



Virtual Public Meeting: Evaluation of the California Coastal Management Program

August 11, 2026

These public comments were taken from the written transcript produced by the Adobe Connect recording of the meeting. The introductory remarks from the NOAA moderators were copied from the written script they read, not the recording.

Spelling errors were corrected and some dialog between moderators and commenters related to audio problems or inability for commenters to unmute their microphones was removed. Where NOAA reviewers could not identify specific words, the transcript is marked [unintelligible].

Joelle Gore - NOAA05:26

My name is Joelle Gore, and I am the Chief of the Stewardship Division of NOAA's Office for Coastal Management and I will be introducing today's virtual public meeting on the evaluation of the California coastal management program.

For today's agenda, I will talk about the background and purpose of today's meeting. Then, I will turn it over to my colleague Josh Lott to cover the meeting logistics and explain how participants may use the Adobe Connect "raise hand" function to provide comments. After that, Josh will moderate the public comment portion of the proceedings.

Due to the number of registered participants, NOAA has decided to extend the meeting time by one hour. The meeting will conclude today either when the last comment is heard, or at 6pm Pacific Time, whichever comes first. We cannot extend the meeting beyond 6pm Pacific Time.

Also, as a reminder, NOAA is accepting written comments on this evaluation via email until 11:59pm Pacific Time on August 22, 2026 to this email address: [czma dot california dash evaluation at noaa dot gov](mailto:czma.california-evaluation@noaa.gov). That's czma.california-evaluation@noaa.gov

California's coastal management program is part of the National Coastal Zone Management Program. The national program, authorized by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, is a voluntary partnership between the federal government and coastal and Great Lakes states and territories. State and territorial coastal zone management programs balance the demands of coastal resource use, economic development, and conservation. California's coastal management

program is administered through three agencies—the California Coastal Commission, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and the California State Coastal Conservancy.

Section 312 of the Coastal Zone Management Act requires NOAA to conduct a continuing review of the performance of federally approved coastal zone management programs, including California's coastal management program.

During the evaluation, NOAA considers the extent to which the State of California has implemented and enforced the approved program, addressed the coastal management needs identified in the CZMA, and adhered to the terms of any grant, loan, or cooperative agreement funded under the CZMA.

On June 26, 2026, NOAA published a Federal Register Notice announcing an in-person public meeting in Santa Monica, held on August 10, and two virtual public meetings today and tomorrow in order to gather any new input on the performance of California's coastal management program, particularly regarding five specific areas: spaceport infrastructure, offshore oil production, pipeline maintenance, desalination projects, and undersea cables.

These public meetings will add to the input obtained from the previous public meeting held in August 2024 as part of NOAA's evaluation. When the evaluation is complete, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management will place a notice in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the final evaluation findings.

With that I will turn it over to my colleague Josh Lott to explain the logistics and begin the public comment portion of today's virtual meeting.

Josh Lott09:43

Thank you, Joelle. My name is Josh Lott, Acting Chief of the Policy, Planning, and Communications Division in NOAA's Office for Coastal Management. I will be moderating the public comment portion of today's virtual meeting

All of today's participants are muted and cameras are turned off. As this is a public meeting to collect public comments only, we will not be taking questions or responding to comments.

Due to the number of participants, we will be unable to assist you with individual audio or visual needs.

This virtual public meeting is being recorded, and a transcript of today's comments will be made available upon request at the same email address of czma.california-evaluation@noaa.gov.

For any media outlets joining today, inquiries should be directed to our public affairs office email at oceanservicepress, one word, at NOAA dot Gov. That's oceanservicepress@noaa.gov.

Please use the 'raise hand' function at the top of the Adobe Connect window to be entered into the queue to make a comment.

From there, those who wish to make a comment will be called on by name in the order the virtual hand is raised and you must unmute your own microphone to speak. All names will be read out loud and will be included in the transcript of the public meeting.

