



FALL 2016 NEWSLETTER

PHILLIPS 66 OIL TRAINS – A LONGER TRACK

Oil trains have made big news in Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties over the last couple of years. Those who have seen these ominous trains pull through town don't forget the experience, and sadly the news has provided regular reminders of the risks they pose. Between March 2013 and May 2015, there were more than a dozen separate derailments of oil trains in the US and Canada – with eight of these leading to explosions or fires. And yet a major expansion of crude by rail is a distinct possibility in our tri-counties due to the Phillips 66 Rail Spur Project. This project imposes enormous threats to all the cities and communities along the rail corridor, not to mention the coastal bluffs, beaches and precious open spaces and recreation areas that we all depend upon. The risk stems not just from potential fires and explosions but from significantly increased air pollution, threat of spills, and additional greenhouse gas emissions.

If completed, the project would open the door to at least three and as many as five oil trains per week, each hauling around 80 rail cars up to one mile in length from end to end, each carrying a total of more than two million gallons of chemically treated heavy crude oil. Not only are homes, businesses and hospitals at risk from this project, many commuters face risks as the tracks in many places run adjacent to our major transportation corridors. In addition, many prized beaches and parks including Ventura's Surfer's Point, the Carpinteria Bluffs, Elwood Mesa and the Gaviota Coast are located within the potential blast and evacuation zones which would stretch one mile from the tracks.

EDC has attended seven hearings on this issue just this year, representing Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, Stand, Center for Biological Diversity and ourselves in an effort to convince the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission to deny this dangerous and unnecessary project. We will continue to oppose this project before the County Board of Supervisors and California Coastal Commission, a process which will likely last well into 2017.

Friends of EDC have been both generous and active in this effort. Your support has made an enormous difference and we look forward to working with you in 2017 to finally defeat oil trains in our region.



Phillips 66 proposal increases risks of oil spills and explosions and threatens our communities safety. Photo by Dave Arntson



WHY THIS MATTERS

This would be the first new or expanded offshore oil lease in California waters since the 1969 Oil Spill! In addition, these new wells would drill into the California Sanctuary. The new wells would be added to an aging infrastructure, which EDC discovered has already been used for acid well stimulation (acidizing) - a highly intensive oil extraction technique never contemplated when the platform was built. EDC contends that Venoco's new drilling shouldn't even be an option, as the rights to access this area were surrendered decades ago.

EDC has also been working for years to shut down processing at the EOF, which has had safety problems in the past and also sits on land zoned for recreation. Both Platform Holly and the EOF have been operating since the 1960s, far longer than expected. In the wake of the 2015 Refugio Oil Spill, this is no time to extend the life of aging and unnecessary oil infrastructure.



WHAT'S NEXT & WHAT YOU CAN DO?

Platform Holly

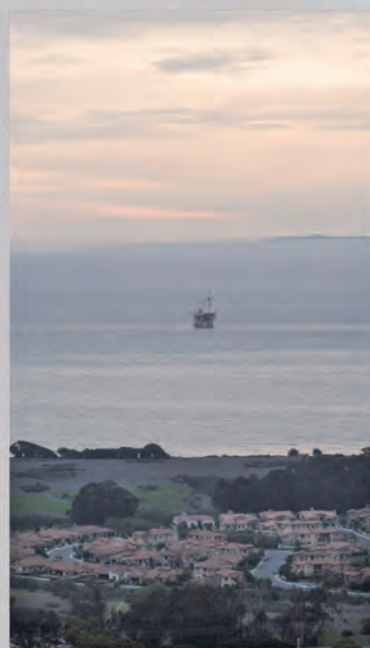
The California State Lands Commission is the primary agency deciding on Venoco's proposed drilling expansion. EDC will complete our analysis of the drilling proposal and then submit formal comments on behalf of our clients at Sierra Club, Get Oil Out! (GOO!), and Citizens Planning Association.

Be sure to sign up for EDC's emails at EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org and we will send you details for how you can speak up, as well as critical hearings for you to attend. We need your help.

