

Drilling Off Virginia's Coast

NOT WORTH THE RISK

No producing oil or gas wells have ever been drilled off our coast. The Trump Administration's plans to initiate exploration and drilling in the Atlantic is a major shift in national policy which threatens our communities, our military preparedness, and our local economies. Seismic airgun blasting and drilling off Virginia's coast is not worth the risk.

The Threat to Our Communities

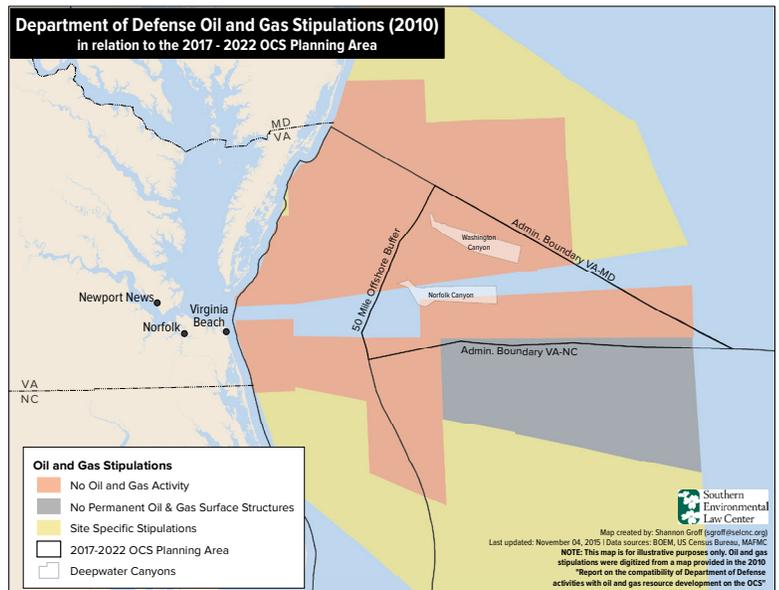
- More than 120 communities have passed anti-drilling resolutions up and down the Atlantic coast, including major coastal cities like Charleston, Myrtle Beach, Savannah, and Wilmington. In Virginia, both Accomack County and Northampton County, with their many miles of Atlantic shoreline, oppose offshore drilling.
- Onshore infrastructure and activities that accompany the offshore oil and gas industry like oil refineries, storage facilities, pipelines, traffic and routine spills and accidents pose environmental and health-related challenges for coastal communities and would irreparably alter the character of those communities.

The Threat to our Nation's Military

- The Department of Defense has expressed concern about drilling off Virginia's coast. Naval Station Norfolk is the world's largest navy base and the open waters off the coast provide critical space for training. Likewise, the Air Force utilizes the airspace and conducts air-to-surface training and testing operations off the coast of Virginia. For safety reasons, live weapons testing and training require expansive areas.
- NASA has also expressed concern that drilling structures would have a "significant detrimental effect" on their aerospace testing and launching operations.

The Threat to Our Local Economies

- Tourism is a booming industry in Virginia—in 2016, tourism revenue reached \$24 billion and supported 230,000 jobs.¹ In Virginia's Coastal Region in 2015, tourism generated \$4.7 billion in revenue and \$345 million in state and local taxes. Additionally over 45,000 jobs and nearly \$1 billion in salary rely on tourism along the coast.²
- Because of this, leading tourism associations like the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging and Travel Association and the Virginia Beach Hotel Association have joined hundreds of local businesses to oppose offshore drilling.
- Virginia is the largest seafood producer on the East Coast and the third largest in the US. Our working watermen landed 388 million pounds of seafood in 2014 with sales over \$1.2 billion. Virginia's 50 commercial fishery species—including scallops, crabs, clams, flounder and striped bass—and 17,000 jobs would be at risk from oil spills and ongoing drilling pollution impacts.³
- The negative economic impacts of the 2010 BP oil spill are severe: a 2012 study found that the potential overall impact on commercial and recreational fisheries and mariculture in Gulf of Mexico waters is estimated at \$8.7 billion by 2020 and projects a loss of more than 22,000 jobs in fisheries-related sectors.⁴



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¹ Virginia Tourism Corporation, http://www.vatc.org/uploadedFiles/Research/2016EconomicImpactofDomesticTravelonVirginia_Preliminary.pdf

² Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau, <http://www.visitvirginiabeach.com/images/about-us/fact-sheet.pdf?2017>

³ NOAA, <https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/Assets/economics/publications/FEUS/FEUS-2014/Report-and-chapters/FEUS-2014-FINAL-07-MidAtl-V2.pdf>

⁴ U. Rashid Sumaila, et al., Impact of the Deepwater Horizon well blowout on the economics of U.S. Gulf fisheries, CANADIAN JOURNAL OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC SCIENCES, Vol. 69(3) (2012) at 499-510.