Each speaker will have 3 minutes to provide a comment, and you will be muted at the 3 minute mark. Speakers must ensure comments are free from abusive, profane, threatening, or harassing language. Individuals engaging in language of this nature will have their line muted and will not be permitted back into the queue.

Each speaker may provide one comment only; this includes any individual who has registered multiple times under the same name. Any groups sharing a single registration will still be held to the three minute time limit for that registration.

The virtual public meeting will conclude today either when the last comment is heard, or at 6pm Pacific Time, whichever comes first.

Thank you and now we will begin the public comments.

Our first comment today comes from Emma Haydocy. Emma, please unmute your line and provide your comment. You have 3 minutes from the time you begin speaking.

Emma Haydocy12:45

My name is Emma Haydocy. I am here today speaking on behalf of the Surfrider Foundation. I am the senior manager of the National Coast and Climate Initiative, and I live in the Florida Keys, so it may be or seems strange for me to speak on behalf of California's coastal program, but through my work at Surfrider, I see how the California Coastal Program and California Coastal Commission are really leading the way in how to address sea level rise and other coastal hazards in a way that protects beaches and public recreation to support a robust coastal recreation-driven economy in the state. I also have the pleasure of getting to go to California, typically on an annual basis to visit the Surfrider headquarters and have been able to enjoy and recreate at places like San Onofre State Beach, Surfers Point, and other iconic California surf breaks and beaches that have been protected in large part because of the California Coastal Program.

I want to highlight some particularly exceptional work that the Commission's done recently to promote coastal resiliency that really merits national attention. First, in November 2025, the Commission approved local coastal program amendments for the City of Marina. After properly finding them consistent with the Coastal Act, which ensures long-term coastal resilience by making new shoreline armoring near to impossible. This is a major win for coastal resilience and public access as it prioritizes Marina's beaches, keeping them natural and unarmored, ensuring future development avoids shoreline armoring, all while accounting for sea level rise. In a place along the central coast like Marina that has a tourism and travel economy valued at \$7 billion, keeping new armoring off of Marina's beaches helps to protect the bottom line of the economy and community in the Central Coast.

Second, in December 2025, the Commission unanimously approved the Commission's next five-year strategic plan with support from coastal advocates, including groups like Surfrider. The Commission's approved plan explicitly calls out nature-based solutions, voluntary property buyout programs, and managed retreat as sea level rise strategies. As we see sea level rise accelerate along the California coast, the time really is now to lay groundwork for the relocation and buyout programs that will be necessary to save our beaches and communities and economies in addressing these threats to protect the state, both ecologically and economically.

And so to conclude, just as you concluded in your draft findings last year, and as these examples demonstrate, the Commission and California's Coastal Program are not only properly implementing the Coastal Act, but are leaders in ensuring a thriving, resilient coastline for California. And as somebody who lives in Florida, I sure wish I had an entity like the California Coastal Program protecting my shorelines. Thank you.

Josh Lott15:41

Thank you, Emma. Our next comment comes from Anne Marie Stenton. Please unmute your mic and begin speaking.

Anne Marie Stenton15:54

Thank you. I'm here today to support the stable, predictable, and balanced development and natural resource protection that we've come to expect from California's outstanding coastal management programs. My name is Anne Stenton. I'm speaking to you as a mom, teacher, and lifelong California boater and resident. Some of the most meaningful moments in my life have been spent sailing, surfing, diving, swimming, all of it in the coastal waters of California. Being on the water plays a huge role in my family's mental health and well-being. It's how we spend time together and we're on the water or at the beach several days a week.

As a teacher, I've spent years helping students understand why protecting our oceans matters, not only for the whales, dolphins, birds, and fish, but for our own health and future as well. As you've heard from so many speakers yesterday and today, we need healthy coastlines, and California's coastal management program makes that happen.

