
(not set)	2,600
Mexico	2,536
Norway	2,215
Australia	2,180
Germany	2075
France	1,690

**Domestic Footprint  
Top 10 States that Visited BOEM.GOV in 2013**



<b>State</b>	<b>Visits</b>
Texas	76,536
Louisiana	41,114
Virginia	35,813
California	22,281
District of Columbia	17,125
New York	12,250
Alaska	11,988
Florida	10,962
Colorado	10,817
Massachusetts	7,565

## How Users are Accessing BOEM.GOV

In 2013 the majority of the visits to BOEM.GOV were achieved with a desktop/laptop. However, the percentage of new visits was highest among portable devices (mobile and tablets). With the growing popularity of portable devices, it becomes important to test and evaluate the performance of BOEM.GOV on mobile platforms.

Device Category	Visits	% New Visits
desktop/laptop	361,755	47.84%
mobile	13,985	75.76%
tablet	10,050	65.50%

## Mobile Devices Used to Access BOEM.GOV

The Apple products (iPad, iPhone and iPod) were the top three portable devices used to access BOEM.GOV in 2013. All mobile devices ranked at 50 percent or higher new visits. Growth in the segment will be monitored closely.

Mobile Device Info	Visits	% New Visits
Apple iPad	9,076	65.09%
Apple iPhone	7,896	74.77%
Apple iPod	275	88.73%
Motorola MOTXT912B Droid Razr 4G	266	50.00%
Samsung GT-I9300 Galaxy SIII	253	74.31%

## Visitors to BOEM.GOV

BOEM.GOV experienced significant growth across all Top Level Domains in 2013. Notably, the .edu and .org visitors both grew by 100% or more over 2012. The .gov visitors had the least amount of growth (18.04%).

Top Level Domain	2012	2013	Percent Growth
.com	61,313	81,802	33

.edu	6,895	15,355	122
.gov	16,085	19,626	22
.mil	2,627	4,241	61
.net	93,332	145,328	55
.org	2,753	5,527	100
.us	3,196	6,016	88
other	40,949	85,635	109

### How Visitors Find BOEM.GOV Content from the Internet

In 2013, there were 182,956 organic searches from the Internet to locate BOEM or content located on BOEM.GOV. Organic search results are listings on search engine (Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc.) results pages that appear because of their relevance to the search terms.

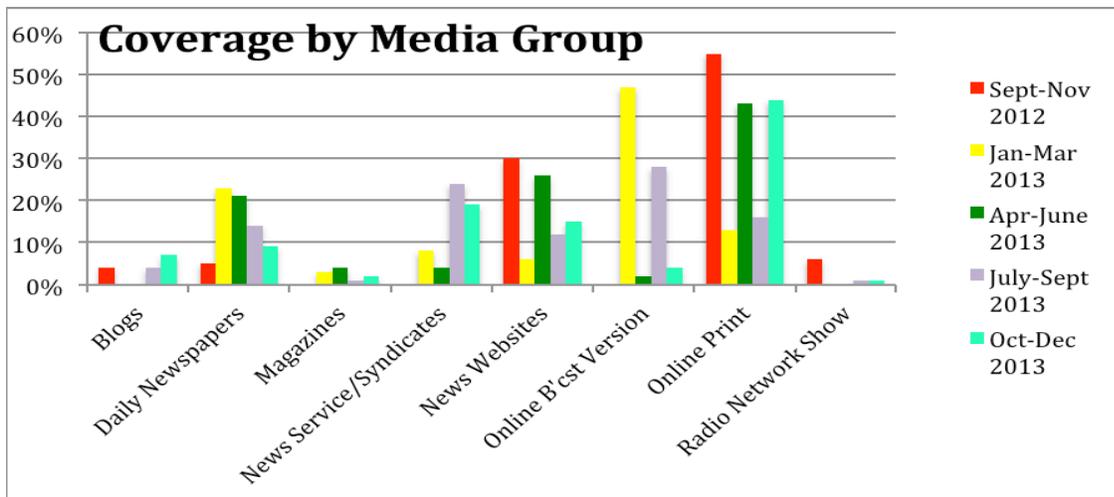
Search Term/Phrase	Number of Requests
boem	12815
wave energy	1915
boem.gov	1553
bureau of ocean energy management	883
www.boem.gov	519
boem alaska	485
ocean wave energy	403
outer continental shelf lands act	401
wave	364
boem lease sale	339

### How Visitors Find Content While on BOEM.GOV

Midway through the 2013 calendar year, BOEM.GOV repaired its search engine by deploying USA Search. The information below shows the top 10 searches that were entered into the search box while on BOEM.GOV.

