



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

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CLERK OF THE BOARD

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June 6, 2025

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (VAM-LD)
45600 Woodland Road
Sterling, VA 20166-9216

RE: Opposition to Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling Along the California Coastline
(Docket ID: BOEM-2025-0015)

Dear Ms. Kelly Hammerle:

On behalf of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our strong opposition to any new or expanded offshore oil and gas drilling along the California coastline.

Mendocino County's coastline is part of one of the most biologically rich and ecologically sensitive marine ecosystems in the world. This area encompasses over a dozen California Marine Protected Areas, kelp forests, nearshore fisheries, and essential habitat for numerous marine mammals and seabirds. Our coastal economy is closely tied to a clean and healthy ocean, which supports sustainable fisheries, tourism, and a high quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Offshore oil and gas development poses unacceptable risks—including oil spills, chronic pollution, and habitat destruction—that can cause long-lasting and irreversible harm to marine ecosystems, coastal economies, and public health. The federal government's ongoing consideration of expanded drilling, particularly in areas adjacent to Mendocino County, jeopardizes decades of hard-won environmental protections and conservation goals.

Our ocean waters are home to a wealth of fish, marine mammals, and bird species, supporting a thriving coastal economy that relies on a healthy marine environment. Offshore drilling and exploration put these ecosystems and economies at risk, potentially leading to catastrophic oil spills and pollution.

These concerns are not theoretical. In October 2021, a pipeline rupture off Huntington Beach spilled approximately 25,000 gallons of oil into the ocean, closing beaches and causing serious harm to wildlife and local businesses. In 2015, a corroded pipeline near Refugio State Beach released over 100,000 gallons of crude oil, killing hundreds of animals and resulting in millions of dollars in damages and lost economic activity.

California has set ambitious goals to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 under the Climate Crisis Act (AB 1279). Expanding offshore oil and gas drilling undermines this commitment and contradicts our shared obligation to transition toward clean, renewable energy sources. In 2024, the federal designation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary took a commendable step in

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permanently protecting 4,500 square miles of ocean. California continues to advance legislation, such as the West Coast Ocean Protection Act and the California Clean Coast Act, to safeguard our marine resources.

More than 100 municipalities, the State of California, and numerous environmental and civic organizations have formally opposed new offshore oil development. Mendocino County proudly stands with them. We urge both the State of California and the United States government to pursue a permanent ban on offshore oil and gas development along our coast.

We further support state and federal legislative efforts to protect ocean and coastal resources, including the West Coast Ocean Protection Act and California's prohibition on new oil infrastructure to support offshore drilling (AB 1775/SB 834 of 2018).

Thank you for your leadership in protecting the health, environment, and economic vitality of California's coast.

Sincerely,



John Haschak, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: The Honorable Alex Padilla, Senator from California
The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of California
The Honorable Mike McGuire, Member of the California State Senate
The Honorable Chris Rogers, Member of the California State Assembly
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)