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## OFFSHORE PLATFORM FABRICATION FACILITY FOR NORTH HAMPTON COUNTY

Rezoning has been conditionally granted for 980 acres of property south of Cape Charles on the Chesapeake Bay for the installation of a major facility to manufacture platforms for offshore well drilling. According to Mr. Humphrey, local planner for North Hampton County, the project has been in development over the last four years, and even with the rezoning the company behind the installation, Brown & Root, would not break ground earlier than 1980.

At present, a group of consultants, Mattern & Mattern, is undertaking the environmental impact study required for major industrial facilities. The firm plans to complete this study by the end of the year.

Landowners in the affected area, however, have presented an appeal concerning the rezoning of the land to the Supreme Court of Virginia, who will decide whether they will review the appeal by April of this year. If the Supreme Court will hear the appeal, final determination should be forthcoming by late fall of the year.

The appeal by the landowners does have the effect of postponing immediate use of 60 acres of rezoned property by Allied Industry, a subsidiary of Brown & Root, for the manufacture of small ducts and vessels. Environmental impact studies are not required for this smaller industry.

A final consideration concerning the project is the outcome of the search for offshore oil which is now being conducted off the coasts of New York, Maryland, and Delaware. Unless the search proves successful, thereby creating a market for the platforms, the facility to manufacture these offshore platforms would obviously never materialize.