

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Jackie Speier  
Board of Supervisors, District 1

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June 10, 2025

Ms. Kelly Hammerle  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (VAM-LD)  
45600 Woodland Road  
Sterling, VA 20166-9216

Re: Comments on the Request for Information (RFI) for the 11<sup>th</sup> National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program identified as Docket ID: BOEM-2025-0015.

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide these comments in response to the “Request for Information” pursuant to the preparation of the 11<sup>th</sup> National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program identified as Docket ID: BOEM-2025-0015. The request proposes to consider offshore Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas leasing in all federal waters adjoining any U.S. coastline, including within National Marine Sanctuaries and other protected areas.

We are members of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. Offshore oil and gas development likely would include landside facilities to service the offshore rigs. We note that a spill or accident could destroy our local economy based upon tourism and fishing and damage the natural resources of our coast and waterways for generations to come.

This is why the County of San Mateo has long prioritized the protection of agricultural open space and public access along our coastline, a visitor-serving destination within easy reach of our inland urban population centers and the Greater Bay Area. Our protected coast is at the heart of our County’s economic base, as is the vibrant commercial and recreational fishing harbor at Half Moon Bay. Our coast also hosts the annual Maverick’s surfing competition, attracting big wave surf enthusiasts from around the world.

The County of San Mateo has a multi-decade history of support for permanent protection of our coast from offshore oil and gas drilling, a policy necessary to preserve San Mateo County’s clean-coast economy, fisheries, and unique coastal and offshore ecosystems. There are multiple examples of extremely sensitive areas that merit ongoing protection. The following are just a few.

Located in San Mateo County, *Año Nuevo State Park*, a state park encompassing Año Nuevo Island and Año Nuevo Point, is well-known for its unique pinniped rookeries. A necklace of state and county parks dots the San Mateo coast, and private sector visitor-serving facilities, make our coast a sought-after destination for local and global visitors.

The Farallon Islands, near San Mateo County's coast, host the largest breeding colony of seabirds in the Continental U.S. as well as world-class marine mammal breeding colonies. The Farallon Islands were first protected from offshore oil drilling by the U.S. Congress as part of the *Point Reyes OCS Exclusion Zone* in 1978, then in 1981 by the designation of the original *Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary*, and more recently by the additional protection afforded in 1992 by the designation of the *Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary*.

As a matter of public record, on January 6, 2025, a permanent *Executive OCS Withdrawal* was duly issued under Section 12(a) of the OCS Lands Act (OCSLAA) 43 U.S.C. 1341(a) to protect all unleased federal waters along the U.S. Atlantic, Pacific, and Florida Gulf Coasts, as well as portions of the Northern Bering Sea, from offshore oil and gas leasing for a time period without specific expiration. The aforementioned *Executive OCS Withdrawal* is inclusive of the entire San Mateo County coastline, thus we believe that consideration of any tracts within these referenced *Executive OCS Withdrawals* is unavailable for leasing by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM).

Situated in North-Central California, the *Golden Gate UNESCO International Biosphere Network* has embedded both terrestrial protections along the San Mateo coast and in all adjacent coastal waters extending seaward to include the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The *Golden Gate UNESCO International Biosphere Network* is a member of the U.S. Biosphere Network (USBN) and the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves, as well as the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The *Golden Gate Biosphere* represents a highly diverse complex of terrestrial, coastal, and marine environments.

The reserve is complimented by a rich cultural history with lands and waters in Sonoma, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties. Designated in 1988 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), the *Golden Gate Biosphere* encompasses urban, multi-use managed areas, and wildlands that include marine and aquatic ecosystems as well as terrestrial ecosystems ranging from evergreen forests, oak woodlands, chaparral, coastal scrub and prairies, rare serpentine grasslands, as well as coastal and offshore islands. Through a collaborative approach, the *Golden Gate Biosphere* protects the natural and cultural resources of the dynamic North-Central California coastal bioregion through conservation, education, research and monitoring, and sustainable development.

California's *State Marine Reserves Network* also protects *Montara State Marine Reserve*, and *Pillar Point State Marine Conservation Area* in San Mateo's coastal waters. The need for precautionary management of these sites to protect them from routine OCS discharges, accidental offshore oil spills, or transportation spills associated with OCS leases has been well-documented. See [https://californiampas.org/v1/pubs/OC MPA Integration Review Recommendations.pdf](https://californiampas.org/v1/pubs/OC%20MPA%20Integration%20Review%20Recommendations.pdf) We hereby incorporate by reference all *California Marine Life Protection Act* (MLPA) documentation associated with the creation, designation, and decadal monitoring of California's MPA sites.

We also hereby incorporate herein by reference the original Designation Document, the Management Plan currently in effect, and all regulations in effect for the *Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary*, including, but not limited to, the prohibition on seabed disturbance, and the original Designation Document, the Management Plan, and all regulations in effect for the *Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary*, which additionally includes a bipartisan protective congressional legislative mandate as part of the *Hurricane Andrew Supplemental Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1993-1994*.

Our comments on Docket ID: BOEM-2025-0015 restate our support for permanent protection of our coast from offshore oil and gas leasing and our objection to inclusion of San Mateo County's coastal waters for consideration by BOEM in the 11<sup>th</sup> National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program or any other future OCS leasing plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jackie Speier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jackie Speier  
Supervisor, District 1

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Mueller". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a prominent "M" at the end.

Ray Mueller  
Supervisor, District 3