

California State Lands Commission
California Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources

Reference: Abandoned Nearshore Oil Wells in Santa Barbara County

Dear

During the 19th and early 20th centuries nearshore oil exploration was prolific along the Santa Barbara County shoreline. After the oil wells lost their production value these oil wells were abandoned. Unfortunately, at the time of abandonment there were no standards or oversight provided by any regulatory entity. As a result, these nearshore oil wells were left in a condition that now provides inadequate protection to the Santa Barbara County coastal environment. Because the responsible parties for these wells have not existed for several decades, the State of California now has responsibility for these sites.

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors understands that your agencies, working with other State agencies such as the California Game & Fish Department's Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) and Federal partners, has conducted analysis of the abandoned oil well problem and the complicating geologic aspects of the wells' placements.

The Board of Supervisors is requesting that your agency provide an in-person presentation to the County Board of Supervisors on your knowledge of the locations abandoned oil wells within the coastal areas of Santa Barbara County, the impacts of these wells on the environment as far as oil release, what steps have been taken to mitigate the abandoned wells and what future plans exist to further mitigate the wells' seepage.

Please contact Jeremy Tittle of Santa Barbara County First District Supervisor Salud Carbajal's office at (805) 568- 2186 to further discuss this matter and to schedule a presentation before the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors.

Sincerely,

Joni Gray, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

cc:

Lois Capps, Member of Congress, 23rd Congressional District

Chair Gavin Newsom and Members of the California State Lands Commission

Tony Strickland, Member of the California State Senate, 19th District

Das Williams, Member of the California State Assembly, 35th District