Search Term/Phrase	Number of Requests
deepwater horizon	58
data center	55
alaska	49
shell	46
ntl	45
forms	38
gulf of mexico	37
serial register page	36
bsee	33
production	33

Below, Cision’s evaluation tells us the majority of the reach is through online sources. Media without an on-line presence averages around 10 percent.



## OBJECTIVES

The primary objective is to communicate BOEM's programs and actions clearly to our stakeholders.

Key objectives for improving public affairs in BOEM in the year ahead are:

- İ Improving the efficiency of our media relations program throughout the bureau.
- İ Increasing targeted outreach media utilized by our key stakeholders.
- İ Increasing our social media outreach.
- İ Continually updating and evaluating our website to ensure we are providing relevant, clear information to the public.

## OVERARCHING MESSAGES

*BOEM promotes energy independence, environmental protection and economic development through responsible, science-based and innovative management of offshore conventional and renewable energy and marine mineral resources.*

*As part of President Obama's Climate Action Plan BOEM works to create American jobs, develop domestic clean energy sources and cut carbon pollution.*

## COMMUNICATION GOALS

- İ Develop and implement national external Public Affairs Guidance that is coordinated with DOI Communications and consistent across all three regions.
- İ Monitor media coverage for tone. *Media Coverage Reports* (transitioning from Cision in 2013 to Meltwater in 2014) will be periodically prepared to gauge the tone of news coverage for percentages of neutral, positive, negative, etc. coverage of BOEM stories.
- İ Use the Meltwater distribution platform to increase online coverage of BOEM news and information. Reports will be used to determine increases in coverage by media group for: daily newspapers, trade press, blogs, radio news and online news sites, including science media. OPA will continue to use Google Analytics to track use of BOEM.gov.
- İ Increase in the number of stakeholders reading the **BOEM BULLETIN** and opening BOEM Notes to Stakeholders and Science Notes issued by OPA. Constant Contact tracks this information and reports open rates for BOEM messages delivered through this email service.

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND AUDIENCES

- İ Industry (oil and gas, renewable energy, sand and gravel and mineral mining)
- İ Media
  - o Invite oil and gas industry trade reporters to pen and pads sessions.
  - o National media list primarily of trade reporters (energy and environment)
  - o There is a larger mainstream audience that only calls when there is a crisis.
  - o Regionally, we should focus on:
    - İ Scientific studies underpinning bureau decisions.
    - İ Oil and gas, environmental research and protection, coastal restoration and seismic issues in the Gulf

- ï Oil and gas in Alaska, pending decisions made by leadership
- ï Renewable energy in the Pacific and oil and gas in southern California
- ï Renewable energy in New England
- ï Mid-Atlantic: renewable energy, marine minerals for coastal and wetlands restoration, and seismic surveys

Strategic element for leveraging the web: Try to time the posting of applied science stories on the front page to related decisions mentioned in our press releases.

Outreach to federal agencies, states and tribes

- ï State and local governments
- ï Tribes and Native Communities
- ï Congress
- ï Science and Environmental organizations
- ï Academia
- ï General Public
- ï BOEM Employees

### Visitors to BOEM.GOV

BOEM.GOV experienced significant growth across all Top Level Domains in 2013. Notably, the .edu and .org visitors, both grew by 100% or more from 2012, meaning they more than doubled. The .gov visitors had the least amount of growth (22%).

Top Level Domain	2012	2013	Percent Growth
.com	61,313	81,802	33
.edu	6,895	15,355	122
.gov	16,085	19,626	22
.mil	2,627	4,241	62
.net	93,332	145,328	55
.org	2,753	5,527	100
.us	3,196	6,016	88
other	40,949	85,635	109

## **THEMES AND SUPPORTING TALKING POINTS**

The following themes and supporting talking points are to be incorporated into communication products (speeches, news releases, tools, etc.), as applicable. These serve as general talking points for BOEM leadership and subject matter experts (SMEs).

### **1. BOEM IS TACKLING TODAY’S ENERGY CHALLENGES**

- ï BOEM utilizes an “all of the above” approach to meet today’s energy challenges.
- ï BOEM is making areas containing 75% of recoverable offshore oil and gas available for exploration and development.
- ï BOEM is committed to a renewable energy future while expanding existing conventional energy sources.

### **2. BOEM’S ENERGY PROGRAMS ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE**

- ï BOEM continues to grow our energy economy at home while protecting the environmental and cultural resources and human health.
- ï BOEM ocean energy programs utilize the best available science in analyzing effects of proposed and ongoing OCS energy- and MMP-related activities.
- ï The current five-year oil and gas program focuses on resource potential and environmental protection and is a regionally tailored and focused approach to offshore lease sales.

### **3. BOEM CONDUCTS RIGOROUS ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS**

- ï BOEM conducts rigorous environmental analyses on proposed energy and MMP activities on the Outer Continental Shelf.
- ï BOEM conducts an environmental review in compliance with NEPA prior to issuing all OCS energy and mineral leases. Before any plan is approved for oil and gas or renewable energy development, a site-specific environmental assessment or environmental impact statement is conducted.
- ï BOEM employs a diverse staff of highly qualified scientists who are experts in their fields and dedicated to protecting the environment.

## **PROGRAM SPECIFIC KEY MESSAGES**

### **Offshore Renewable Energy**

BOEM advances offshore renewable energy by using *Smart from the Start* approach to facilitate siting, leasing and construction of new projects.

Smart from the Start is stakeholder-driven and emphasizes planning and early environmental reviews to advance offshore renewable energy leasing.

Close coordination with BOEM’s federal, state and industry partners ensures an informed renewable energy leasing process.

### **Outer Continental Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2012-2017**

The program is based on transparency and designed to account for the distinct needs of the regions across the OCS.

The Five Year Program makes all areas with the highest known resource potential available in order to strengthen America’s position in domestic oil and gas production.

The Five Year Program considers a range of factors, including current and developing information about resource potential, the status of resource development and emergency response infrastructure, and the recognition of regional interest and concerns. Because it is a frontier area, BOEM and DOI will take a cautious approach to exploring offshore resources in the Arctic.

### **Marine Minerals**

The Marine Minerals Program works to preserve and restore our nation's coasts and wetlands.

As steward for sand and gravel resources extracted from the ocean floor, BOEM ensures that the removal of mineral resources is done in a safe and environmentally sound manner to minimize impacts to the marine, coastal and/or human environments, and build coastal resilience.

### **Environmental Programs**

The Office of Environmental Programs' collective vision is to help advance good stewardship of OCS resources by continuing to ensure that environmental science has a voice at the table well in advance of decisions being made. The program identifies long-term research needs and emerging issues and uses applied science to inform BOEM decisions on energy and marine mineral needs in the context of environmental risks. The Environmental Studies Program, BOEM's science arm, identifies research needs in a wide range of physical, biological and social science related to the OCS, and conducts and oversees research.

Environmental assessment activities apply the best scientific information available to determine environmental risk across the spectrum of physical, biological and social resources in order to best inform BOEM decisions related to offshore energy and marine minerals programs.

BOEM's environmental studies contribute to implementing other national priorities such as the National Ocean Policy and the Climate Change initiative.

## **COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS AND TACTICS**

### **Media Relations Tactics:**

BOEM OPA has set up operational tools for media relations over the past year and will continue to work on this part of our communications program. Some of the operational tools that we will pursue in 2014 to improve media relations in BOEM are:

#### **ï Media database**

*Objective:* Identify and target influential media for our stakeholders.

Use a media directory to expand our distribution of press releases and be more targeted in our media outreach in 2014. Over the past year, OPA has relied largely on an Excel file and media list that was in place when the bureau was launched in 2011, and subsequently imported into Constant Contact.

