Santa Barbara CHANNELKEEPER®

25 Years - Clean Water, Healthy Habitats, and Thriving Communities

Stand Up For California's Coast

The Trump administration has launched a federal review of California's Coastal Management Program (CCMP) under the Coastal Zone Management Act, an essential framework under which we have protected our coast for the last 50 years. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is currently asking for public comments on the state's oversight of offshore oil production, pipelines, spaceport infrastructure, desalination, and undersea cables.

A critical aspect of the CCMP is that in addition to providing federal funding to support the state in implementing the program, the state is delegated authority to review federal projects that have the potential to impact California's coastal resources under a "federal consistency review." This process has successfully occurred over the last nearly five decades with very few objections to federal projects. This review does provide the State an ability to review and secure changes that protect water quality, habitats, wildlife, and human needs along the coast.

This current and untimely review has escalated from recent federal-state conflicts over offshore drilling and expanded space launch projects. This targeted federal review puts at risk California's authority to effectively weigh in on federal projects and millions in annual federal funding to the Coastal Commission, the State Coastal Conservancy, and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and

Development Commission, if NOAA decertifies the state's Coastal Management Plan.

A negative review could prompt NOAA to challenge California's federal consistency authority, which allows California to object to offshore drilling in federal waters and requires federal infrastructure projects to account for coastal impacts before breaking ground. In addition, the Secretary of Commerce can suspend federal financial assistance.

There are several ways to provide public comment on NOAA's review this month. NOAA is holding an in-person meeting in Santa Monica on August 10, two virtual public meetings on August 11 and 12, and will accept written public comments submitted by email through August 22. This is a critical opportunity for community members to voice support for the agency.

Make Your Voice Heard:

In-Person Public Meeting: August 10, from 2:00 to 6 p.m., Pacific Ballroom, Hilton Santa Monica Hotel and Suites, 1707 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. To speak, register by emailing czma.california-evaluation@noaa.gov by 11:59 p.m. on August 8. Walk-in registration is available but called only after pre-registered speakers. You can also watch via livestream (comments not accepted through this channel): register for the livestream here.

A Press Conference and Community Gathering: will also be held prior to the public meeting on August 10, from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Hilton Santa Monica Hotel & Suites (1707 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Register here to attend.

Virtual Public Meetings: August 11 and 12, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. each day, via Adobe Connect. Register by 11:59 p.m. on August 10 at this link. Attendance is capped at 1,000 per session, so NOAA asks participants to attend only one day. Speakers are called in order via the Adobe Connect "raise hand" function.

Written Comments: Email czma.california-evaluation@noaa.gov with "Comments on Performance Evaluation of the California Coastal Management Program" in the subject line. Deadline: August 22, 2026, 11:59 p.m.

Talking Points:

- A solid track record. California's coastal program has a decades-long record of approving well-sited projects and objecting only when there's documented harm.
- This review is redundant. NOAA evaluated California's program in 2024 and found it successfully implemented and enforced. That report was never finalized. This new review comes less than two years later, far sooner than the typical five-to-ten-year cycle.
- State authority is at risk. A negative finding could suspend federal funding to the Coastal Commission and related agencies and lay the groundwork to challenge the "federal consistency" authority that allows California weigh in on offshore drilling and federal infrastructure projects.
- What do these protections mean to you and your community? We encourage those who live, work, surf, fish, or enjoy the coast to share your thoughts to keep California's program in place, as is.

Oppose Offshore Fracking In the Santa Barbara Channel

On Thursday, August 13, at a three-day hearing in Santa Cruz, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) will determine whether to approve a Consistency Certification for a proposal by DCOR, LLC to conduct hydraulic fracturing on 16 of its existing oil wells at Platform Gilda, off the coast of Ventura. CCC staff reviewed the company's application and recommends that the Commission object to the Consistency Certification due to substantive inconsistency that this project has with the state's Coastal Management Program.

In 2022, after years of litigation, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the Environmental Defense Center and Channelkeeper, and prohibited fracking from platforms offshore California until a full environmental review has been conducted, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services is consulted with regarding endangered species, and the CCC reviews the project under their Federal Consistency Review. This effort by DCOR at Platform Gilda is the first fracking proposal off the California coast since the initial litigation in 2014.

