

Date: March 11, 2009
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Secretary Salazar Regional Meetings On Energy Development of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf

http://www.doi.gov/news/09_News_Releases/021009.html

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar will host four regional public meetings in April to present Interior’s findings on Outer Continental Shelf (OSC) energy resources and information regarding sensitive areas and resources in the OCS from their development. At the meetings, the Secretary will also hear comment from public officials, interested organizations, advocacy groups and private citizens on OCS’s development.

The meetings will be held at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on Monday, April 6; Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, on Wednesday, April 8; Dena’ina Convention Center in Anchorage, Alaska, on Tuesday, April 14; and at the University of California-San Francisco’s Mission Bay Conference Center in San Francisco, California, on Thursday, April 16.

“President Obama has laid out his vision for energy independence for the sake of our national security, our economic security and our environmental security,” Secretary Salazar said. “The purpose of these meetings is to have an open, honest conversation with the American people to solicit the best information possible about an offshore energy plan. The Department’s efforts over the next six months to develop a comprehensive offshore energy plan will embrace the President’s commitment to a government that is open and inclusive and that makes decisions based on sound science and the public interest.”

Regional Governors and elected federal officials, private citizens, interested organizations, entities, energy producers, advocacy groups, and local governments are invited to attend and offer brief comments or to ask questions. After opening remarks by the Secretary, there will be presentation of a report being prepared by the Department concerning offshore energy resources. The rest of the day’s meeting will be devoted to hearing from these elected officials and public and private interests.

If persons cannot attend in person, or are unable to speak at the meetings, they are welcome to submit written statements, comments or documents, either at the meeting or during the extended public comment period. Written comments can be either submitted at the meeting or thereafter throughout the extended public comment period electronically at www.MMS.gov, “Five Year Program,” “How to Comment,” or by mail to Ms. Renee Orr, Chief, Leasing Division, Mineral Management Service, MS 4010, 381 Elden Street, Herndon, VA 20170-4817.

These meetings are part of a four-part strategy Salazar announced on Feb. 10, 2009, for developing a new, comprehensive energy development plan for the U. S. Outer Continental Shelf, including conventional and renewable resources. Interior oversees more than 1.7 billion acres on the Outer Continental Shelf — an area roughly three fourths the size of the entire United States. The strategy is composed of the following parts:

- Extending the public comment period 180 days -- until Sept. 21, 2009 -- on the Draft Proposed
- 5-Year Oil and Gas Leasing Program announced by the previous Administration.
- Develop a report by departmental scientists from the Minerals Management Service and U.S. Geological Survey on conventional and renewable offshore energy resources, due March 30.
- Upon completion of the report, host four regional meetings in April, one each for the Atlantic Coast, Gulf Coast, Pacific Coast, and Alaska to review the findings of the report and to gather input from all interested parties on where and how Interior should develop the traditional and renewable energy resources of the Outer Continental Shelf.
- Expedite the Department's renewable energy rulemaking for the Outer Continental Shelf that was required under the Energy Policy Act of 2005, but which was never accomplished by the previous Administration.