

THE COMPATIBILITY OF THE OFFSHORE OIL INDUSTRY  
AND THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

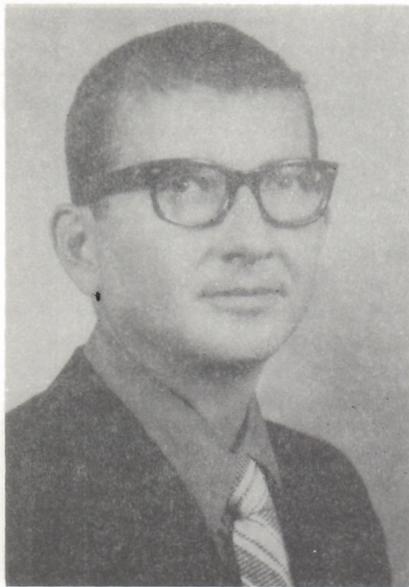
by  
BurVon B. Tettleton

ABSTRACT

The strong feeling against the oil industry's offshore operations by the general public is basically unjustified. The general public has based its opinion on inaccurate reporting and this is what must be corrected. The offshore oil industry and the industries which derive their livelihood from the sea are actually allies in the common pursuit of the ocean's natural resources. The offshore oil industry does strive to be, and is, more than compatible. It is, on the other hand, inherently beneficial to most of these opposing interests. Personal observations over the past several years, beneath platforms in the Gulf of Mexico, show that each production platform becomes an individual artificial reef and, as such, attracts tremendous numbers of marine life. Over 2,800 of the artificial reefs now stand in the Louisiana waters, placed there by oil companies. These have caused a changing ecology in the Gulf of Mexico that has produced a fantastic accumulation of fish life. People connected with the sea, which include opposition in other areas, have received the associated rewards.

Colored slides and movies taken during scuba dives are presented that show how flora and fauna collect on progressively older platforms and how they attract fish life.

BURVON B. TETTLETON - Biographical Sketch - AAPG Distinguished Lecturer



BurVon B. Tettleton earned both a B.S. and a M.S. degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1957 and 1958 respectively. He joined Mobil Oil Corporation in 1958 and Sohio Petroleum Company in 1969. He is currently Gulf Coast Geologist in Sohio's office at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

He has been diving and interested in the sea and its life for eleven years. He is an underwater photographer and has studied marine ecology and oceanography as an avocation. Mr. Tettleton began diving in the Gulf of Mexico nine years ago, in 1961. After witnessing the changes in the marine ecology around production platforms off Louisiana, he began studying and documenting, by film, marine life around platforms in 1968, prior to Santa Barbara. This work was completed in 1969 as a documentary movie. He has had articles published in Skin Diver Magazine and Petroleum Today. His underwater pictures

have been reproduced in other publications. Mr. Tettleton also testified as an expert witness on marine life at the Department of the Interior Hearings in New Orleans for the Offshore Operators Committee, which speaks for 47 oil companies.

Mr. Tettleton holds memberships in a number of societies which reflect his interest in geology and the offshore environments. These societies include:

The American Association of Petroleum Geologists, Oklahoma City Geological Society, The American Marine Littoral Society, The International Oceanographic Foundation, Louisiana Council of Diving Clubs, Underwater Society of America, and The International Underwater Photographic Society.

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