Ellwood Onshore Facility (EOF)

The City of Goleta commissioned a report which demonstrated their ability to phase out the EOF, as Venoco realized its return on investments back in 2009. EDC will need your help to convince the City Council to establish an official end date and shut it down!

For more information visit EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org or write to us at EDC@EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org.



VENOCO'S OFFSHORE OIL EXPANSION SCHEME

Venoco is proposing new offshore oil drilling from Platform Holly, off the coast from UCSB and Isla Vista. The project would include six new wells, reaching more than four miles into waters so diverse that this area is often referred to as the Galapagos of North America. Oil from these new wells would flow by undersea pipeline for processing at the Ellwood Onshore Facility (EOF), near the Ellwood Mesa open space, Haskell's Beach, Ellwood Elementary School, and the Bacara Resort and Spa. The project would extend the life of this aging processing facility and the offshore platform.

ELLWOOD
SCHOOL

SANDPIPER
GOLF CLUB

MONARCH
BUTTERFLY GROVE

ELLWOOD
MESA

PLATFORM
HOLLY



WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

TEEMING WITH NEW TEAM MEMBERS



Good news comes in threes! First, former staff attorney turned EDC Board President, Alicia Roessler, has rejoined staff as an attorney and is working on the Gaviota Coast Plan, onshore oil issues, and much more. Then Chloe McConnell, after 18 months on the team, accepted a promotion to Development Coordinator, charged with helping raise funds to support our program work. Finally, we are thrilled to introduce Kaleena Quarles who recently joined us as our Office Manager/Event Coordinator, running our TGIF! series and facilities management. We are lucky to have all three on our team.

Alicia Roessler, Kaleena Quarles, Chloe McConnell

DIRTY POWER PLANTS

The burden of three dirty, fossil fuel power plants currently threatens the community of Oxnard and its beaches. EDC is working alongside our clients and partners to prevent the addition of a fourth: NRG's proposed Puente Power Project. Not only would NRG's new plant be built on environmentally sensitive habitat, including the Santa Clara River mouth and wetlands, but reports show the site is at risk of sea-level rise, beach erosion, and tsunamis. We reached an important milestone when the Coastal Commission recommended that the CA Energy Commission (CEC) relocate the project, however ultimately final decision is up to the CEC. With a final decision set for spring 2017, EDC will continue working to protect Oxnard's coastal resources, and advocating for alternative energy solutions to these dirty fossil fuel projects.



NRG's Mandalay Bay Power Plant is one of three on the beaches of Oxnard – we do not need a fourth! Photo by Linda Krop

"[SITING THE POWER PLANT HERE] CERTAINLY IS NOT LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY WITH THE UNCERTAINTY OF HOW CLIMATE CHANGE IS GOING TO IMPACT OUR COASTLINE. THE PERMITTING OF THIS PLANT WOULD BE A RECKLESS APPROACH."

**-BRIAN SEGEE,
EDC SENIOR ATTORNEY
EENEWS**

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

As a public interest law firm, it is important that we know what YOU care about! Please consider completing our anonymous online survey and tell us about your interests, ideas, and current involvement with the Environmental Defense Center. With your input, we hope to be even more effective in our work protecting our local environment. Please help us by taking 10 minutes to complete this survey by December 23, and have a chance at winning a Patagonia Nano Puff vest embroidered with EDC's logo.

Visit EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org today to take the survey.



Give us 10 minutes of your time and get a chance to win a Patagonia Nano Puff Vest.



DETERMINING THE FUTURE OF THE GAVIOTA COAST

A world renowned biodiversity hotspot and one of the most ecologically diverse regions on the planet, the 38 mile-long Gaviota Coast is one of southern California's last remaining stretches of undeveloped rural coastline. EDC has dedicated more than 20 years toward securing long-term preservation of this precious coastline, however it is still under threat as the Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors begins review of the final Gaviota Coast Plan in November. EDC will continue to push for stronger policies to ensure preservation of the Gaviota Coast for generations to come.

