



Factsheet on Hermosa Beach Oil Drilling Proposal

For decades, oil companies have been hankering to tap oil offshore of Hermosa Beach. The area most sought after is not the typical “offshore” drilling operation/location. The proposed area is smack-dab in the middle of Hermosa Beach —surrounded by neighborhoods, a popular park/greenbelt, the beach, busy roadways, and other bustling businesses. *You might ask yourself how this is possible?* E&B Oil is proposing to build wells on land and “directionally drill” into the ocean, to obtain an unquantifiable amount of oil. The plan also calls for tapping oil from surrounding neighborhoods, which poses public safety, environmental and economic concerns.

However, there is a sure-fire way to **STOP** the proposal. The answer resides with the voters of Hermosa Beach. In 2014 citizens will vote on a ballot measure to lift a current ban on drilling, or not. The events leading up to the 2014 vote are convoluted and literally date back several decades. But the gist is that the City Hermosa Beach awarded a lease to Macpherson Company (who then later sold the rights to E&B Oil) to conduct drilling.

In 1995 through a “citizen’s initiative”, Hermosa Beach voted to ban ALL drilling. Macpherson sued the City for breach of contract and after several years of court battles, the parties finally settled (eventually E&B Oil bought out Macpherson). The settlement requires the following: In 2014, Citizens will vote on lifting an oil drilling ban—if the ban is **not** lifted, the project will **not** happen and the City must pay E&B Oil \$17.5 million. If the drilling ban is lifted, E&B Oil can proceed with their plans and the City only owes E&B Oil \$3.5 million. Surfrider is strongly opposing this project through our “Not the Answer” [campaign](#)—which calls for an end to *new* offshore oil drilling. Below are just a few areas of concern for Surfrider. To learn more about potential impacts, please visit [this](#) website and read [this](#) recent news article that explains the situation well.

Environmental Concerns: Several decades ago, the Santa Monica Bay (SMB) was in *very* poor environmental shape, however after major efforts to restore and to protect SMB, it is now considered a healthy ecosystem. EB Oil’s proposal has the potential to wipe out decades of hard work within minutes—especially if there is an oil spill. The process of drilling is downright dirty—polluted water could enter the ocean (containing toxins like benzene, zinc, arsenic, radioactive materials, and other contaminants). Oil drilling, plus the construction of oil pipelines to transport oil back to shore could easily disturb fragile seafloor habitats within SMB. Clearly, oil-drilling infrastructure will damage beaches, wetlands, and coastal habitats, which will directly impact Hermosa Beach’s economy that relies heavily on tourism and recreation. Of course, Surfrider is also concerned about air pollution associated with oil processing and the massive amounts of freshwater used to process oil.

Public Safety Concerns: The proposed site will be less than 100 feet away from homes and businesses and would impact more than half of Hermosa Beach residents. Explosions and gases leaks under residential areas are a major concern. And to make matters worse, the project (and its underground pipes) are located near a popular park and greenbelt that hundreds of people use daily. Of course, there are many fault lines within Santa Monica Bay that could be jostled during drilling—potentially triggering earthquakes (in 1998 when the Coastal Commission first reviewed the project they mentioned concerns about seismic activity).

What You Can Do: Be sure to vote and help educate people about the upcoming vote. Write letters to the editors for newspapers in Santa Monica Bay—this project could impact millions of people and we need to get the word out far and wide. Tweet, Blog and use social media to spread the word. [Attend](#) Hands Across the Sand on May 18, 2013 to demonstrate against the project. Contact Craig from the South Bay Surfrider Chapter to get involved. rap@surfrider-southbay.org