



**environmental**  
DEFENSE CENTER



Laurie Bailey Photography

## SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

### IN FOR THE LONG HAUL

There is no question that California's south central coast is a treasured spot to live, work and play. The Santa Barbara Channel has been called the Galapagos of North America for its remarkable diversity of animal and plant life, our views are unparalleled and you could spend years and not be able to visit all our abundant trails and open space. Yes, the geography and diversity were all a gift, but keeping this beautiful place intact has taken a lot of work.

The Environmental Defense Center has been in the middle of these efforts for 37 years. Over that time, **we have represented 114 of our region's leading organizations** in stopping irresponsible oil and gas development, protecting marine mammals and other threatened wildlife, and ensuring clean air, clean water and open space. More than any other factor, what defines EDC is that when we take on a project, we are in it for as long as it takes. Here are a few examples that demonstrate the need for us to stay engaged and vigilant:

- The Environmental Defense Center's work began in 1977 as a response to the devastating 1969 Santa Barbara Oil Spill, and we continue working today to ensure this never happens again onshore or offshore. New technologies like fracking and acidizing are just the latest threats that we have had to confront to protect our environment and communities.
- We have been working to protect More Mesa from development since 1979 and Naples since 1999! The fact that both of these important places remain undeveloped is a tremendous victory for EDC, our clients and all the organizations and individuals who have dedicated so many years to preserving one of the last great undeveloped coastlines in southern California.
- Ever since 1987 the Environmental Defense Center has worked to get the "no-otter zone" off the books and to allow the southern sea otter to regain a foothold throughout its natural range. In 2009 we filed a lawsuit on behalf of the The Otter Project that resulted in the termination of this regulation in 2012, but our work continued into this year, when another attempt to banish otters was finally defeated.

Every time we agree to take on a case, we are making a commitment to represent your voice and see it through – whether that means six months or 20 years. The Environmental Defense Center can only make these commitments because of the support we know we can count on from you.

Thank you for your continued, generous support for our work.



More Mesa is one of the largest and most pristine coastal open spaces currently threatened with development in Santa Barbara County. Photo by Erin Feinblatt

# IN FOR THE LONG HAUL:

## EDC'S CURRENT CASES AND THEIR HISTORIC BEGINNINGS

1969



**OIL SPILL PLATFORM A:** Led to the birth of the environmental movement including the first Earth Day celebration and adoption of new state and federal environmental protection laws.

1984



**VENTURA RIVER:** EDC begins working to protect this critical Ventura County waterway. Photo: Karen Bednorz

1991



**MISSION CREEK:** EDC initiates work to revitalize creek and protect endangered steelhead trout. Photo: Brian Trautwein

1978



**COMMUNITY HOTLINE:** EDC begins providing guidance and referrals to community members with environmental concerns. Photo: EDC

1987



**SEA OTTER PROTECTION:** EDC begins work to end disastrous "no-otter zone" policy and allow sea otters to return to their native range. Photo: Jeff Foott

1992



**SANTA YNEZ RIVER:** EDC pursues efforts to help preserve wetlands and endangered species. Photo: Brian Trautwein

1970

1980

1990

1969

1977



**ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE CENTER OPENS:** Founded as a response to the Santa Barbara Oil Spill, EDC begins as a nonprofit, public interest, environmental law firm.

1979



**MORE MESA:** EDC begins helping protect one of the most pristine and largest, remaining open spaces threatened with development in Santa Barbara County. Photo: More Mesa Preservation

1991



**FARMLAND PROTECTION:** EDC first focuses on strengthening protections for farmland, beginning with support for robust agricultural protection policies in the Santa Barbara County general plan. Photo: Mike Roberts

1994



**GAVIOTA COAST:** EDC helps found Gaviota Coast Conservancy and begins protecting this majestic coastal stretch from development. Photo: Erin Feinblatt

Over the last 37 years, the Environmental Defense Center has represented 114 different nonprofit organizations on critical environmental issues. As this timeline demonstrates, once we have taken on a case, we are in it for the long haul and you can count on us to be here. Regardless of how long it takes, we are committed to protecting our region's coast and ocean resources, open space and wildlife and community and environmental health.

