

DON'T DRILL BABY, DON'T DRILL

In yet another chapter of Ken Salazar being my temporary favorite cabinet secretary, Salazar and Obama have reversed Bush's plans to increase offshore drilling.

The Obama administration on Tuesday overturned another Bush-era energy policy, setting aside a draft plan to allow drilling off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

"To establish an orderly process that allows us to make wise decisions based on sound information, we need to set aside" the plan "and create our own timeline," Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced in a statement.

Alleging that the Bush administration "had torpedoed" offshore renewable energy in favor of oil and natural gas, Salazar said he was extending the public comment period by 6 months.

"The additional time we are providing will give states, stakeholders, and affected communities the opportunity to provide input on the future of our offshore areas," he said.

Salazar also ordered Interior Department experts to compile a report on the Outer Continental Shelf's energy potential – not just oil and gas, but also renewables like wind and wave energy.

"In the biggest area that the Bush administration's draft OCS plan proposes for oil and gas drilling – the Atlantic seaboard, from Maine to Florida – our data on available resources is very thin, and what little we have is twenty to thirty years old," he said. "We shouldn't make decisions to sell off

taxpayer resources based on old information."

Granted, compared to Eric Holder (who gets to embrace renditions as his first meaningful act) and Tim Geithner (who is stuck with the worst economy in decades), Salazar has it easy. He can stay busy for months just undoing Bush's harm.

Still, it's nice to see one Department improving on what Bush had done.