



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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News Release

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COUNTY FORMALLY OPPOSES OFFSHORE DRILLING PLANS

The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors has formally submitted comments opposing the U.S. Department of the Interior's proposed plan to issue new oil and gas leases off the coast of California.

The County's comments, submitted to the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), object to any offshore leasing adjacent to California and request an extension of the current public comment period, which is scheduled to close on January 23, 2026. The Board cites concerns related to threats to coastal economies, the environment, fisheries, conflicts with National Marine Sanctuaries, and insufficient opportunities for meaningful public participation, requesting additional public hearings within potentially impacted communities along California's coast.

"Santa Cruz County's coast is fundamental to our economy, our environment, and our quality of life," Supervisor Justin Cummings said. "Opening the door to new offshore drilling places our fisheries, tourism industry, and coastal communities at unnecessary risk. We are calling on the Department of the Interior to listen directly to coastal communities before advancing a plan that could have irreversible consequences."

The County is encouraging residents, nonprofits, businesses, tribes, and public agencies to submit their own comments before the January 23, 2026 deadline. Public comments can be submitted through the [federal rulemaking portal](#) or by visiting [SaveMyCoast.org](#), which provides background and information on the proposal and tools to participate in the process. Residents can also stay updated by signing up for the Save My Coast mailing list.

Led by Cummings and longtime California coastal advocate Richard Charter, 11 of 15 coastal California counties have formally voted to oppose new oil and gas exploration near the iconic California coast and have joined the Save My Coast coalition, along with the city of Santa Cruz. Additionally, on Thursday from noon-1 p.m., Cummings will join California Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot for an event titled "Not on Our Watch: Stopping More Oil Drilling on California's Coast." Registration is [available here](#).

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