

For Immediate Release

July 23, 2018

Contact:

Charlie Plybon, Surfrider, cplybon@surfrider.org, 541-961-8143

Kelly Timchak, local organizer, klysparks@gmail.com, 573-579-5004

Greg Ryder, local organizer, rydergreg@aol.com, 419-410-7695

Port Orford and Gold Beach pass resolutions against offshore drilling Curry County leaders urge protection of fishing, tourism and recreation businesses

Gold Beach, OR – On August 13, the City of Gold Beach unanimously passed [a resolution](#) opposing offshore oil and gas drilling and exploration off Oregon’s coast. Gold Beach is the second city in Curry County, following [Port Orford](#), and the sixth in Oregon to pass such a resolution. The cities join more than 170 on both coasts in opposing a federal proposal released in January that would open 90 percent of US waters to oil and gas drilling.

No new oil leases have been offered off the Pacific coast since 1984, but the federal proposal calls for seven from 2019 to 2024. The proposal met with immediate, bipartisan opposition, with state and local leaders around the country urging the federal government to protect the millions of jobs and businesses that rely on a healthy ocean. In Oregon, the cities of Port Orford, Newport, Lincoln City, Toledo, Yachats, and Gold Beach have passed resolutions opposing the proposal. The Siletz Tribal Council and Ports of Toledo and Newport have also passed resolutions.

“Our ocean resources and their coastal economies are worth more than the limited possibilities off the Oregon Coast for drilling,” said State Representative David Brock Smith, whose district includes more than 100 miles of coastline in the state’s southwest corner.

Representative Brock Smith joined U.S. Representative Kurt Schrader, U.S. Representative Suzanne Bonamici, State Senator Arnie Roblan, State Representative David Gomberg, and staff for U.S. Senators Merkley and Wyden for a press conference at last week’s Oregon Coast Economic Forum affirming Oregon’s commitment to protecting its coastal economy from the threat of offshore drilling.

“Gold Beach is renowned for our natural beauty, and countless local businesses rely on tourism, boating, fishing or hiking along our spectacular coastline,” said Gold Beach organizer Kelly Timchak. “We simply can’t afford the risk of an oil spill that would shut down commerce in these vital industries. That is why we are joining the chorus of Oregon voices urging protection of our coastline and coastal economy.”

A healthy ocean is a major economic engine for Oregon’s coastal communities. Beyond the many fishing-related jobs, this includes small business owners who operate bed and breakfasts, restaurants, whale watching charters, and rentals for recreational equipment such as kayaks, surfboards, diving equipment, among others. A [2011 study](#) by NaturalEquity, Surfrider, and Ecotrust found that coastal recreation alone generates \$2.4 billion per year.

“It’s great to see this momentum in Curry County at the local level,” says Charlie Plybon, Oregon Policy Manager for Surfrider Foundation. “Our community understands that oil and gas drilling are major threats to our healthy ocean economy and they are sending a clear message of unified local opposition to decision makers at the state and federal levels.”

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management received hundreds of thousands of public comments opposing the “Draft Proposed Program” for offshore drilling. After environmental reviews are conducted, the Bureau will release the “Proposed Program,” triggering another comment period. The “Final Proposed Program” is expected by 2019. The current plan includes seven lease sales on the Pacific Coast: one for Oregon and Washington, and six in California.

About Surfrider Foundation

The Surfrider Foundation is a non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our world’s oceans, waves and beaches through a powerful network. Founded in 1984 by a handful of visionary surfers in Malibu, California, the Surfrider Foundation now maintains over 500,000 supporters, activists and members, with more than 80 volunteer-led chapters and 70 clubs in the U.S., and more than 450 victories protecting our coasts. Learn more at surfrider.org.

###