

Send your comment to oppose offshore drilling

The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is taking public comments until March 9, regarding the Trump Administration's proposal to significantly expand offshore oil drilling, including off the coast of Oregon. This would reverse long-standing policy and put our cherished coastline and rich marine environment at high risk of pollution.

Oregon's Governor, Senators and Representatives (except Mr. Walden) have opposed offshore drilling, but we need to do our part as citizens to help block this ill-considered proposal!

Please help by submitting your comments at the following website:

<https://www.boem.gov/National-Program-Comment/-submitcomments>

Here are some points you can make. Feel free to cut and paste some or all of these. Remember it's especially helpful if you add your OWN perspective. In this case, you should indicate how and where you and/or your community uses the marine environment.

I strongly oppose BOEM's Draft Proposed 2019-2024 OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The proposed expansion of offshore oil drilling in the Atlantic, Pacific, Eastern Gulf of Mexico, and Arctic Ocean would cause enormous and unnecessary negative impacts to our nation's marine ecosystems, coastal communities, and vital recreation and tourism industries.

Oregon's coast has some of our nation's cleanest and most productive marine waters, which support rich marine ecosystems and local economies. Oil and gas drilling would put these important values at risk of degradation and irrevocable damage.

Coastal recreation and tourism depend on clean beaches and waters, viewable wildlife, and scenic view sheds. Visitors to our communities enjoy a variety of marine based recreation includes surfing, sea kayaking, beach combing, tide-pooling, SCUBA diving, bird watching and whale watching.

Tourism and recreation generate billions of dollars for coastal states and the nation as a whole. Coastal recreation and tourism accounts for 83 percent of businesses and 71 percent of employment opportunities for coastal communities in the United States.

According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, our state's marine resources support commercial fisheries that annually contribute more than \$500 million in personal income to Oregon, a critically important economic driver for the coast and the state.

Beyond economic values, Oregon's coast hosts one-third of the West Coast's seabird breeding habitat. More than 100 species of seabirds depend on Oregon waters for some phase of their

life --often traveling thousands of miles from distant breeding grounds, to feed in rich waters. In addition, 34 sites on Oregon's coast are recognized as "Important Bird Areas."

Oregon's marine waters provide habitat for several federally threatened species, including the Southern Oregon-Northern California coho, marbled murrelet, green sturgeon, and eulachon.

Our waters also host gray whales, both migratory and resident, that visitors love to view.

New offshore oil and gas exploration and development would require seismic surveys, drilling operations, oil transport by tankers, and the installation of platforms, pipelines, and other infrastructure. Collectively these activities would cause significantly damage the environment, marine wildlife, and coastal economies.

New offshore drilling would also expose the marine environment and coastal communities to the risks of a catastrophic oil spill that would have irrevocable impacts to our coastal communities.

Although oil and gas companies claim that improvements in technology have greatly reduced the likelihood of a spill, between 2006 and 2015, 389 oil spills occurred from OCS platforms and pipelines (not even counting associated vessels and barges), tarnishing America's coastlines with roughly 206.5 million gallons of polluting oil.

According to Oregon's Geology and Minerals Department (DOGAMI), it's unlikely that oil drilling will be productive or feasible off our state's coast. Owing to underlying geology, we have very limited oil and gas resources that are difficult to access, and at the same time, extremely stormy and turbulent conditions that make risk of accidents higher than in other locations. The potential economic gains are simply not worth the risk.

Given current trends of climate change and increasing ocean acidification off Oregon's coast, we cannot afford to increase levels of atmospheric carbon by burning more fossil fuels. I urge the BOEM to consider alternative energy sources that do not increase atmospheric carbon.

I urge the BOEM to consider alternatives that focus on less-polluting forms of energy than oil.