



GET ^{THE} FACTS ABOUT PLAINS PIPELINE'S NEW THREAT TO COASTAL CALIFORNIA

Plains All American Pipeline caused California's worst coastal oil spill in 25 years – the Refugio Oil Spill of 2015 – and now it wants a second chance to spill again.

Santa Barbara County is processing Plains' application to build another coastal oil pipeline that would restart drilling from six decrepit offshore oil platforms in the Santa Barbara Channel. Houston-based Plains was criminally negligent in allowing its previous coastal oil pipeline to become corroded and fail, coating Santa Barbara area beaches in crude and killing hundreds of birds and marine mammals. It doesn't deserve another opportunity to kill threatened wildlife, poison our communities and wreck the climate.

THE PROJECT

- Plains All American Pipeline is [proposing to build](#) more than 123 miles of new oil pipeline through Santa Barbara (73 miles), San Luis Obispo (37 miles) and Kern counties (14 miles), transporting heavy crude pumped from offshore drilling platforms to onshore processing facilities. Plains also proposes to abandon in place about 123 miles of its old failed oil pipelines.
- The new pipeline will mostly follow the same route as the old broken pipeline – which was built based on environmental studies done in the late '80s – in a rapidly changing coastal zone that is now being affected by coastal erosion, sea level rise and other impacts from climate change.

HISTORY OF VIOLATIONS

- Investigators responding to a massive coastal oil spill near Refugio State Beach in 2015 found the source, Plains' Pipeline 901, to be severely corroded and poorly maintained. In September 2018, a Santa Barbara [jury found Plains guilty](#) of a felony for failing to properly maintain its pipeline and eight misdemeanor charges for a delay in reporting the spill and for its deadly impact on protected wildlife. The jury concluded the company knew or should have known that its pipeline was corroded and about to fail.
- Plains All American Pipeline had a [bad safety record](#) even before the Refugio spill. Federal records show the company had 175 incidents from 2006-2015, most of them oil spills, including 11 in California. Federal enforcement actions were launched against the company 20 times during that period, many for corrosion control and maintenance problems on its pipelines.

- [Federal data](#) show oil pipelines are dangerous and prone to failure, particularly when they're either old or brand new, the latter often because of faulty welds. From 1986-2015, there were nearly 8,000 serious pipeline breaks in the U.S., causing more than 2,300 injuries and nearly \$7 billion in property damage. More than a third of those were from corrosion or other spontaneous failures.

MORE DANGEROUS OFFSHORE DRILLING

- Six offshore drilling platforms – ExxonMobil's Platforms Harmony, Heritage and Hondo; and Freeport McMoRan's Platforms Harvest, Hermosa and Hidalgo – were all idled by Plains' 2015 pipeline failure. The new pipeline could restart oil production, prolong the lifespan of aging offshore infrastructure, and serve new offshore drilling planned by the Trump administration.
- The Trump administration is proposing to offer the first new fossil fuel leases in federal waters off California in more than 30 years. Hundreds of new offshore wells could be drilled in coming years.

DIRTY OCEANS, DEAD WILDLIFE

The 2015 Plains Pipeline oil spill blackened Santa Barbara area beaches for miles and [killed hundreds](#) of birds and marine mammals, including at least 74 California sea lions. Even larger spills are possible once the project reactivates long-dormant offshore platforms and pipelines.

Allowing drilling in federal waters off Southern California to resume and expand would likely result in [hundreds of oil spills](#) that would harm California sea otters, blue whales and other animals [vulnerable to Pacific drilling](#). Resuming [offshore fracking](#) would further dirty our oceans and harm marine life.



USFWS biologist, inspects dead bird for signs of oil at San Buenaventura State Beach in Ventura, California on June 12, 2015. after Refugio oil spill.



USFWS wildlife operations team cares for harbor seal pup rescued by field crews on June 6, 2015.