

Poll: Most Santa Barbara County Voters Oppose Plans to Restart Offshore Drilling

Nearly 3 in 4 Concerned About Highway Safety From ExxonMobil Trucking Plan

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. - A majority of Santa Barbara County voters say they oppose proposals to restart ExxonMobil's offshore drilling platforms in the Santa Barbara Channel, according to a [new poll](#).

Most voters also oppose ExxonMobil's proposal to truck oil from its offshore operations along local highways. Nearly 3 out of 4 respondents said they were concerned "about the safety of our local highways if up to 70 oil tanker-trucks are allowed on our roads each day" as the company has proposed and Santa Barbara County is now considering.

"Santa Barbara County voters don't want ExxonMobil to restart its dirty and dangerous offshore platforms," said Stephanie Prufer, an organizer with the Center for Biological Diversity, which commissioned the poll. "They don't feel safe with oil tanker trucks on their coastal highways or the threat offshore drilling poses to Santa Barbara's beautiful beaches. People are ready to phase out offshore drilling and embrace clean energy and climate action."

Public Policy Polling surveyed 890 registered voters from throughout Santa Barbara County on Oct. 23 and 24. The results are consistent with national opposition to offshore drilling. A Washington [Post poll](#) released in mid-October found 53 percent of respondents wanted less offshore drilling in U.S. waters. Just 14 percent voiced support for more offshore drilling, which the Trump administration and oil industry have sought.

ExxonMobil's platforms off Santa Barbara County have been idle since the 2015 failure of the Plains All-American Pipeline coastal pipeline that served them failed, causing a coastal oil spill. In the Santa Barbara County poll, 53 percent of respondents agreed with the statement "I'm concerned that offshore drilling endangers Santa Barbara," while 35 percent said they support offshore drilling and the rest weren't sure.

Santa Barbara County officials are now considering ExxonMobil's proposal to restart its three platforms and ship that oil to processing facilities in San Luis Obispo and Kern counties. The poll found 51 percent oppose the idea, 32 percent support it and 17 percent were not sure.

Asked about their level of concern about highway safety from ExxonMobil's trucking proposal, 44 percent said they were "very concerned," 28 percent were "somewhat concerned," 25 percent were "not concerned at all," and 4 percent were not sure.

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors is expected to vote on the ExxonMobil trucking proposal early next year, followed later by a proposal by Plains to build a new coastal oil pipeline to serve those platforms.