**1998**



**CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY:** EDC begins representing the conservation community on the Sanctuary Advisory Council, advocating for Marine Reserves and other protections for ocean wildlife and resources. Photo: Claire Fackler, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries

**2007**



**WHALES & SHIPPING:** Five endangered blue whales killed because of ship strikes leads EDC to begin work to move shipping lanes and protect whales in the Santa Barbara Channel. Photo: John Calambokitis

**2013**



**CAMP 4:** EDC begins work to ensure environmental resources are protected on 1,400 acres of important open space in the Santa Ynez Valley. Photo: Larry Hunt

**2011**



**CONEJO CREEK:** EDC begins working to protect 740 acres of important farmland and wildlife habitat in Camarillo from being converted to 2,500 homes and massive commercial development. Photo: Bob Merrilees

**1999**



**NAPLES:** EDC signs on to fight massive, irresponsible development on this iconic Gaviota Coast open space. Photo: Branden Aroyan

**2000**

**2010**

**2014**

**1999**



**CLEAN WATER ACT (CWA):** EDC prioritizes protection against polluted stormwater runoff and uses CWA to force clean-up of oil platforms and polluting industries. Photo: Brian Segee

**2008**



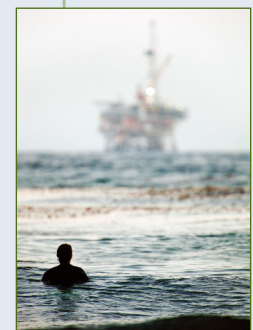
**ORMOND BEACH WETLANDS:** 90% of California's coastal wetlands have been lost over time, but EDC prioritized protection of this vital coastal spot in Ventura County. Photo: Kurt Preissler

**2011**



**FRACKING:** EDC uncovers fracking taking place in Santa Barbara County and helps lead the way to the first local fracking ordinance in CA. Photo: EDC

**2013**



**ACIDIZING:** EDC discovers the use of hydrochloric and hydrofluoric acid to increase oil production from Platform Holly, just two miles offshore Goleta. Photo: Erin Feinblatt

**2000**



**CA MARINE PROTECTED AREAS:** EDC begins educating community and advocating for these critical underwater wilderness areas. Photo: Erin Feinblatt

## WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

### SAFE PASSAGE: PROTECTING WHALES AND CLEAN AIR

Since 2007, after five endangered blue whales were killed in the Santa Barbara Channel because of ship strikes, the Environmental Defense Center has been working to protect the many species of great whales that pass through or live off our coast, including the largest seasonal population of blue whales in the world. We are now working side-by-side with the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary to encourage ships to slow down in the Channel. By collaborating with agencies, shipping companies, the Navy, the Coast Guard and other concerned individuals and organizations, we look to both protect whales and reduce dangerous air pollution from shipping – the greatest producer of Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) in the County - that has been impacting residents for years.



Every year thousands of large container ships transit the Santa Barbara Channel, overlapping with a critical feeding zone for great whales. Photo by John Calambokitis

### CONSERVATION AND AGRICULTURE: WORKING TOGETHER



Photo by Maggie Hall

Preserving important agricultural land in Santa Barbara County continues to be central to our mission at the Environmental Defense Center. For the last five years, our Open-Space Preservation Educational Network program has been working to build bridges between agriculture and conservation. Only by working together have we been able to win important victories like the recent success preserving agricultural uses on the Mosby property near Lompoc, adoption of the Ag Buffer rule and so many others. In December, EDC unveiled a report that we hired LoaCom to put together examining opportunities for these two communities to continue to work together. The full report, *Win-Win: In Pursuit of Collaborative Policy Development for Santa Barbara County Agriculture*, can be seen on our website.

## SUSTAINING SUSTAINABILITY

The Environmental Defense Center was founded as a response to the tragic 1969 Santa Barbara Oil Spill and stopping irresponsible oil projects remains one of our most urgent priorities. With risky new technologies like acidizing, fracking and cyclic steaming on the rise, and with more than 15 billion barrels of unrecovered oil in the Monterey Shale beneath our feet, this priority is unlikely to change. Today, we are asking you to help EDC stand up to the next generation of oil threats by becoming a sustaining member. It's easy. Just return the enclosed envelope or visit [EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org](http://EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org) and click to give \$20 or even \$10 per month. Can we count on you to help ensure EDC is ready to fight back to protect our climate and communities?