There are many issues with this proposal, including extending the lifespan of already old infrastructure and threatening the rich biodiversity of the Santa Barbara Channel with the risk of more spills and toxic fracking fluids released into the ocean.

The public can join us in supporting the objection raised by CCC staff and urge the Commission to protect our coastal resources and not approve the Federal Consistency Certification.

Speak up on Thursday, August 13

In Person Meeting: Scotts Valley Hilton, 6001 La Madrona Drive, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
8:00 a.m.: Rally begins outside
9:00 a.m.: Commission hearing begins

Virtual Meeting: Submit a speaker request (Thursday, Item 8)
See public participation guidelines (here)

Submit Written Comments:
Due August 7, 2026, by 5 p.m.
Commission Staff: EORFC@coastal.ca.gov

Talking Points:

- Please support the staff's recommendation and object to the consistency certification by DCOR, and the consistency determination by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management for fracking from Platform Gilda.
- Fracking off the coast of California was prohibited by a federal court until and unless the federal government complies with environmental laws (which has yet to occur).
- This project would extend the life of aging Platform Gilda increasing the likelihood of oil spills in one of the most ecologically significant waters in the world.
- DCOR has not demonstrated effective containment and cleanup measures in the event of a spill.
- DCOR facilities have been involved in two of the three most significant offshore spill incidents in the past five years. This is not an operator with a good record.
- Offshore fracking involves the use of highly toxic chemicals that could be spilled into the sensitive marine environment, or contaminate discharged wastewater.
- Offshore fracking threatens marine life, recreation and coastal access, and commercial and recreational fishing.
- The project undermines climate goals by prolonging the production of fossil fuels.

Support AB 1448 to Close the Offshore Drilling Loophole

In late 2025, the Trump administration proposed new federal leases for offshore oil and gas drilling along the California coast.. While California law already prohibits the State Lands Commission from issuing new leases for oil and gas infrastructure in state waters that support federal offshore drilling after January 1, 2018, a loophole remains: oil companies could use existing aging infrastructure, like the corroded Sable pipeline, to support new federal offshore drilling.

The use of aging offshore oil pipelines and platforms puts California's wildlife, economy, and coastal communities at risk of catastrophic spills.

AB 1448, (the California Coastal Protection Act) introduced by California Assembly Member Gregg Hart (Santa Barbara) and coauthored by California State Senator Henry Stern (Sherman Oaks), would prohibit the use of existing California infrastructure to expand federal oil production. It would strengthen pipeline safety rules and protocols. It would also add important review authority for the California State Lands Commission on existing leases and require the agency to consider additional environmental and safety factors before renewing or transferring leases.

Please show your support for AB 1448 by reaching out to Assemblymember Hart, Senator Henry Stern, Senator Limón, and Assemblymember Bennett to let them know that you are grateful for their work to protect our coast.

Channelkeeper Honors National Water Quality Month

August is National Water Quality Month, a longstanding initiative of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to promote awareness around the value of our water resources and what we can do to protect them. Throughout the month,

Channelkeeper is working to inspire conversations and awareness around actions that our community can help us take to ensure that we all have access to safe, clean water for generations to come.

Protecting water quality in the Santa Barbara Channel is at the core of Channelkeeper's work to ensure that our community has access to clean, drinkable, swimmable, fishable water. To that effect, Channelkeeper monitors and advocates to protect water quality in the Santa Barbara Channel and surrounding watersheds.

Our team collects and shares water quality data to help decision-makers protect and improve local waterways and to foster wider community awareness and involvement in protecting water quality. We collect plankton samples in coastal waters to monitor harmful algal blooms, respond to community member reports of pollution, and take action to advance the enforcement of fundamental environmental laws. We also help educate the next generation of environmental scientists by teaching students water quality monitoring skills and the importance of individual actions to keep our waters clean.

You can help us keep local waters clean by reporting possible sources of pollution and/or volunteering with the Watershed Brigade to remove trash from beaches, creeks, rivers, and urban areas.

Donate Today for a Chance to Win Tickets to Jack Johnson's SURFILMUSIC Tour

This summer, Channelkeeper is partnering with All At Once, musician Jack Johnson's social action campaign to support environmental action. Thanks to the Johnson Ohana Foundation, every donation to Channelkeeper through August 31 will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to $2,500.

