



For Immediate Release

As Drilling Moratorium Lifts, Safety Questions Remain

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WASHINGTON, DC (October 12) – *Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today announced an end to the federal moratorium on deepwater oil and gas drilling.*

Adam Kolton, senior director of Congressional & Federal Affairs of the National Wildlife Federation, said:

“While today’s announcement follows a 6-month effort to meaningfully reform offshore drilling practices, we cannot yet assure the public that we will be protected from another catastrophe so soon after the Deepwater Horizon blowout.

“Much more still needs to be done to appropriately respond to the scale of this disaster.

“To guarantee the safety of our coasts and livelihoods, the government must be empowered to effectively monitor industry claims of safety – because, as was so painfully demonstrated in the Gulf oil disaster, Big Oil’s assurances aren’t good enough.

“The new drilling regulations put in place by the Administration will only be as good as the government’s ability to independently verify industry compliance. Although progress is being made in reorganizing the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, we are concerned that the agency does not yet have capacity to adequately verify industry claims. We also need assurance that inspectors are equipped to determine the actual state of safety equipment on deepwater rigs, not just rubber stamp projects.

“Oil and gas lobbyists and their allies on Capitol Hill continue to block real reform. A comprehensive clean energy bill was blocked. Oil spill response legislation was blocked. Subpoena power for the Gulf commission was blocked. And a new substantial funding source for long-term restoration of the wetlands and marshes of the Mississippi Delta has yet to be created.

“America deserves to know that things have fundamentally changed in the business-as-usual practices that led to the Gulf oil disaster. That hasn’t happened, yet.”

The [National Wildlife Federation](http://www.nwf.org) is America's largest conservation organization inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

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