EDC has spent decades working to preserve the Gaviota Coast – and we won't let up now! Photo by Christina McGinnis

EDC BOARD CONTINUES TO GROW

EDC is thrilled to welcome three established leaders to our board of directors: Jim Hammock, Diane Wondolowski and Jim Salzman. Jim Hammock is a 40 year veteran real estate appraiser with a long history supporting land preservation, Diane Wondolowski is the CFO and COO at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and a trained CPA, returning to EDC's board after a 13 year absence, and Jim Salzman is the Donald Bren Distinguished Professor of Environmental Law and a nationally recognized expert on environmental law. Each of our new board members brings expertise and years of nonprofit experience to EDC. Please join us in welcoming our new leaders!



Jim Hammock



Diane Wondolowski



Jim Salzman

FULL HOUSE

It was a full house here in our Santa Barbara office this summer, with the wonderful addition of two law clerks, Hudson Hornick and Raven Rutledge. A student at Santa Barbara and Ventura Colleges of Law, Hudson helped conduct research on water management, while Raven, joining us from Hofstra University School of Law, assisted with research on state and federal requirements to evaluate the response of the Refugio Oil Spill and identify measures to prevent future spills. Their contributions were much appreciated, and we miss them already.



Raven Rutledge and Hudson Hornick joined our team as our summer law clerks.

EDC AND PARTNERS AWARDED FOR CLEARING OUR AIR



Kristen Hislop, EDC's Marine Conservation Program Director, with award in hand!

This summer the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency honored EDC and our partners, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, Santa Barbara and Ventura County Air Pollution Control Districts, and National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, with a national Clean Air Excellence Award for our work reducing cargo ship speeds in the Santa Barbara Channel to cut air pollution and protect endangered whales. Shipping is a significant source of air pollution in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, and interactions between ships and whales has led to many fatalities in our region. In close collaboration with our community partners, EDC continues to focus on ways to reduce these impacts.

PROTECTING ENDANGERED SPECIES FROM OFFSHORE FRACKING

In 2011, EDC discovered that the risky oil extraction techniques of fracking and acidizing were taking place from platforms in the Santa Barbara Channel. Earlier this year, as a result of an EDC lawsuit, a fracking moratorium was put into place as the first ever environmental review of these techniques was conducted. Unfortunately, in May federal agencies released a flawed report in which they failed to consult wildlife agencies regarding the admitted potential impacts to at least 25 threatened and endangered species, including whales, sea otters, sea turtles, abalone, and marine and coastal birds. EDC is now mounting a legal challenge to the agencies' failure to consult under the Endangered Species Act and considering other potential legal and regulatory strategies to protect our ocean environment.



Photo by Barbara LaCorte, Channel Islands Naturalist Corps



Owen Bailey, EDC's Environmental Hero Charles Lester, and Linda Krop



Clint & Corrine Unander and Geoff April

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Bendy White & Kathy Snow, David Landecker, Laurel & Mark Heintz, Renner Wunderlich, Hans Cole



Nearly 500 guests joined us in the gardens at Rancho La Patera & Stow House



environmental
DEFENSE CENTER

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EDC STAFF

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Linda Krop, *Chief Counsel*
Pearl Lee, *Accounting Manager*
Chloe McConnell, *Development Coordinator*
Kaleena Quarles, *Office Manager/Event Coordinator*
Alicia Roessler, *Staff Attorney*
Brian Segee, *Senior Attorney*
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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.

A HERO FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

This year, EDC supporter Lee Heller was honored as the California Cox Conserves Hero! Lee is not just a hero today, but also for the future: she has updated her will to include a substantial gift that EDC will receive upon her death. This kind of Planned Giving helps ensure this environmental watchdog will be on duty for years to come. If you have any questions about how you can help EDC with a bequest or other Planned Gift, please contact Owen at 805-963-1622.



2016 Cox Hero Lee Heller with EDC's Owen Bailey, Assemblymember Das Williams, and Kirsten McLaughlin of Cox Communications.