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## Administration Extends Ban on New Offshore Drilling to 2012

*Hastings: This is now the 'Obama Moratorium' on offshore drilling and the responsibility for this delay lies squarely at his feet*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – After more than a year of delays, Secretary of the Interior quietly [announced](#) last week that the Obama Administration will discard the 2010-2015 lease plan for new development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and wait until 2012 to put a new plan in the place. This means that the Administration's initial six-month delay has turned into a three-year moratorium on new offshore drilling. Even if a new lease plan is implemented by July of 2012, no new lease sales will occur during President Obama's term in office. It will also mark 45 months since Congress first lifted the moratorium.

*"Secretary Salazar has finally confirmed what had long been feared – that the Obama Administration has no intention of opening up new areas for offshore drilling during his four-years in office," said House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings. "In 2008, in a bipartisan agreement, the decades-long ban on offshore drilling was lifted that opened 500 million additional acres for new energy production. This area contains an estimated 14 billion barrels of oil and 55 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. The American people expected the Administration to seize this incredible opportunity, not keep the ban in place for years down the road. This is now the 'Obama Moratorium' on offshore drilling and the responsibility for this delay lies squarely at his feet.*

*"Despite public comments that favored a new leasing plan by a [2-to-1 margin](#), the Administration has decided to disregard the overwhelming opinion of the American people who support opening additional areas to drilling. By extending this drilling ban to 2012, the Administration is single-handedly preventing new job creation, billions in new government revenue and increased energy security."*

### **Background – Timeline of OCS Leasing and Development:**

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Beginning in 1981-</b> | Congress annually passes a moratorium on new OCS development.   |
| <b>1990 -</b>             | President George H.W. Bush institutes an Executive Moratorium on OCS leasing (overlapping the annual moratorium imposed by Congress). |
| <b>July 14, 2008 -</b>    | President George W. Bush lifts the Executive ban on OCS   |

leasing.

- July 30, 2008 -** President George W. Bush announces the beginning of a new “five-year plan” to provide a blueprint for OCS leasing in the 2010 to 2015 period. This would replace the five-year plan for the 2007-2012, which did not provide for any lease sales in areas that were covered by the moratorium.
- October 1, 2008 -** Responding to public outcry over high gas prices and mounting pressure from Republican lawmakers, Congress lifts the ban on new oil and gas leasing in the OCS.
- January 16, 2009 -** Bush Interior Department issues a Draft Proposed OCS oil and gas leasing program, and solicits comments on all aspects of the plan. The proposal includes 31 OCS lease sales in all or some portion of the 12 of the 26 planning areas—4 areas off Alaska, 2 areas off the Pacific coast, 3 areas in the Gulf of Mexico, and 3 areas off the Atlantic coast.
- February 10, 2009 -** Secretary Salazar [announces](#) he will delay the Bush Administration 5-year plan for oil and gas development on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf for six months. He begins a “listening tour” in spite of the fact that the Bush Administration had already solicited public opinion on this plan.
- September 17, 2009 -** Secretary Salazar [states](#) that the Administration may not complete a new OCS lease plan until 2012.
- September 21, 2009 -** The Administration’s extended public comment period on the draft proposed 2010-2015 Outer Continental Shelf plan comes to an end – yet the Administration still makes no announcement regarding the future of offshore drilling.
- January 26, 2010 -** The Department of the Interior [announces](#) it will delay the Virginia offshore lease sale scheduled for November 2011.
- January 27, 2010 -** President Obama [mentions](#) offshore drilling in his State of the Union address – leading many to believe he is open to expanding drilling in the OCS.
- February 1, 2010 -** President Obama releases his FY 2011 budget proposal that shows [revenue](#) from new Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) leasing declining from \$1.5 billion in 2009 to only **\$413 million** in 2015. The only way revenue would decline is if less of the OCS is offered for leasing for energy production.
- February 4, 2010 -** The Wall Street Journal [reports](#) that public comments

collected by the Department of the Interior ran 2-to-1 in favor of the new 2010-2015 lease plan.

**March 3, 2010 -**

Secretary Salazar [confirms](#) that the Administration will not put a new OCS lease plan in place until 2012, which means no new drilling will take place during President Obama's term in office.

**July, 2010 -**

The date new areas would be available for leasing under the original 2010-2015 lease plan if it were not for the "Obama Moratorium," which has delayed implementation of a new lease plan until 2012.

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