



Our Children's Earth Foundation | 100 First Street, Suite 100-367, San Francisco, CA 94105

NEWS RELEASE

Date: September 1, 2004

Contact:
Tiffany Schauer, OCE - 415.948.7409
Linda Krop, EDC - 805.963.1622
Christopher Sproul, Environmental Advocates - 415.533.3376

U.S. EPA Agrees to Issue Water Permits to Oil Platforms

New, updated permits will diminish continued pollution discharge into Pacific Ocean

San Francisco, CA — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has agreed to issue updated clean water permits to twenty-two oil exploration and drilling platform facilities located off the coast of Central and Southern California no later than September 15, 2004.

The action came as a result of lawsuit three environmental groups filed last January against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Administrator Michael Leavitt, and Regional Administrator, Wayne Nastri for failing to update existing expired permits which do not meet current state and federal clean water standards governing the discharge of pollutants into the Pacific Ocean.

“This is just another example of environmental groups having to take the Bush Administration to court so it will carry out its federal mandate,” said Tiffany Schauer, Executive Director of Our Children’s Earth. “We are glad the EPA is going to finally do its job, but it seems to me that this step shouldn’t be necessary for the government to regulate polluters and protect our ocean waters.”

The settlement agreement, which resolves a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in San Francisco by Our Children’s Earth Foundation, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, and Get Oil Out, calls for the US EPA to issue and finalize clean water permits, called National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, which govern the discharge of pollutants from the Southern California oil platforms into ocean waters.

"This is a victory for every person who cares about water quality," said Linda Krop, Chief Counsel for the EDC and co-counsel in the case. "These updated permits will enable us to enforce the federal and state environmental laws and to monitor these offshore platforms."

The original suit cited an EPA 2003 Fact Sheet that indicated that several toxic pollutants had been found in oil platform discharges including ammonia and arsenic.

Our Children's Earth Foundation is serving as co-counsel in this case. Our Children's Earth is a San Francisco-based non-profit organization that works to protect the public, especially children, from the health impacts of pollution and other environmental hazards. To access a copy of the complaint and to learn more about OCE visit www.ocefoundation.org.

The Environmental Defense Center (EDC) is serving as co-counsel in this case. Since 1977, EDC has been serving California's Central Coast as the only non-profit environmental law firm between Los Angeles and San Francisco, assisting other environmental and community groups with their efforts to protect our cherished quality of life. To learn more about EDC, visit www.edcnet.org.

Plaintiff Get Oil Out (GOO) was formed in response to the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill. GOO provides education about the risks of off shore oil and gas development, and represents several hundred supporters and a majority of Californians in supporting legal procedures that challenge offshore oil projects or serve to mitigate the impacts of the projects that are developed.

Plaintiff Santa Barbara Channelkeeper (SBCK) is a non-profit organization located in Santa Barbara, California, whose mission is to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds through enforcement, citizen action, and education. To learn more about SBCK, visit www.sbck.org.

###