



THE LEADING EDGE OF COASTAL ACTIVISM

June 12, 2009

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capital Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Opposition to legislation designed to circumvent the State Lands Commission denial of the Tranquillon Oil and Gas Project

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

Surfers' Environmental Alliance (SEA) is strongly opposed to any attempt to circumvent the State Lands Commission's (SLC) denial of the Tranquillon Ridge Oil and Gas Project as proposed along the Santa Barbara coast. We see this effort as an obvious attempt to ignore the SLC's long-established decision-making process by enacting special legislation designed and intended to single-out the Tranquillon proposal for special and preferential treatment.

As a preliminary matter, Surfers' Environmental Alliance (SEA) is a (501c3) grass-roots, project-based organization aggressively committed to the cultural and environmental integrity of the sport of surfing. SEA is as much devoted to protecting the natural wonders of the coastal environment as we are to fostering and protecting beach access. Lately, SEA has been working hard to ensure that coastal real estate and infrastructure development does not destroy our heritage, or our children's. SEA was founded by surfers who wanted to do something to protect the ocean, beaches, and coastlines, and keep this planet a safe place to surf.

SEA is specifically opposed to efforts to pass legislation to allow California's Director of Finance the authority to override the SLC decision and approve the project.

We contend that any attempt to circumvent the SLC decision clearly violates the SLC's vested authority and weakens important and necessary public processes as established by the State of California. Such preferential legislative actions tend to erode California's existing system of environmental project review through independent boards and commissions.

We are aware that on January 29, 2009, the California State Lands Commission denied the Tranquillon Ridge Oil and Gas Project by a 2-1 vote. Important and relevant issues raised with the project as proposed included the perception that the agreement could not be reliably enforced at the state level. Also, concerns were raised about the federal Minerals Management Service (MMS) not including an end date in the federal permit. Consequently, we believe these concerns are valid, and we remain concerned about the enforceability of this project at the state level and with the MMS permit.

Surfers' Environmental Alliance perceives inadequate protection of our coast and coastal waters in the Tranquillon proposal, and we remind you that any and all proposals for new off-shore oil drilling and pumping platforms must be analyzed with clear vision and awareness of all the myriad of interrelated factors that make the California coast an inviting place to live, work, recreate, and visit. Potential environmental damage from such operations should never be minimized or ignored in the decision-making process. We must all do everything possible to preserve and protect our irreplaceable coastal resources. We further remind you that untold numbers of people around the world prize the California coast for its scenic value and recreational potential rather than for the oil platforms on the horizon.

We ask that all efforts to pass legislation authorizing the Director of Finance to override the State Land Commission's denial of the Tranquillon Ridge Oil and Gas Project be ceased immediately.

Sincerely,