It is your support that has allowed us to do so much to protect the environment of the south central coast. [Please join us as a sustaining member to help us continue this important work.](#)

## ANOTHER OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING PROPOSAL?



Vandenberg Air Force Base is currently assessing a proposal to slant drill for oil from onshore into a reserve offshore.

In November 2013 EDC formally expressed our concern to the Air Force on behalf of several environmental organizations, objecting to a proposal by a private company, Sunset Exploration, to slant drill for oil from a location on Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB) into offshore reserves. This proposal would require development of new oil drilling and production facilities, and would threaten the magnificent coast near Point Arguello, offshore state Marine Protected Areas, and the Santa Ynez River with a potential oil spill. As the Base conducts an internal assessment of the proposal, EDC continues to urge them to refrain from opening the Base to private oil drilling and to ensure protection of the unique and sensitive environmental resources, and to avoid potential negative impacts to our clean air, clean water and public health.

## AVICTORY AGAINST VENOCO OIL DEVELOPMENT

For years, the Environmental Defense Center and our clients have worked to prevent Venoco from expanding oil development offshore Ellwood, near UCSB and Ellwood Mesa. Just two years after celebrating the departure of the last oil barge to ever leave the Ellwood Marine Terminal, EDC celebrated another success as the State Lands Commission (SLC) voted to require additional analysis of Venoco's request to resume drilling on the Ellwood Pier. Due to the facility's aging infrastructure and the risk of oil spill, EDC and our clients oppose this project and urged the SLC to require Venoco to analyze processing the oil and gas at Las Flores Canyon, the one designated processing site on the south coast. Up until this hearing, the only two options considered for processing this oil were the unsightly Ellwood Onshore Facility, located between Sandpiper Golf Course and the Bacara Resort Hotel, or on the Ellwood Pier itself, both of which are unacceptable to EDC and our clients who want to protect the environment and this public recreation area. The SLC also responded to EDC's request to ensure specific measures for mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.



Venoco is proposing to resume oil production on the Ellwood Pier (pictured here), which was shut down after an oil spill occurred in 1994. Venoco proposes to process the oil and gas at the aging Ellwood Onshore Facility located between Bacara Resort Hotel and Sandpiper Golf Course. Photo by Linda Krop

# THANK YOU GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!

## Stewardship Circle

Stewardship Circle Members include donors who contribute \$1,000 or more to EDC in a 12-month period. This currently includes the following:

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**When you are ready to think about your bequest, EDC can help you leave a legacy of a healthy environment. Contact us for more information.**

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**MISSION STATEMENT:** The Environmental Defense Center protects and enhances the local environment through education, advocacy, and legal action.

**FOCUS:** Since 1977 we have empowered community-based organizations to advance environmental protection. Our program areas include protecting coast and ocean resources, open spaces and wildlife, and human and environmental health. We primarily work within Santa Barbara, Ventura and San Luis Obispo counties.

## DON'T MISS



We hope you will join us for this year's annual benefit event, *Green & Blue: A Coastal Celebration*, held Sunday, June 8, 2014 in the gardens at Rancho La Patera & Stow House in Goleta. *Green & Blue* refers to the majestic Santa Barbara Channel and the precious coastal lands that frame the sea, providing homes and recreation for all of us to enjoy. We look forward to more than 400 guests joining us for an afternoon of hors d'oeuvres, wine, music, silent and live auctions, and the sale of artwork by prestigious Oak Group artists. We are also very excited to announce our short program will include a special guest appearance by **Toad the Wet Sprocket**, a homegrown band that has found international fame and is celebrating their 25th Anniversary this year, as well as the presentation of our environmental hero awards to Citizens for Goleta Valley and the Goleta Valley Land Trust.

## tgif: Your Summer of Fun



MAY 9 | JULY 11 | SEPTEMBER 12 | OCTOBER 10



Santa Barbara's best-loved summer event series –our tgif!– has already begun with our season opener on May 9th, and boy was it fun! But don't you worry, there are three more events that you can attend. Not only will you enjoy a frosty beer or a glass of local wine, tasty appetizers, and live music with 200-300 of your closest friends, but you will have a chance to learn a little about some of the amazing environmental work being done throughout our communities—what more could you ask for?