### ï **Resource for tracking media queries and our approved responses**

*Objective:* Organize a consistent set of responses to media inquiries that can also be used by the BOEM Office of Congressional Affairs. Again, consistency of message and helping the public to understand the process (environmental reviews, etc.) that is undertaken before policy decisions are made is a goal.

### ï **Standard Operating Procedures for Media Relations and Other Communications**

*Objective:* Formalize guidance related to operations of the media relations program for OPA, clarifying our processes and how we conduct business with the media. A draft of the SOPs has been completed.

Develop clear SOPs for employees outside of OPA who are asked to draft and submit articles for scientific journals and magazines.

### ï **Media training**

*Objective:* Offer training for all BOEM employees.

Provide tools to all employees to include tip sheets, articles on media interviews, etc.

## **Website Tactics:**

BOEM OPA will work to resolve the remaining issues related to setting up a development server and website administration. The webteam will continue to provide excellent customer service and will raise the skill level and ability of the team to provide new approaches to delivery of online communications.

Some of the ideas for further developing the BOEM.gov website include but are not limited to:

- ï Updating pages quickly and accurately, providing strong customer-service internally from the webteam.
- ï Over time, populating the site with quality photos and video; include webcasts so viewers can see speeches, etc. after the actual delivery or event dates.
- ï Hiring a BOEM web administrator to support significant changes that must be made to the content management system.
- ï Communicating website policy to all offices in BOEM so that those who approve website content for their offices have clear guidance and information about website development and content revisions.
- ï Adopting a style guide to improve website content with “plain language.”
- ï Improving navigation of the site by giving regional content a higher degree of visibility.
- ï Increase the BOEM.GOV footprint by adding features such as Really Simple Syndication (RSS).
- ï Build out a BOEM Image Gallery using Flickr.
- ï Build Workflow modules within the content management systems that will allow program offices to manage their own web content.
- ï Develop a plan to monitor the growing number of mobile platforms that are accessing BOEM.GOV.
- ï Work closely with the Department to ensure that BOEM web efforts are in line with the Departments web efforts.

### **Constituent Relations Tactics:**

BOEM OPA works closely with leadership and the programs to promote stakeholder involvement and public engagement in agency events and announcements. By engaging stakeholder input prior, during and after policy development, the agency is fostering transparency and partnership with stakeholders to achieve our goals.

- Leverage *BOEM Bulletin* and *Ocean Science* magazine as tools to reach stakeholders
- Support stakeholder meetings, round tables, conferences and exhibits, and other high impact events to support program offices, including an outreach series with the new Chief Environmental Officer to reach leaders of environmental organizations.
- Identify potential high impact events with exhibit/speaking opportunities for BOEM Leadership.
- Identify a short list of stakeholder events to attend this year with an exhibit. One large event to revisit this year under the new BOEM banner is the National Science Teachers Association meeting in Boston in April.
- Provide necessary background and preparation materials for BOEM Leadership and staff prior to presenting/speaking at stakeholder events; staff leadership at events providing support for stakeholder outreach as well as staffing for press attending events.
- Conduct Stakeholder/News Clip Analysis following agency announcement/outreach
- Distribute information to stakeholders in the form of news releases and notes announcing program updates and achievements.
- Scan the websites of the top 20 BOEM constituent organizations and relay information about their positions on BOEM issues (as needed) to the Directorate.

### **Social Media Tactics:**

BOEM OPA launched Facebook and Twitter in 2013 to give the agency a seat at the ever-growing table of social media. By utilizing social media, the agency has another way to reach stakeholders and keep them informed of announcements and updates while also engaging the general public.

- Content of posts will be aligned with bureau messages and announcements.
- Materials will consist of previously cleared information for quick posting.
- Continued focus on promoting BOEM and its mission through images.
- Engage public and BOEM stakeholders via live question and answer forums with SMEs and new leadership.
- Explore additional forms of social media outreach such as Instagram, Tumblr and YouTube.