For example, I've been especially impressed with the success of our marine protected areas. I can remember snorkeling at Santa Cruz Island as a child in the 80s and 90s when some areas were little more than urchin barrens, basically deserted. Returning in recent years to snorkel in the recently created MPAs, I've seen thick kelp forests, abundant fish, lobsters, sharks, you name it, all while commercial and recreational fishing continues nearby. Researchers from UC Santa Barbara have found that these MPAs increase fish biomass both in and out of the protected areas. This is - impossible to ignore this progress.

Marine protected areas are just one example of how California's management programs work to support recreation, tourism, fishing, and industry, while protecting the habitats that allow marine life to recover and thrive, which in turn helps our communities and economy thrive. Californians recognize that additional offshore oil and gas drilling, as well as other forms of industry pose significant threats to our delicate ecosystems, our health, and our economy. I urge NOAA to recognize the success of California's coastal protections and reaffirm the partnership it's had with California. This is an extremely important moment in history. Please consider how your actions will play out. This is not extreme environmentalism, California's program demonstrates smart, careful stewardship that protects our environment, our economy, and our communities for generations to come. Please think about your choices. Thank you.

Josh Lott18:21

Thank you, Anne. Our next speaker in the queue is Ben Eichenberg.
Ben, please unmute your mic and begin your comments.

Ben Eichenberg18:35

Hi, good afternoon. My name is Ben Eichenberg. I'm a senior attorney with San Francisco Baykeeper. I'm also a parent and a resident of the Bay Area and protecting our waters is deeply personal to me and my family. Baykeeper is a nonprofit organization comprised of approximately 5,000 members and supporters who live and recreate in and around the San Francisco Bay Area. Together, our mission is to defend San Francisco Bay from the biggest threats and hold polluters and government agencies accountable to create healthier communities and help wildlife thrive. Our team of scientists and lawyers investigate pollution via aerial and water patrols, strengthen regulations through science and policy advocacy, and enforce environmental laws on behalf of the public.

Baykeeper works every day to defend our bay's ecosystems and communities, and California's federally approved coastal management program is essential to our work. It ensures local communities have a direct voice in federal decision-making, guiding how projects impact our precious coastlines and estuaries. California is the largest ocean and coastal-based economy in the United States, generating tens of billions of dollars across important economic drivers like tourism, commercial fishing, and maritime trade. Protecting this economic engine requires strong coastal management and comprehensive local expertise.

Under Section 312 of the Coastal Zone Management Act, NOAA is statutorily required to conduct periodic evaluations of state coastal programs, but there is no legal basis for revoking or limiting California's CZMA authority. On day one, President Trump signed an executive order pledging to prevent the weaponization of the federal government, but this evaluation process targets state environmental authority, whether on behalf of Elon Musk's spaceport or expanded fossil fuel extraction and is exactly that kind of weaponization. Congress enacted the CZMA specifically to counter the threat of unchecked coastline development, explicitly identifying the need to balance economic growth with environmental protection. Congress asked the states to step up as partners and agencies like the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission have done just that, making California's coast a worldwide success story. BCDC provides tremendous, priceless, and irreplaceable support for federal action.

Nobody knows the Bay better than BCDC nor understands the precise considerations needed to maintain a healthy functioning ecosystem for the millions who rely on it for economic stability and recreation. As BCDC Executive Director Larry Goldzband noted, most of what BCDC reviews is straightforward, basic maintenance at airports, military sites, and infrastructure. In fact, BCDC frequently uses its federal authority to collaborate productively with the federal government by, for example, working directly with the Navy on dredging to secure sand from the bay floor for critical shoreline restoration projects. Having a dedicated state process where BCDC weighs in leads to multi-benefit outcomes.

These outcomes should not be stripped. NOAA must fulfill its Section 312 mandate by upholding, not [unintelligible] California's lawful authority under the CCMA. Thank you.

Josh Lott21:39

Thank you, Ben. Our next speaker is David Schbach. David, please unmute your mic and begin your comment.

David Shpak21:59

Very good, thank you. Good afternoon, Ms. Gore and Mr. Lott. My name is Dave Shpak. I reside on the Mendocino coast. I appreciate this opportunity to comment on federal review of the California coastal management program. California has a nearly 50-year record of successful

coastal management program implementation, including more than 3,700 federal actions in which the Coastal Commission aligned with federal actions 96% of the time.

