

Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior

U.S. Department of the Interior

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web comment form: www.doi.gov/feedback.cfm

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Dear Secretary Salazar and U.S. Department of the Interior,

Please register my strong disapproval of seismic oil/gas exploration under discussion for the Mid Atlantic and South Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). High-intensity pulses from seismic airguns will imperil tens of thousands of dolphins and whales, among them the critically endangered North Atlantic right whales whose only calving grounds are in the south Atlantic.

Explosive airgun noise can induce fatal organ hemorrhage in whales and other marine beings who depend upon *echolocation* — communication and movement via emitted sound and its echo. Seismic activity damages their ability to feed, breed and navigate ocean waters.

Airgun racket spans thousands of miles. When calls go unheard over a vast stretch like this, animals desert their habitat and stop searching for food. Those within close range of airguns can suffer hearing loss, injury or death.

Seismic oil/gas discovery also dislocates cod, haddock, rockfish and more fish species. It is an initial part of offshore drilling's long chain of irreparable impacts on environment. Please shift focus from oil/gas expansion to renewable energy sources. The U.S. Energy Information Agency claims full use of all recoverable offshore oil reserves would only reduce gas prices by 3 cents over two decades.

It's not worth it.

I respectfully ask the Department of Interior to shield wild animals from harm, not strand them from the blast of seismic airguns.

Thank you,