



The Cabinet Room

Salazar Infuriates Green Groups

Posted by Amanda Erickson | 03/30/2010

Demoralized by the glacial pace of any meaningful green legislation, environmentalists are quickly losing patience with the Obama administration.

And now they have something of a punching bag - Interior Sec. Ken Salazar. Salazar is being hit



for his failure to include several animals (including the sage grouse, helpfully pictured here) on the endangered species list. A trio of western groups are even filing a lawsuit.

This by itself is not remarkable - green groups push the government to expand their animal protections all the time. But the degree of vitriol toward Salazar should have Obama worried.

“Salazar is doing whatever he wants,” Dr. Robin Silver of the Center for Biological Diversity told me. “We [environmentalists] are outsiders.” Silver accused the Department of

behaving “no differently” under Salazar than it did during the Bush years, which he meant as quite the insult.

With hope for a strong climate change bill quickly drifting into pipe dream status, the President needs his cabinet members to keep environmental groups on his side. Lower-profile wins could, at the very least, temper a rising tide of discontent. Instead, Salazar’s actions seem to be provoking a full-on assault. Not good in an election year.