

HGS Dinner Meeting, December 11, 1995

Offshore Atlas Project Defines Deep-water Northern Gulf of Mexico Hydrocarbon Plays

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Despite the limited amount of drilling in the deep-water Gulf of Mexico (water depths >305 meters [1,000 feet]), 11 deep-water accumulations have been discovered which, when developed, will rank in the top 100 largest fields in the Gulf of Mexico. Proved field discoveries have added over 1 billion barrels of oil equivalent to Gulf of Mexico reserves, and unproved field discoveries may add an additional 1 billion barrels of oil equivalent.

The Minerals Management Service has completed a gulf-wide review of 1,086 oil

and gas fields and placed every pay sand in each field into one of 72 hydrocarbon plays. Plays are defined by chronostratigraphy, lithostratigraphy, structure, and production. Seven productive hydrocarbon plays include reservoirs located in the deep-water northern Gulf of Mexico. Regional maps illustrate the productive limits of each play. In addition, dry holes and wells with sub-economic pay were added to define the facies and structural limits for each play. Areas for exploration potential are identified for each hydrocarbon play. ■



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