



For Immediate Release

January 27, 2009

Contact: Linda Krop or David Landecker, Environmental Defense Center
(805) 963-1622

**ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS URGE CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION TO
SUPPORT DEAL TO END OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING**

Santa Barbara, CA – Twenty-five (25) environmental groups from around the state have signed onto a letter of support for the Tranquillon Ridge proposal, which will guarantee an end to several existing oil and gas developments off the coast of Santa Barbara County. Joined by Congresswoman Capps and the County of Santa Barbara, the organizations' letter states that this proposal will shut down three oil platforms in nine years, and another platform in 13 years. Current law allows these platforms to operate indefinitely, and with new slant drilling technology and variable oil prices, it is more than likely that drilling will continue for many more years, possibly another 30 – 40, as has been the experience with other platforms in the Santa Barbara Channel. Never before has the public been able to assure an end date for existing oil and gas production.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to put an end to oil drilling off the coast of California," remarked Linda Krop, Chief Counsel of the Environmental Defense Center (EDC), the group that negotiated the deal on behalf of Get Oil Out! and Citizens Planning Association of Santa Barbara County. "We therefore urge the State Lands Commission to approve this project on Thursday, and move the state one step closer to achieving long-term protection for the coast."

Among the benefits Krop suggested would be lost to the state if the project is denied are:

- 1) The four offshore platforms in question will be allowed to continue to operate indefinitely.
- 2) The presence of these platforms will be used to support new federal oil leasing, as proposed by the Minerals Management Service and the oil industry.
- 3) The state will lose the opportunity to permanently protect nearly 4,000 acres of valuable coastal land.
- 4) The community would lose the agreement to decommission the Lompoc Oil and Gas Plant which is located near a residential area and the Gaviota processing plant visible from Highway 101.
- 5) Santa Barbara County will lose as much as \$313 million in property tax revenue.
- 6) The state will lose as much as \$5 billion in royalty revenue - \$100 million of which will be made available during this budget year.

The hearing will take place on Thursday, January 29, at 12:00 noon at the Hotel Mar Monte, Cabrillo Room, 2d Floor, 1111 Cabrillo Boulevard, Santa Barbara, CA.

Atts: Support letter and map

**SIERRA CLUB * SURFRIDER FOUNDATION * THE OCEAN CONSERVANCY
PACIFIC COAST FEDERATION OF FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS * THE OTTER
PROJECT * LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA * PLANNING AND
CONSERVATION LEAGUE * ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE CENTER * GET OIL OUT! *
CITIZENS PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY * LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA * COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL
COUNCIL * GAVIOTA COAST CONSERVANCY * SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON * LA
PURISIMA AUDUBON * SURFRIDER FOUNDATION, SANTA BARBARA CHAPTER *
SURFRIDER FOUNDATION, VENTURA CHAPTER * HEAL THE OCEAN * LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA * LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA
MARIA VALLEY * SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ACTION NETWORK * CONCEPTION
COAST PROJECT * CARPINTERIA VALLEY ASSOCIATION * SANTA YNEZ VALLEY
ALLIANCE * FRIENDS OF THE ELLWOOD COAST**

January 27, 2009

Lt. Governor John Garamendi, Chair
California State Lands Commission
100 Howe Ave, Suite 100 South
Sacramento, CA 95825-8202

RE: **Tranquillon Ridge Project - SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Garamendi and Commissioners:

We, the undersigned environmental groups, hereby express our support for the proposed Tranquillon Ridge project, as modified through an agreement forged with some environmental groups. **This agreement guarantees a definite end to certain offshore oil and gas production that would not otherwise be required.**

We support the Tranquillon Ridge agreement because this agreement will result in the shut down of four existing federal platforms and two onshore processing facilities. Without this agreement, these facilities can be operated indefinitely, threatening our coast with serious impacts and perpetuating global climate change. This agreement between Santa Barbara-based environmental groups and PXP is consistent with the California Coastal Sanctuary Act and would benefit the State of California by terminating existing offshore oil production, reducing the risk of new federal leasing, guaranteeing carbon neutrality for direct project emissions, and conveying approximately 4,000 acres of land for public conservation purposes.

This agreement is consistent with support for the federal moratorium against new leasing in federal waters off our coast. Reinstatement of the federal moratorium would prevent the development of *new* oil fields and leases, while the Tranquillon Ridge agreement will end *existing* production of two federal oil fields, Point Pedernales and Point Arguello. Both strategies are necessary to protect the California coast from the risks of offshore oil and gas

development, and to protect the environment from climate change. ***In addition, the Tranquillon Ridge project will help prevent new federal leasing by eliminating critical infrastructure.***

The cornerstone of the Tranquillon Ridge agreement is the inclusion of an end date for not only Platform Irene and the Lompoc Oil and Gas Plant (LOGP), the facilities being used for the proposed project, but also for three additional platforms and one additional processing facility on the Gaviota Coast in southern Santa Barbara County. The three Point Arguello platforms and Gaviota onshore facility will be shut down in 2018. Platform Irene and the LOGP will be shut down in 2022. Without this agreement, especially under a scenario of high gas prices, production from these operations could continue indefinitely.

The end date for the Tranquillon Ridge project will be enforceable by multiple agencies and private parties. For example, the agreement with the environmental parties can be enforced through a court action if necessary. In addition, the County of Santa Barbara has already added the end date in its Final Development Plan for the project, and can enforce this condition. The agreement also requires PXP to include the end date in its applications for the Santa Barbara County APCD Permits to Operate, California Coastal Commission coastal development permits and the State Lands Commission leases. As such, each of these entities would be able to enforce the end date.

Finally, the Lompoc lands, which contain the LOGP, are required to be conveyed to a grantee for conservation purposes by both the agreement with the environmental parties and PXP's agreement with The Trust for Public Land (TPL). As such, this requirement is enforceable by both the environmental parties and TPL. As a result, we believe that the environmental community, as well as the regulatory agencies, can be assured that this project, as conditioned, will end no later than December 31, 2022. On the other hand, without the Tranquillon Ridge project, Platform Irene and the LOGP, as well as the additional platforms and processing facility on the Gaviota Coast could continue to operate well beyond 2022.

Other important factors that make this project a win for the environment include: 1) the fact that with the exception of the new wells being drilled from Platform Irene into the Tranquillon Ridge field, NO NEW facilities will be needed for this project; 2) the project will be carbon neutral as required by both the agreement with environmental parties and the County's permit; 3) several hundred acres of onshore production wells will be shut down; 4) PXP will donate an additional \$1.5 million to the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District for a transit bus technology program, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants in the County; and 5) almost 4,000 acres of land will be donated to TPL in three installments, commencing with commercial production and concluding after December 31, 2022 (following required cleanup of the parcels by PXP). These lands include approximately 3,700 acres that will be added to the state's Burton Mesa Ecological Reserve and up to 200 acres that will be made available along the Gaviota Coast.

It is for all of these reasons that we support this landmark agreement and encourage the State Lands Commission to approve this project.

January 27, 2009
Environmental support letter re Tranquillon Ridge Project
Page 3 of 4

Sincerely,

Paul Mason, Deputy Director, Sierra Club CA
Sierra Club

Traci Sheehan, Executive Director
Planning and Conservation League

Janis R. Hirohama, President
League of Women Voters of California

Chad Nelsen, Executive Director
Surfrider Foundation

Kaitilin Gaffney, Pacific Ecosystem Protection Project Director
The Ocean Conservancy

Zeke Grader, Executive Director
Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations

Steve Shimek, Executive Director
The Otter Project

Linda Krop, Chief Counsel
Environmental Defense Center

Abraham Powell, President
Get Oil Out!

Steve Dunn, President
Citizens Planning Association of Santa Barbara County

Dave Davis, Executive Director
Community Environmental Council

Tim Allison, Chair
League of Conservation Voters of Santa Barbara

Chris Lange, President
Friends of the Ellwood Coast

Mike Lunsford, President
Gaviota Coast Conservancy

Hillary Hauser, Executive Director,
Heal The Ocean

January 27, 2009
Environmental support letter re Tranquillon Ridge Project
Page 4 of 4

Paul Keller, President
La Purisima Audubon

Darlene Chirman, President
Santa Barbara Audubon

Linda K. Phillips, Ph.D., President
League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara

Joan Leon, President
League of Women Voters of Santa Maria Valley

Deborah Brasket, Executive Director,
Santa Barbara County Action Network

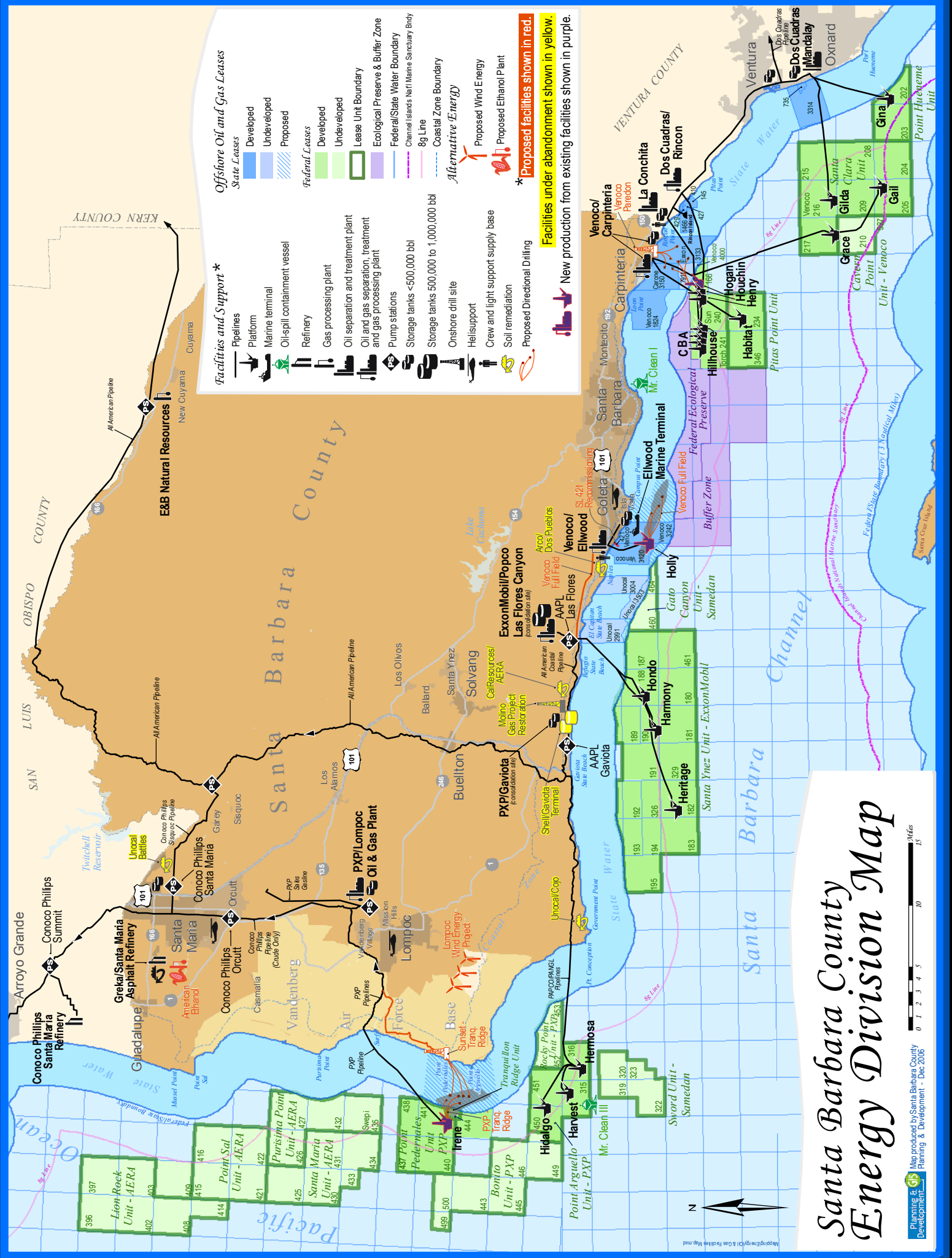
Scott Bull, Chair
Surfrider Foundation, Santa Barbara Chapter

Paul Jenkin
Surfrider Foundation, Ventura Campaign Coordinator

Greg Helms, Chair
Conception Coast Project

Vera Bensen, President
Carpinteria Valley Association

Mark Oliver, President
Santa Ynez Valley Alliance



Santa Barbara County Energy Division Map

Map produced by Santa Barbara County Planning & Development - Dec 2006

- Offshore Oil and Gas Leases**
- State Leases**
- Developed
 - Undeveloped
 - Proposed
- Federal Leases**
- Developed
 - Undeveloped
 - Lease Unit Boundary
 - Ecological Preserve & Buffer Zone
 - Federal/State Water Boundary
 - Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Boundary
 - 8g Line
 - Coastal Zone Boundary
 - Alternative Energy
- Facilities and Support ***
- Pipelines
 - Platform
 - Marine terminal
 - Oil spill containment vessel
 - Refinery
 - Gas processing plant
 - Oil separation and treatment plant
 - Oil and gas separation, treatment and gas processing plant
 - Pump stations
 - Storage tanks <500,000 bbl
 - Storage tanks 500,000 to 1,000,000 bbl
 - Onshore drill site
 - Helisupport
 - Crew and light support supply base
 - Soil remediation
 - Proposed Directional Drilling
 - Proposed Wind Energy
 - Proposed Ethanol Plant
- * Proposed facilities shown in red.
- Facilities under abandonment shown in yellow.
- New production from existing facilities shown in purple.