This implementation success in coordination with federal administrations led by Republicans and Democrats since the 1970s was borne out by top marks given to the Coastal Commission, Coastal Conservancy, and San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission in the near final draft performance review completed in 2024. So after five decades of partnership with the federal government and setting the gold standard for coastal public trust stewardship, what has changed since 2025 to warrant Secretary Lutnick's claims of repeated and unfounded obstruction and bad faith? How does a 4% variance from federally proposed actions to protect the lives, well-being, and jobs of Californians and the environment which sustains them translate into obstructionist policies in the name of environmental extremism?

The Federal Record notice solicits input regarding program performance on spaceport infrastructure, offshore oil production, pipeline maintenance, desalination projects, and undersea cables. As a 66-year Californian, I have witnessed how careful and respectful regulatory oversight of these types of coastal development and use have consistently enabled lawful and well thought out economic development that have contributed importantly to both state and federal economies, an acceptable balance with protection of public trust resource values and local economies. And while the outcomes have not been perfect, including disastrous oil spills and other ecological damages, California's good faith oversight and partnership has contributed crucially to lessons learned, not just here, but all over the country and in the federal government.

Perhaps what we have before us is a misunderstanding. Perhaps what we have before us is something quite different. My hope is that you will conduct this review honestly and you will base your conclusions on objective evidence.

I appreciate you allowing me to comment and I look forward to your consideration.

Josh Lott24:43

Thank you, you David. Our next comment will be coming from Caty Wagner. Caty, please unmute your mic and begin speaking.

Caty Wagner25:03

Thank you. I'm asking NOAA to leave the coastal management program and the California Coastal Commission fully intact and fully funded. There have only been two space launch projects rejected in their nearly 50-year history, and every undersea cable project has been awarded. If anything, the system works too well. California's coast is a \$51 billion economy and doesn't need disruption by further projects. I'd like to tell you what the coast means to me and

how when I die, I want my ashes scattered at Montaña de Oro State Park, but I'm not sure if that would be a compelling point anymore. With the current federal administration, the cruelty seems to be the point. Listen to the Americans calling in, not just from California, but from all over the country, and find the same conclusions that you have found previously, that the coastal management program works. Leave the program intact. Thank you.

Josh Lott26:02

Thank you, Katie. Our next comment comes from Jill Heaps. Jill, please unmute your mic and begin speaking.

Jill, are you able to unmute your mic? We can't hear you.

Okay, we will come back to jail. Our next comment will be from Laura Tam.

Laura, please unmute your mic and begin speaking.

Let's try the next speaker in the queue, Joshua Quigley. Joshua, please unmute your mic.

Joshua Quigley27:36

Great. My name is Joshua Quigley. I'm a senior policy manager for Save the Bay. Save the Bay is the largest regional organization working to protect and restore the San Francisco Bay for people and wildlife. We helped create the Bay Conservation and Development Commission 60 years ago, which oversees part of the state's coastal management program. And we believe that the partnership between our state and federal agencies has largely been a success.

It's false to say that the state's role in the coastal management program has obstructed economic development. California's economy has grown at a faster rate than any other state and outpaces the overall economic growth of the nation as a whole. The Bay Area's economy over the past 50 years has led the nation, and because of our successful coastal management program, we've seen that growth occur alongside improvements in the health of the San Francisco Bay. This has been possible due to the close coordination and collaboration that exists between BCDC and federal project managers to design and advance projects that balance these goals.

Prior to the establishment of BCDC and the coastal management program, the shoreline of the San Francisco Bay was largely inaccessible. It was ringed by garbage and waste dumps, and it was dominated by polluting industries. Through the coastal management program and the work of state and federal agencies, we have re-established tens of thousands of acres of healthy habitat, increased public access with shoreline parks connected by the bay trail, and reduced pollution which has improved water quality and the health of communities near the shoreline.

