



# OIL AND OCEANS DON'T MIX

by the Center for Biological Diversity

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If Trump and his Big Oil buddies get their way, offshore drilling could destroy the very fabric of coastal communities, state and local economies, and critical marine habitats for decades to come. Expanding offshore drilling in the Pacific would result in a coast littered with oil and gas rigs and pipelines, causing heavy industrialization in coastal communities, as we've seen in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

## THE CALIFORNIA COASTLINE IS ONCE AGAIN IN THE OIL INDUSTRY'S CROSSHAIRS

- The federal government recently took steps to vastly expand offshore oil and gas leasing in the Pacific, Atlantic and Arctic oceans and the eastern Gulf of Mexico, areas that have been largely off limits to new federal leasing.
- Oil companies have their sights set on oil and gas deposits up and down the California coast, from La Jolla to Orange County, from Palos Verdes to the Lost Coast.
- The California coastal marine environment is one of the most biologically rich areas in the world, providing key habitat for whales, sea otters, sea turtles and more than 500 fish species.
- Conventional drilling isn't the only threat; just last year the federal government also lifted a moratorium on offshore fracking off California's coast, allowing the use of toxic fracking fluid in our coastal waters and other well stimulation, such as acid fracking and gravel packing.<sup>1</sup>

## WHERE WE DRILL, WE SPILL

- From the infamous Santa Barbara oil spill in 1969 to the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010 to the Refugio oil spill in 2016, we've seen again and again that oil spills are inevitable. There is simply no safe way to drill our oceans.
- In fact, oil spills are routine; the U.S. Coast Guard documented *over 40,000 oil spills* in the Gulf of Mexico between 1973 and 2011. That's more than 1,000 per year.<sup>2</sup>
- In just four years following the Gulf spill (2011-2014), the federal government reported that offshore drilling accounted for a total of 1,063 injuries, 477 fires and explosions, 22 well control losses, 11 spills of over 2,100 gallons of oil, and 11 fatalities.<sup>3</sup>
- The Gulf experienced the longest mortality event recorded for marine mammals and sea turtles following Deepwater Horizon.<sup>4</sup> The Refugio oil spill killed hundreds of animals, including dolphins, sea lions and pelicans.<sup>5</sup>

## THE PLANET IS SPEEDING TOWARD A CLIMATE CATASTROPHE

- Drilling anywhere is a threat to climate and coastal communities everywhere. Scientists warn that the overwhelming majority of fossil fuels must remain in the ground, unburned, if we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

- Ending fossil fuel leases in federal waters would prevent the release of up to 61.5 billion tons of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere and oceans, or the equivalent of driving 13 billion passenger cars for one year.<sup>6</sup>
- New federal offshore leases would allow for oil and gas production over the next 40 to 70 years, long past the point that scientists say fossil fuels must be phased out.<sup>7</sup>
- Coastal California is already experiencing the early impacts of a rising sea level, including more extensive coastal flooding during storms, periodic tidal flooding and increased coastal erosion.
- By the end of this century, coastal flooding could threaten upwards of 1 million California residents and \$100 billion worth of property. Among those especially vulnerable are large numbers of low-income people and communities of color.<sup>8</sup>
- A wide range of critical infrastructure, such as roads, hospitals, schools, emergency facilities, wastewater treatment plants, and power plants will also be at risk.

## FRACK NO!

- Oil companies have fracked hundreds of offshore wells in California's ocean.
- Scientific studies indicate that at least 10 of the fracking chemicals routinely used during these fracking events could kill or harm a broad variety of marine species, including sea otters, fish and benthic invertebrates.<sup>9</sup>
- Fracking and other well stimulation techniques increase pollution and the risk of oil spills and earthquakes.

