

Arctic Ocean Oil and Gas Leases: Oceana Fact Sheet

Under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) sells leases to companies seeking to explore for and ultimately develop offshore oil and gas. In the Arctic, these leases are sold for initial terms of ten years, after which they expire and revert back to the government. Companies pay rent on the leases and may relinquish them prior to expiration.

In the 1980s and 90s, the government sold millions of acres of leases in the U.S. Arctic Ocean. The vast majority of those leases were relinquished. By 2003, there were no leases owned in the Chukchi Sea. In the Beaufort Sea, the few leases that remained were associated with the nearshore Liberty and Northstar prospects.

Between 2003-2008, the government held three lease sales in the Beaufort Sea and one in the Chukchi. Together, these sales resulted in more than 3 million acres of leases being sold. Since those sales, companies have relinquished many of the leases they purchased. These relinquishments have occurred as Shell has mounted its unsuccessful exploration efforts, and the company is among those to have recently relinquished leases.

The calculations below are based on the best available data from BOEM, news coverage, and public statements from the companies. It appears that ownership of some leases has changed over time.

There are currently no active leases remaining in the Chukchi Sea.

CHUKCHI SEA	As sold in Lease Sale 193		Current/Predicted		
	Majority Owner	# Leases	Total Acreage	# Leases	Total Acreage
	Shell	275	1,552,467	0	0
	Conoco	98	558,352	0	0
	Repsol	93	529,889	0	0
	Statoil	16	91,162	0	0
	ENI	4	22,788	0	0
	Iona	1	5,697	0	0
	Total	487	2,760,355	0	0

BEAUFORT SEA	As sold in Lease Sales 186, 195, and 202		Current/Predicted		
	Majority Owner	# Leases	Total Acreage	# Leases	Total Acreage
	Shell	133	732,229	0	0
	ASRC	0	0	21*	119,649
	ENI 50%, Shell 50%	0	0	13	58,083
	ENI 80%, Repsol 20%	0	0	0	0
	ENI	7	23,861	0	0
	Total	32	182,330	0	0
	Armstrong	27	127,288	0	0
	Encana	24	134,459	0	0
	ConocoPhillips	17	101,621	0	0
	Total	240	1,301,788	34*	177,732

* 19 of ASRC's leases have expired as of 10/31/17 and are currently pending a Suspension of Operations (SOO) decision before the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE).