



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 16, 2010

Contacts:

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ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS CELEBRATE WITHDRAWAL OF OIL DRILLING APPLICATION

Venoco Withdraws Ellwood Full Field Development Project

Santa Barbara, CA - Environmental groups received welcome news this week – Venoco, Inc. has withdrawn its application to expand oil drilling in the Ellwood Field offshore Santa Barbara County. In a letter dated November 9, 2010, Venoco informed the California State Lands Commission that “Venoco, Inc. hereby withdraws its application for its Ellwood Full Field Development Project. Venoco does not intend to pursue the Project.” (See attached letter.)

Since 2000, the Environmental Defense Center (EDC), a public interest environmental law firm, has represented four environmental groups (Get Oil Out!, Sierra Club, Citizens for Goleta Valley, and Citizens Planning Association of Santa Barbara County) in opposing Venoco’s plans to expand its drilling operations from Platform Holly near the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) and Ellwood Mesa.

“Venoco’s decision to withdraw its Ellwood Full Field drilling plan is a direct result of massive community opposition,” exclaimed Linda Krop, Chief Counsel of the EDC. “The Environmental Defense Center and our clients raised significant concerns regarding the safety and environmental risks associated with expanding oil drilling so close to our shore.”

The Ellwood Full Field Development Project would have allowed Venoco to drill 40 new wells from Platform Holly into an area known as the South Ellwood Field. Production from the project would have lasted until approximately 2040. In response to Venoco’s proposal, EDC and its clients raised concerns at several hearings and workshops sponsored by the State Lands Commission, County of Santa Barbara and City of Goleta.

The groups pointed out the safety risks that would be caused by using an aging platform (Platform Holly was installed in 1966, and was temporarily shut down in 1999 as a result of hazardous gas releases), and the potential threat of an oil spill immediately adjacent to the University of California’s Coal Oil Point Reserve, UCSB Marine Science Institute, Devereux Slough and Ellwood Mesa Open Space park in Goleta.

The groups also objected to Venoco’s plan because it would have allowed oil drilling within the California Coastal Sanctuary and would have violated an agreement made by Venoco’s predecessor, ARCO, in which ARCO quitclaimed its state leases in this area in exchange for

additional drilling rights offshore Long Beach. The Sanctuary was established in 1994 for the express purpose of preventing any new oil leasing in State waters, which extend three miles seaward of the shore. The area into which Venoco sought to drill is currently part of the Sanctuary.

“Get Oil Out! has been working for more than 40 years to protect our coast from offshore oil development,” stated Abe Powell, President of Get Oil Out!. “I’m glad Venoco finally saw the light and deep-sixed this terrible project.”

“We are not willing to accept any more risk than we already have,” proclaimed Steve Dunn, President of Citizens Planning Association and commercial fisherman. “The BP disaster in the Gulf is a reminder of the inherent risk of offshore oil drilling. We applaud Venoco’s decision not to proceed with this project.”

Mike Wondolowski, President of Citizens for Goleta Valley, stated, “Venoco’s proposal would have endangered Goleta’s coastline, and would have involved drilling within the California Coastal Sanctuary. Both of these are completely unacceptable.”

Atts: Venoco, Inc. letter to State Lands Commission
Map of project area

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The Environmental Defense Center protects and enhances the local environment through education, advocacy, and legal action and works primarily within Santa Barbara, Ventura and San Luis Obispo counties. Since 1977, EDC has empowered community based organizations to advance environmental protection. Program areas include protecting coast and ocean resources, open spaces and wildlife, and human and environmental health. For more information, please see www.EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org

Get Oil Out! was formed in the wake of the Santa Barbara Oil Spill of 1969. GOO!’s mission is to protect the Santa Barbara Channel and coastline from all environmental, economic and esthetic encroachments by petroleum development. For more information, please see www.getoilout.org/index.htm.

The Los Padres Sierra Club serves Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, encompassing the area from National Forest Wilderness areas of the San Ynez Mountains to the Channel Islands National Park in the Santa Barbara Channel. The Club’s issues range from traditional Sierra Club concerns with forest management and wilderness to the urban and growing problems with land use and energy development. For more information, please see lospadres.sierraclub.org/index.html.

Citizens for Goleta Valley is a grass-roots organization that promotes comprehensive planning to help build healthy communities. CGV is active in monitoring oil and gas extraction in Santa Barbara County to ensure that it is developed with as few impacts on our quality of life as possible.

Citizens Planning Association of Santa Barbara County was established to promote responsible land-use planning and environmental protection in Santa Barbara County. CPA works to protect the unmatched natural assets of Santa Barbara County through cooperation with private groups and public offices, community education, and participation in planning and permitting processes. For more information, please see www.citizensplanning.org



November 9, 2010

California State Lands Commission
100 Howe Ave., Suite 100-South
Sacramento, CA 95825
Attention: Eric Gillies

Re: Venoco Full Field Development Project
State Clearinghouse No. 2006061146, CSLC EIR No. 738

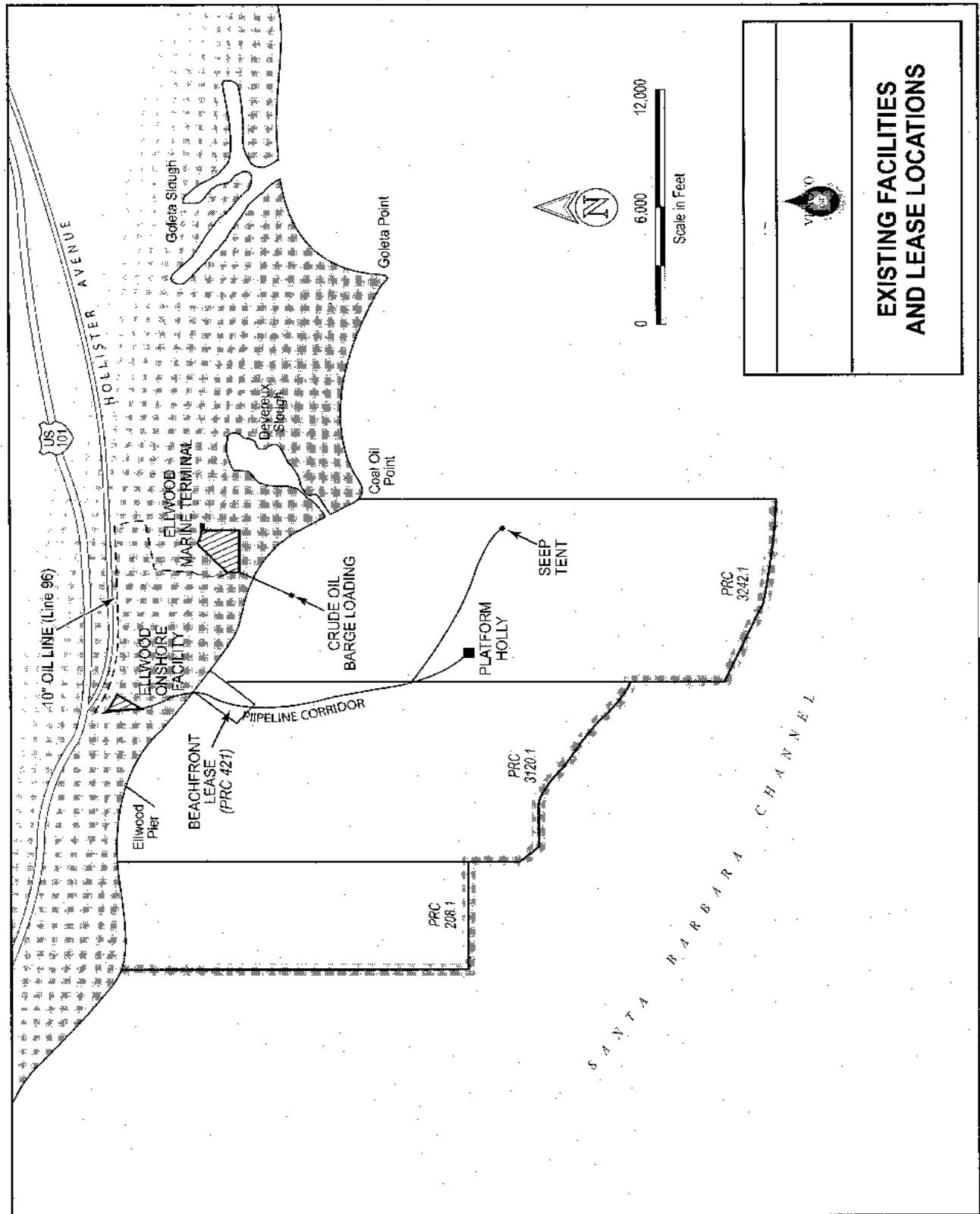
Dear Mr. Gillies:

This is to advise you that Venoco, Inc. hereby withdraws its application for its Ellwood Full Field Development Project. Venoco does not intend to pursue the Project.

Sincerely,

Edward J. O'Donnell
Senior Vice President

cc: Mr. Dean Dusette, County of Santa Barbara
Ms. Alison Dettmer, California Coastal Commission
Ms. Laura Vlk, City of Goleta



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