## **Congressional Outreach Tactics:**

Timely coordination between BOEM OPA and the Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA) is essential. OPA will ensure that OCA is involved early in the communications planning process for all announcements. Although there have been changes in both chambers of Congress, we anticipate that some of the key issues of interest will be:

- ï Expanding OCS access
- ï Alaska exploration activity
- ï Renewable energy
- ï Marine Minerals Program
- ï Scientific foundation for G&G decisions

BOEM will continue to look for opportunities to clarify the oil and gas and renewables development processes as well as telling the story of how applied science is used in policy making. Some of the following tactics may be used for congressional outreach in the year ahead:

- ï **Update the Congressional briefing packet for second session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress.** A BOEM briefing packet has been developed to convey a broad perspective on what the bureau does and how we interact with other federal agencies, state and local governments and other external entities.
- ï **Leasing 101.** This presentation is under development and will be fine-tuned. The presentation will be used to brief congressional and other audiences. OCA will identify and pursue briefing opportunities with committees and individual offices/staff.
- ï **Science briefings.** OCA will continue to identify opportunities with other congressional audiences.
- ï **Media relations.** BOEM OPA will support all congressional hearings to be on hand to respond to press questions. OPA and OCA will continue to share clips, letters from members and other resources to make sure both offices are aware of congressional activity that is generating media coverage.
- ï **FY15 Budget Briefings.** The BOEM budget director and staff will take the lead on briefings with Appropriations staff on the President's Budget Request for FY14. BOEM OPA will work with Frank Quimby in the DOI Communications Office again this year on the announcement (assumed for March 2014).
- ï **BOEM Energy Forum on the Hill.** OCA and OPA will explore the idea of holding a BOEM Energy Session on the Hill as a special event or series of informational briefings.
- ï **Hall of the States Briefing.** BOEM OCA and OPA will consider a Hall of the States informational briefing. This would involve setting up a topical briefing and inviting staff from governors' offices representing OCS states.
- ï **Partnering with constituent organizations on Hill presentations and events.** OPA will research stakeholder organizations who are engaged and reaching out to members of Congress in the event that BOEM can offer speakers for sessions at forums and briefings hosted by other organizations. We will consider: Coastal States Organization, Environment and Energy Study Institute, National Governors' Association, and other organizations.

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Since media relations is on better footing in the bureau and we are working to resolve some of our ongoing problems with BOEM website administration, OPA is now able to devote attention to internal communications with our work force. To this end, we launched *Employee Insights* in 2013, a quarterly online newsletter about and by BOEM employees.

OPA is also meeting with the BSEE Web Administrator to develop a short-term revision of the existing “Pipeline” to make improvements to the employee intranet site. OPA conducted an employee survey in 2013 as a needs assessment and will use information from that survey for this project. By the end of 2014, we hope to have a new intranet online called “Currents” for BOEM employees. As needed, the old Pipeline (to be retained by BSEE) and the new Currents will share links for administrative items (forms, pay tables, Quick Time links, FPPS, FMBS, etc.). However, the look and feel of Currents will be reflective of BOEM branding.

## EVALUATION

### *Measuring the success of our communications efforts*

To evaluate the effectiveness of BOEM communications strategies, we will:

- ï Measure number of hits on BOEM.gov.
- ï Use Google Analytics to determine website use
- ï Use analytics on Facebook
- ï Measure number of new subscribers to the BOEM Bulletin
- ï Measure number of subscribers opening BOEM Bulletin items and clicking on to the links.
- ï Quarterly measure how BOEM is positioned in the media. We will begin using Meltwater in 2014 for measurement of press coverage and outreach to stakeholders.
- ï Increase the number of invitations for BOEM leadership to speak at events.
- ï Increase in the number of stakeholders calling in or attending BOEM announcements.
- ï Interest from media – measuring the number of inquiries and tracking what reporters are asking about, and whether stories position BOEM in a positive light.

OPA will integrate metrics into our communications planning in the future. We will look at metrics first in terms of our broad communication goals and what we want to accomplish. For example,

- ï Are we getting placement in the media we are targeting, or for the web or Constant Contact?
- ï Are our readers visiting web pages that we think are important?
- ï Are our readers/visitors some of our key stakeholders who interact with the public on a regular basis?

Based on what we find using measurement tools, BOEM communications strategies can be adjusted to ensure that we are taking advantage of the best opportunities to reach our audiences. As an example, if media pickup on a particular issue is not what we might hope for, we may want to consider offering reporters a special briefing or an interview with BOEM leadership that

would help clarify the topic and guide the message.

