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Offshore Oil Drilling in California - Why it Isn't Likely to Occur

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Anyone who lives in Southern California and who travels the coastline from San Diego to San Francisco has seen the offshore oil rigs along the coast of Santa Barbara, Ventura and Long Beach. Anyone who lives in any of the other coastal cities such as San Diego, Pacific Beach, Mission Beach, La Jolla, Del Mar, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Cardiff, Carlsbad, Oceanside, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Laguna Beach, Corona del Mar, Newport Beach, Huntington Beach, Pismo Beach, Morro Bay, Cambria or San Simeon sees something different - pristine beaches without offshore oil rigs.

In the midst of America's financial meltdown and on the same weekend as Congress put together a \$700 billion bailout, Congress did away with a 26 year ban on offshore oil drilling to the dismay of environmentalists.

Despite the ban on offshore oil drilling, it is believed that such drilling, at least off the coast of California is unlikely to occur for many years, if ever. Democrats in Congress are already vowing to reinstate the ban when a new Congress takes their seats in four months. And political opposition, marine protection laws and almost certain lawsuits by environmental groups in California make offshore oil drilling an unlikely event.

First, there is a general belief of Californians, including the Governor, that the California coastline is an international treasure, not to mention a draw to tourists from around the world. Few politicians in the state would dare to jeopardize that treasure.

Second, a law passed by former Governor Pete Wilson already bans all offshore oil drilling in California out to three miles from shore.

Third, there are 300 miles of national marine sanctuaries along the California coast which ban oil drilling.

Fourth, nearly every coastal county in the State of California has enacted ordinances banning new oil pipelines, oil terminals and tanks in the State.

Fifth, environmental groups are already vowing to file lawsuits, and they could be joined by the California Coastal Commission.

While California has around 30 oil platforms off the coast of Santa Barbara, Ventura and Long Beach that were built in the 1950s, no new oil platforms have been built in over 50 years.

It is estimated that California has at least 10.5 billion barrels of oil offshore - about a year and a half of the nation's yearly supply. This is comparable to the estimate of oil in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

But if anything, despite the oil crisis and the financial crisis, in light of global warming and calls for investment in alternative energies, Californians are becoming more and more environmentally aware. Any politician running on any platform (oil or not) based on drilling offshore at a risk to the California scenic coastline, will have a hard time being elected.

If you have an environmental or natural resources legal matter, visit our website at

<http://www.sebastiangibsonlaw.com> Our experienced attorneys can serve as your [California Environmental Lawyer](#) or your natural resources attorney anywhere in Southern California. We have nearly thirty years of experience and have represented clients in many areas of law from Santa Barbara, Ventura, Long Beach, San Diego, Pacific Beach, Mission Beach, La Jolla, Del Mar, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Cardiff, Carlsbad, Oceanside, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Laguna Beach, Corona del Mar, Newport Beach, Huntington Beach, Pismo Beach, Morro Bay, Cambria and San Simeon.

Sebastian Gibson graduated cum laude at UCLA in 1972 and later received two law degrees in the U.S. and the U.K., graduating with an LL.B. magna cum laude from University College, Cardiff in Wales and a J.D. from the University of San Diego School of Law in Southern California.

The Sebastian Gibson Law Firm serves all of San Diego, Orange County, Palm Springs and Palm Desert, the Coastal Cities from La Jolla and Del Mar to Laguna Beach, Newport Beach, Corona del Mar, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Santa Ana, Irvine, Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, Temecula, Riverside and San Bernardino and all the cities in the Coachella Valley including Palm Springs, Palm Desert, La Quinta, Indio, Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree and Twentynine Palms.

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