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Trump's order downplays environmental protection, saying the change would ensure that regulations and management decisions don't get in the way of responsible use by industries that "employ millions of Americans, advance ocean science and technology, feed the American people, transport American goods, expand recreational opportunities and enhance America's energy security."

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In another reversal of Obama policy, Trump earlier this year called for opening most coastal waters to offshore oil and gas drilling, drawing fierce opposition from many coastal states. His administration also is stepping up federal leases for offshore wind energy development.

"Domestic energy production from federal waters strengthens the nation's security and reduces reliance on imported energy," Trump said in his order, which also mentioned shipping, fishing and recreation as among industries standing to benefit from his plan.

The order drew praise from a group representing offshore energy producers.

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Jack Belcher, managing director of the pro-industry National Ocean Policy Coalition, said the new approach would remove "a significant cloud of uncertainty" for marine commerce.

Environmentalists said it erases a national mandate to improve ocean health.

"In another attempt to reverse progress made under President Obama, the Trump administration is recklessly tossing aside responsible ocean management and stewardship," said Arian Rubio, legislative associate for the League of Conservation Voters.

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U.S. Rep. Rob Bishop, a Republican and chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, said Trump's approach would "help the health of our oceans and ensure local communities impacted by ocean policy have a seat at the table."

Rep. Raul M. Grijalva, an Arizona Democrat and ranking member of the committee, demanded a hearing and accused Trump of "unilaterally throwing out" years of conservation work.

Submitted by, Jay Thompson - Unifor 4050 Environment Committee