## (ENDNOTES)

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Programmatic Environmental Assessment of the Use of Well Stimulation Treatments on the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf (May 2016). Available at: <http://pocswellstim.evs.anl.gov/>

<sup>2</sup> US Coast Guard, Polluting Incidents In and Around U.S. Waters, A Spill/Release Compendium: 1969-2011 (Dec. 2012)

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, "Incident Statistics and Summaries". Available at: <http://www.bsee.gov/Inspection-and-Enforcement/Accidents-and-Incidents/Listing-and-Status-of-Accident-Investigations/>

<sup>4</sup> National Ocean Service, Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, Longterm Effects on Marine Mammals, Sea Turtles (20 April 2017). Available at: <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/news/apr17/dwh-protected-species.html>

<sup>5</sup> Center for Biological Diversity, Refugio Oil Spill. Available at: [http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/Refugio\\_oil\\_spill/](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/Refugio_oil_spill/)

<sup>6</sup> Mulvaney, et al. The Potential Greenhouse Gas Emissions from U.S. Federal Fossil Fuels, August 2015. Available at: <http://www.ecoshiftconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/Potential-Greenhouse-Gas-Emissions-U-S-Federal-Fossil-Fuels.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program: 2017-2022, Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Nov. 2016) Vol. I: Chpts. 1-6. Available at: <https://www.boem.gov/fpeis-volume1/>

<sup>8</sup> Hauer, M., Evans, J. and Mishra, D. (2016). Millions projected to be at risk from sea-level rise in the continental United States. *Nature Climate Change*, [online] 6(7), pp.691-695. Available at: <http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/v6/n7/full/nclimate2961.html?foxtrotcallback=true>

<sup>9</sup> Center for Biological Diversity, Troubled Waters: Offshore Fracking's Threat to California's Ocean, Air and Seismic Stability (September 2014). Available at: [https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/offshore\\_fracking/pdfs/Troubled\\_Waters.pdf](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/offshore_fracking/pdfs/Troubled_Waters.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Id

<sup>11</sup> United States Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Ocean Service, California 2014, Employment: Tourism and Recreation. Available at: <https://www.coast.noaa.gov/enowexplorer/#/employment/tourism/2014/06000>

<sup>12</sup> Beitman, Andy. Sierra Club. Report: Clean Energy Jobs Overwhelm Coal, Oil, & Gas in 41 States and D.C. Available at: <https://www.docdroid.net/G6njmYC/sierra-club-clean-energy-jobs-report-final-1.pdf#page=2>

<sup>13</sup> Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Assessment of Undiscovered Oil and Gas Resources of the Nation's Outer Continental Shelf, 2016. Available at: <https://www.boem.gov/2016-National-Assessment-Fact-Sheet/>

<sup>14</sup> United States Energy Information Administration. How much oil is consumed in the United States? Available at: <https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=33&t=6>

- Shockingly, the oil industry has federal permission to dump more than 9 billion gallons of wastewater, including fracking fluid laced with toxic chemicals, into the Pacific Ocean every year.<sup>10</sup>

## DON'T BELIEVE THE OIL INDUSTRY'S LIES

- Along the California coast alone, nearly 410,000 jobs and \$20 billion in gross domestic product rely on healthy ocean ecosystems, through fishing, tourism and recreation.<sup>11</sup> This far outweighs any potential jobs or economic gains that could ever be provided from offshore drilling.
- Clean energy jobs vastly outnumber all fossil fuel jobs in California, by a margin greater than 6:1.<sup>12</sup>
- Even if *all* of the economically recoverable resources off California were exploited, the oil would last for significantly less than 2 years at current national consumption rates.<sup>13,14</sup>

## CALIFORNIA CITIES MUST LEAD THE WAY

- The state of California prohibits new leasing in state waters because of the unacceptably high risk of damage and disruption to the marine environment of the state.
- It's up to California, its cities and its residents to guard our coastline against dangerous offshore drilling and the worst impact of climate change, including sea-level rise and ocean acidification.
- Our voices matter. When the Obama administration proposed offshore lease sales in the Atlantic Ocean, more than 100 East Coast municipalities passed resolutions opposing offshore drilling and seismic blasting. In the face of such opposition from residents, their representatives, and more than 41,000 businesses, the Obama administration removed the Atlantic from the leasing plan.