

# Crude Oil Pipelines and Tanker Terminals

## Description

Ninety-eight percent of the oil produced in the American portion of the region is transported to shore-based facilities through pipelines. The remaining 2% is shipped by either tank ship or barge (Havran and Collins, 1980). About 12,000 miles of oil and gas pipelines were located in the American portion of the region in 1981. Annual additions to the network often amount to hundreds of miles. However, most additions are relatively small; e.g., sections connecting drilling platforms with one another or to one of the 56 major pipeline networks in American waters that carry oil and gas to shore (Havran, 1981). In the Mexican portion of the region major offshore pipeline networks link the oil and gas fields of the Gulf of Campeche to the Dos Bocas oil port.

Offshore pipelines also transport crude oil to tanker terminals where it is pumped onto tank ships and taken to refineries. Most tanker terminals in the region are onshore. However, one deepwater port (the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port or LOOP) accommodates the offloading of crude oil from supertankers. Crude oil is pumped from this port to onshore points for storage and refining.

Because they reduce the need to transport crude oil by barges or tank ships, pipelines minimize the probability of spillage and eliminate the chance of vessel collisions and groundings. However, spills or leaks from pipelines can result from physical damage to the pipe, overpressurization, malfunctioning seals, or corrosion. Oil spilled from leaking or ruptured pipelines can severely affect seagrass beds and coastal marshes. Pipeline emplacement may also affect coastal and offshore habitats, causing the destruction of vegetation and benthic organisms.

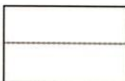
## Crude Oil Pipeline



Existing



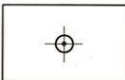
Under Construction



Proposed



Approved



Tanker Terminal



Thousands of Barrels of Crude Oil Shipped in 1979



Thousands of Barrels of Oil Products Shipped in 1979



Blocks for OCS Oil and Gas Leasing

## References

McCaslin, J.C., ed., 1982; PennWell Publishing Co., 1981; Petroleo Internacional, 1982; Petroleum Publishing Co., 1976; Stewart-Gordon, T.J., 1981; US DOI, Minerals Management Service, 1982a.

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