These days most reporters and stakeholders are flooded with inundated with information reaching them in a variety of formats. The key to effective media engagement is building and maintaining relationships and providing compelling, concise and relevant content in a format that is easy to grasp.

## **CONCLUSION**

- ï We will continue our stakeholder outreach efforts and identifying opportunities for leadership to interact with constituents.
- ï Based on the measurable results of outreach during 2012 and 2013, BOEM OPA has been on the right track with placing an emphasis on online communications over the past year. Our most successful tools have been BOEM.gov and use of the BOEM Bulletin, targeted Notes to Stakeholders and Science Notes.
- ï Media coverage in 2013 saw a great improvement in positive press coverage. (need year end data on the trends). During what would have been one of our toughest periods of media coverage, only 8% of our press coverage was rated as “very negative” in tone; 21% was “somewhat negative.” However, 68% of the press coverage ranged from “neutral” to “very positive” in tone (34% neutral; 21% somewhat positive; 13% very positive).

## **Key Recommendations**

- ï OPA should continue to work closely with program managers and subject matter experts to identify the best news stories for BOEM.
- ï We should continue to emphasize the bureau’s online presence since stakeholders following BOEM activity are following us primarily by using online communications vehicles and reading press releases we distribute online.
- ï Continue “Science Notes.” This will allow us to reach out with notes about items of interest from the Office of Environmental Programs and underscore the importance of applied science in decision-making about offshore resource management.
- ï BOEM would benefit from additional media training with the directorate and program managers. All managers and SMEs should understand how the media works in case they are approached by reporters spontaneously at events. As the number of BOEM attendees at conferences will continue to be limited, there may continue to be times when OPA will not be able to staff where there will be media at events. For that reason, BOEM managers and those making presentations in the field should be aware of what to do when they are approached by reporters. Media training for one-on-one interviews and press events should be offered again to the Director, Deputy Director, Chief Environmental Officer and Regional Directors, then to general staff who make public presentations.
- ï BOEM should make better use of Mike Plummer’s skill set as a writer in order to improve the quality of speeches prepared for the Director and Deputy Director and assist with other GOM OPA public affairs writing needs.
- ï BOEM OPA should re-assess how our communications efforts worked in 2013 by looking at the year-end metrics report, decide how to tweak our plans for 2014.
- ï BOEM OPA should continue to develop online tools for communicating with employees in order to show our work force that they are the most important asset in the organization.

- i BOEM OPA should use the upcoming *Stewardship of the Nation's Offshore Energy and Mineral Resources* strategic framework document as a basis for our messaging.

## TIMELINE FOR KEY 2014 BOEM COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

Note: This timeline will be updated throughout the year. None of the activities listed should be considered final. Activities are proposed until completed and reviewed with the Department.

MONTH	ACTION	COMMENTS OR DELIVERABLES
<b>January</b>	<p>Northeast Regional Ocean Council meeting, northeastern city, 1/15/14</p> <p>DOI Partners in Conservation Award Ceremony, 1/16/14</p> <p>2024/14 MD Public Information Seminar 1/24/14</p> <p>Federal Register Notice/Renewable Energy (Jan, tbd), BOEM will publish a Determination of No Competitive Interest in the <i>Federal Register</i> for an unsolicited lease request from Principle Power.</p> <p>BOEM to publish GA NOA EA for Interim policy, 1/00/14.</p> <p>American Fisheries Society Conf, Charleston, SC, 1/24/14</p> <p>Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference, 1/26-1/29</p>	<p>Renee Orr, Jeff Reidenauer and Jeff Waldner discuss MMP process</p> <p>Two BOEM environmental studies to be recognized; Jen Ewald coordinating</p> <p>Jennifer Culbertson and contractor present white paper on Understanding and Maintaining Habitat Values of OCS Shoals. Publicize w/ Note to Stakeholders</p>
<b>February</b>	<p>FNOS for GOM Central Sale 231 and Eastern Sale 225 - FRN to publish 2/17/14.</p> <p>Programmatic EIS for Atlantic G&amp;G – FRN to publish 2/21/14</p> <p>Ocean Sciences 2014, 2/23-28/14</p> <p>GreenConferences, Boston, Feb. 25-26, 27/14</p>	<p>Press Release announcing FNOS notices for March 19 sale</p> <p>Rodney Cluck, Greg Boland, Donna Schroeder, Susan Zaleski and Jean Thiurston</p> <p>William Y. Brown (OEP) speaking</p>

<p><b>March</b></p>	<p>GOM Sales 225,&amp; 231 3-19/14</p> <p>FEIS GOM WPA Sales 238,246,248 – FRN to publish 3/21/14</p> <p>Public hearings on DEIS Sales 235, 241,247, Gulf of Mexico, late March or April</p> <p>(TBD) FEIS and ROD on Atlantic G&amp;GLouisiana State of the Coast Meeting, New Orleans, 3/18-20/14</p> <p>Central East Coast Sand Management Working Group Mtg, 3/31/14</p>	<p>Event at Superdome, Press releases, media avail</p> <p>Press release</p> <p>MMP Mike Miner presenting; Note to Stakeholders</p> <p>MMP Colleen Finnegan; Note to Stakeholders</p>
<p><b>April</b></p>	<p>PNOS WPA Sale 238 –FRN to publish (t) 4/3/14Sand Management Working Group April TBD, 2014 Florida Sand Management Working Group Mid-year meeting</p> <p>Global Marine Renewable Energy Conference, Seattle, WA April 15-18, 2014</p> <p>Earth Day, April 22</p> <p>National Science and Engineering Festival, Wash., DC, 4/25-27</p>	<p>MMP Colleen Finnegan, others; webinar; Note to Stakeholders</p> <p>Tie outreach to NSE festival below.</p> <p>BOEM booth; finalize educ posters, update materials, add new activities (wind turbine demo)</p>
<p><b>May</b></p>	<p>National Ocean Sciences Bowl finals, 5/1-4/14, Seattle, WA</p> <p>International Oil Spill Conference , May 5-9 in Savannah, GA</p> <p>AWEA WINDPOWER 2014, May 5-8 in Las vegas, NV</p> <p>Asia-Pacific Conference on Underwater Cultural Heritage, May 12-16 in Honolulu, HI</p> <p>National Science Teachers Ass’n meeting, 5/14-5/17/14, New Orleans</p> <p>OCS Scientific Committee meeting, May19-21/14, Herndon/Reston or DC</p>	
<p><b>June</b></p>	<p>Energy Ocean International, June 3-5 in Atlantic City, NJ</p>	

	<p>Capitol Hill Ocean Week, 6/10-12/14, DC</p> <p>AGU Science Policy Conference, 6/16-18/14</p> <p>US Conference of Mayors, Dallas, 6/20-23/14</p> <p>Assoc. of American State Geologists Annual Mtg, June TBD 2014, Lexington, KY</p>	<p>Explore speaking role if useful</p> <p>Pitch for Rodney Cluck and Guillermo Auad to discuss MARES study. Explore for Sec. or BOEM Director speech, including MMP coastal resiliency</p> <p>See if MMP is sending anyone</p>
<b>July</b>	<p>FNOS WPA Sale 238 – FRN to publish 7/16/14</p> <p>National Governors Assoc. annual meeting, Nashville, TN, 7/10/14</p> <p>National Marine Educators Assoc. Conf, 7/22-26/14, Mobile, Ala.</p>	<p>Explore for Sec or BOEM Director speech, including coastal resiliency</p> <p>Barbara Wallace; take new materials</p>
<b>August</b>	<p>GOM WPA Sale 238 8/20/14</p> <p>Southern Governors Assoc annual mtg., Little Rock, AR, 8/15-17/14</p>	<p>Explore for Sec. or BOEM Director speech, including coastal resiliency and MMP</p>
<b>September</b>	<p>Oregon Ocean Renewable Energy Conference, September 25-25 Oregon location TBD</p> <p>FEIS CPA Sales 235,241,247 – FRN to publish 9/19/14</p> <p>PNOS CPA SALE 235 – FRN to publish (t) 9/25/14</p>	
<b>October</b>		
<b>November</b>		
<b>December</b>	<p>PEIS Gulf G&amp;G public hearings tbd</p> <p>American Geophysical Union fall meeting, San Francisco</p>	