

Offshore Drilling Could Transform Beach Towns into Oil Towns

From pipelines to refineries, the infrastructure associated with offshore drilling poses a threat to both people and wildlife by directly polluting the water, air and land. Coastal communities are united in opposition to offshore oil drilling and the associated web of pipelines and industrialization that would clog beach towns and the environment for decades. Despite widespread opposition, President Trump continues with plans to extend offshore drilling to nearly all federal waters.¹ By stopping the expansion of oil and gas activities – particularly in areas that do not have offshore drilling or onshore support infrastructure yet – we can prevent unnecessary harm to the environment and safeguard coastal communities for generations to come.



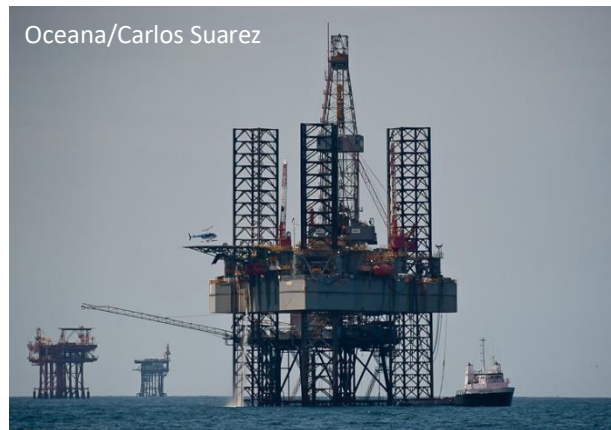
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Drilling offshore requires substantial infrastructure and elaborate oil transportation systems both offshore and onshore.² Industrialization of coastal communities subjects people to hazards like oil pollution and burdens them with an unsightly landscape. Under President Trump's current drilling plan, over 90% of federal waters would be subject to dirty and dangerous development.³ In many of these areas, there is little or no coastal infrastructure needed to sustain offshore oil and gas

production.⁴ For example, any drilling off the Atlantic Coast would require new pipelines, refineries, storage facilities and port infrastructure onshore to support the drilling rigs offshore.

Oil industrialization threatens beach towns' character and quality of life

- Opening new areas to drilling would require constructing and investing in an influx of unsightly infrastructure: rigs, pipelines, oil trains, storage facilities, canals, tankers and refineries.
- The Trump administration admitted that development in areas with limited onshore transportation networks may cause significant impacts – suggesting that oil-related infrastructure could take many years, be costly and be disruptive to the surrounding region.⁵
- Coastal tourist destinations risk turning into oil towns like those found in some Gulf Coast states. The footprint of offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico is massive: there are around 2,000 offshore platforms and more than 26,000 miles of pipeline,



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which is more than enough to circle the Earth.⁶

- The transformation can make beach towns less attractive to tourists, as well. One analysis found that counties without offshore drilling infrastructure like pipelines and refineries netted twice as many tourism dollars per capita when compared to other Gulf counties and parishes.⁷

Dangerous infrastructure permanently alters coastlines and surrounding areas

- Oil is toxic to plants and animals – both onshore and in the ocean.⁸ At each step of the production and transportation process – from rigs, pipelines or tankers – toxic substances can enter the environment and harm wildlife.
- Each year, more than 18 billion barrels of waste fluids – like radioactive materials, polluted water, sludges and sediments – are generated from oil and gas production in the U.S.⁹



- Spilled oil or fluid waste in nearshore waters could quickly damage important ecosystems like seagrass beds, mangroves, reef bottoms, salt marshes and coastal wetlands. These healthy ocean ecosystems support thriving tourism, fishing and recreation industries. Leaky oil infrastructure threatens more than 2.6 million jobs and roughly \$180 billion in GDP along the Pacific, Atlantic and Florida's Gulf Coasts.¹⁰
- Oil and gas pipeline construction in Louisiana has devastated extensive wetland and marsh habitat.¹¹ On average, the state is losing roughly a football field of wetland every 100 minutes.¹² From 1932 to 2016, Louisiana's coastal zone lost approximately 1,866 square miles, or about 25% of its area.¹³
- Laying pipeline on the seafloor or submerging it stirs up and suspends sediment in the water, which can be harmful for zooplankton, invertebrates and fish.¹⁴
- Clearing habitat for new pipelines can cause wildlife displacement and increase the risk of erosion, while the resulting infrastructure may become a barrier to wildlife.¹⁵

Refining crude oil threatens human health, in addition to the environment

- Once crude oil is extracted from wells and pumped onshore, it must be refined to produce things like gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel or heating oil.¹⁶ The refining process creates hazardous and volatile byproducts that are harmful to the environment and human health.

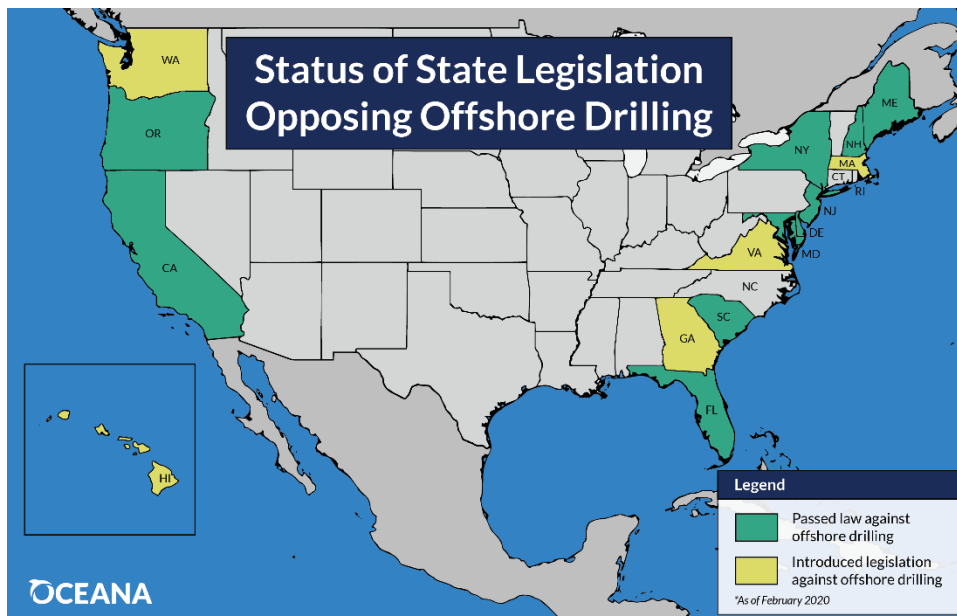
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- People who live within a half-mile radius of oil and gas facilities face potential health impacts from toxic air pollution, like an elevated risk of cancer or asthma.¹⁸
- As they operate, refineries release hazardous chemicals¹⁹ that can endanger public health – many are known to cause cancer, reproductive issues, developmental problems and can aggravate asthma.²⁰
 - Chemicals like benzene and ethylbenzene can cause cancer while toluene and xylene can cause adverse reproductive effects.²¹
 - Criteria air pollutants like particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide and sulfur dioxide can harm the respiratory system, induce asthma and reduce oxygen in the bloodstream.²²
- When fluid waste from oil and gas production is not properly disposed, it can contaminate ground or surface water and threaten people’s drinking water.²³



States are fighting back.

Recognizing the impact of expanded offshore drilling will fall on coastal business and communities, many states are fighting back. State legislatures are taking matters into their own hands and proposing measures to protect their state-controlled waters from the hazards of drilling and spilling.²⁴ The map below shows the status of state legislative efforts. Anti-drilling legislation sends a clear message: states up and down the East and West Coasts oppose President Trump’s offshore drilling plan.



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