In celebration of Channelkeeper's 25th anniversary, every gift of $25 or more will be entered to win two tickets to be a part of Jack Johnson's SURFILMUSIC tour live at the Santa Barbara Bowl on October 4, 2026.

Your support will help us protect our coast by:

• Defending the Channel and community from expanded offshore oil drilling
• Connecting students to the ocean through hands-on education experiences
• Monitoring water quality in Goleta's creeks to protect public health and wildlife

We invite you to give today to double your impact and be entered in a chance to win tickets to see Jack Johnson's SURFILMUSIC tour!

Donate Now

California State Lands Commission Webinars
Risks & Impacts of Continued Offshore Pipeline Use
Tuesday, August 13
2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

On Thursday, August 13, the California State Lands Commission is hosting two virtual public information webinars (2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.) about its ongoing

Analysis of Impacts to Public Trust Resources and Values for the remaining offshore oil and gas pipeline leases under its jurisdiction.

The Commission's study will evaluate the risks and impacts of continued offshore pipeline use, including pipeline integrity, cultural resources, ocean and coastal uses, economic resources, and more. The findings will help inform future decisions about these offshore pipeline leases.

During the webinar, Commission staff will explain the purpose of the study, identify which pipeline leases are included, and provide an overview of the analysis.

Register

MPA Watch Volunteer Training
Thursday, August 13
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Are you interested in becoming an MPA Watch volunteer? Sign up for Channelkeeper's Virtual Training on August 13th from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Channelkeeper’s MPA Watch program conducts surveys of human use activities in our local marine protected areas (MPAs) at Campus Point MPA (IV/Goleta), Naples MPA(Gaviota), and Kashtayit MPA (Gaviota State Beach). The data collected helps to inform MPA monitoring and enforcement efforts. Surveys involve walking a designated transect along the beach at the MPAs mentioned above and recording all human use activities observed on the beach or just offshore. Volunteers are asked to conduct three surveys per month and surveys are conducted independently.

The volunteer training workshop will take place virtually and will be followed on a later date by a one-hour field training session at Campus Point in the Campus Point MPA. Click below to sign up for the volunteer training workshop.

Register

San Jose Creek Cleanup
Saturday, August 15
9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Channelkeeper is collaborating with the Environmental Defense Center and the Old Town Creek Justice Project to clean up San Jose Creek!
With the rainy season approaching, we plan to remove as much trash from creeks as possible before it can be washed out into the ocean.
The terrain may be rocky and wet, so we encourage volunteers to wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Don't forget your hat, sunscreen, and a reusable water bottle.

Let's work together to keep our creeks clean and our ocean healthy.

Register

Coastal Cleanup Day
Saturday, September 19
9:00 a.m.

Get ready to roll up your sleeves and make a difference! Channelkeeper is once again proud to be the site captain at West Beach for this year's Coastal Cleanup Day. Join us as we team up with volunteers from across the community to help protect our coastline and local wildlife.

Coastal Cleanup Day is a global volunteer effort to clean up beaches and waterways. It is held annually in over 100 countries, and it brings together hundreds of thousands of volunteers to remove trash, raise awareness about pollution, identify its sources, and inspire behavior change.

We will put a special focus on microtrash—those tiny but troublesome pieces of litter smaller than a golf ball. From plastic bottle caps and snack wrappers to styrofoam bits and packaging fragments, microtrash might be small, but it poses a big threat to marine life and can even enter the food chain.

Using kitchen strainers, we'll be sifting through the sand to remove microtrash and leave West Beach cleaner and safer for all. Cleanup supplies will be provided, but participants are also encouraged to bring their own kitchen strainers for microtrash collecting.

This is a fun and impactful activity for volunteers of all ages—a great way to get outside, connect with your community, and take action for the environment. We hope you'll join us!

There will be free parking from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at all City of Santa Barbara lots with a Coastal Cleanup Day voucher, available from the site captain on the morning of the event.

Register

Support Clean Water

Want to make a difference for the environment and your community? Making a tax-deductible contribution to Santa Barbara Channelkeeper today is an investment in clean beaches, healthy watersheds, and a more sustainable future.

Thank you for your support!

Donate

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