



April 5, 2018

Ms. Kelly Hammerle
Chief, National Oil and Gas Leasing Program
Development and Coordination Branch
Leasing Division, Office of Strategic Resources
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (VAM-LD)
45600 Woodland Road
Sterling, VA 20166

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Re: Comments on the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management 2019-2024 Draft; Proposed National Oil and Gas Leasing Program, Docket ID: BOEM-2.017-0074

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

We are writing this letter as the elected officials of the community of Los Osos, which is located in San Luis Obispo County on the Central Coast of California, in opposition to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's 2019-2024 Draft Proposed National Oil and Gas Leasing Program and any expansion of offshore drilling off the coast of California.

The Draft Proposed Program which was prepared as a result of the April 28, 2017, Executive Order called Implementing an America-First Offshore Energy Strategy, which establishes a policy to encourage energy exploration and production on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and restarts the 2017-2022 five-year lease sales program, whose sole purpose was to facilitate offshore oil and gas development in federal waters, includes two leases in the Southern California region, which includes the area just off the shores of our community. We strongly urge you to eliminate these proposed leases in the next draft of the Program.

California's coastline supports tourism, fishing, navigation, public access, and abundant marine life: including whales, salmon, sea lions, and shorebirds. The potential impact on these integral parts of our Central Coast is simply not worth the limited oil resources in our oceans.

Following the 1969 Santa-Barbara oil spill, which at the time was the worst oil spill to occur in U.S waters, which continues to impact the fisheries, marine wildlife, sea birds, tourism and economy on our Central Coast, the federal government and California enacted legislation to protect the environment and limit energy exploration off coastal waters. In California this included the creation of the Coastal Commission, the passage of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and a ban on new oil and natural gas leases in state-controlled waters. This ban lasted for 16 years and was reinstated by the Legislature in 1994. In Congress, the Santa Barbara spill helped lead to the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act, the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, and a general strengthening of federal regulations on oil and gas exploration.

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The State of California, and especially the Central Coast continues to pioneer clean, renewable energy, recognizing that instead of prioritizing new oil and gas development, an area can thrive by championing renewable energy, which creates jobs, bolsters the economy, and protects the coastline, resources, and marine wildlife from another catastrophic oil spill.

The State of California has also made significant social and financial investments to create the marine protected areas, one which is just to the north of our community, to safeguard ecosystems, protect marine life and habitats, and economic activities that rely on a healthy ocean, including tourism and commercial fishing. This was done not only for the benefit of our generation but also for all future generations.

We therefore join our California Governor and others in urging you, in the strongest possible terms, to remove any proposed oil and gas leasing off the Central Coast of California from the next draft of the Proposed Program.

Sincerely,



Vicki L. Milledge
President



Marshall E. Ochylski
Vice-President



Charles L. Cesena
Director



Louis G. Tornatzky
Director



Christine M. Womack
Director

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