In fact, by protecting our coastal resources and promoting public safety and health, California has fostered economic growth, not hindered it. People are drawn to California because of its

iconic landscapes, which the Coastal Commission, the Coastal Conservancy, and BCDC work to protect.

Oil spills and other polluting industries put the state's more than \$50 billion coastal economy at risk. Allowing harmful industrial uses along the shoreline of the San Francisco Bay would not only undermine the progress that we have spent decades making, but will likely worsen environmental health impacts in communities that have long suffered and where progress only began recently. People shouldn't have to trade their health and the health of their children and communities for economic growth.

Vibrant shoreline habitat shouldn't be seen as an obstacle to development, but an asset that enriches our communities and provides benefits like flood resilience and recreational space. California is showing that we don't have to choose between a healthy coast and a strong economy, but that requires continuing to support our strong, integrated, and collaborative coastal management program. The administration should acknowledge California as a model for cooperative coastal management, and rather than undermining that process, the state and federal government should continue to build on the success of the past 50 years and ensure that we keep the California coast open, accessible, healthy, and thriving for generations to come. Thank you.

Josh Lott30:26

Thank you, Joshua. Let's go back now to Jill Heaps.

Jill, please unmute your microphone and you will have three minutes once you begin speaking.

Jill Heaps31:01

I hear the feedback as well. Let me try to finish this and I'll go back again.

Josh Lott31:10

We will now turn back to Laura Tam. Laura, please unmute your microphone and you have three minutes once you begin speaking.

We will try again with Jill and Laura in a bit, but first let's go to the next person in the queue, Donald Amador. Donald, you have three minutes once you begin speaking.

Donald Amador32:13

I'm Don Amador, a native Californian who grew up in the north coast in Humboldt County. and I've spent much of my life exploring, documenting, and working on California's coastal public lands. For much of the 20th century, motorized recreation was one of the many accepted ways Californians experienced the coast. Over the past 50 years, those motorized opportunities have steadily diminished. I ask you to please evaluate not only what California's coastal management program has accomplished, but how it makes decisions and if the process is

sufficiently broad, collaborative, and adaptive to address today's changing conditions. And finally, I also ask that you expand the scope of analysis to ensure that outdoor recreation receives adequate consideration in this review. Thank you.

Josh Lott33:11

Thank you Donald for your comment.

Let's go back to Laura Tam. Laura, please unmute your mic and you have three minutes to speak once you begin speaking.

Next in the queue is William Doyle. William, please unmute your microphone and you have three minutes to speak once you begin speaking.

William Doyle34:07

Good afternoon, my name is William Doyle and I serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the Dredging Contractors of America. Thank you to NOAA's Office for Coastal Management for this opportunity to comment on its evaluation of the California coastal management program. Dredging and marine construction contractors work where environmental stewardship, maritime commerce, national security, energy infrastructure, and coastal resilience meet.

Our member companies, including companies working in California, maintain navigation channels, improve ports and harbors, nourish beaches, restore wetlands, strengthen shorelines, and construct and maintain essential marine infrastructure.

We support NOAA's careful review of whether California's program is fully implementing Coastal Zone Management Act, including its responsibilities to protect coastal resources, consider the national interest, coordinate effectively with federal agencies, and provide timely and predictable decision-making. Our industry is not asking for environmental standards to be weakened. Dredging contractors operate under extensive federal and state permits, environmental controls, monitoring requirements, and project-specific conditions. We understand that responsible marine construction requires sound science, careful planning, protection of sensitive resources, and the highest standards of worker and public safety.

Several subjects identified by NOAA have direct connections to dredging and marine construction. Offshore energy facilities, pipelines, desalination systems, and undersea cables may require seabed preparation, trenching, installation, shoreline approaches, maintenance, repair, and eventual decommissioning. Although our member companies do not decide whether these projects should be authorized, they are responsible for performing permitted work safely, precisely, and in full compliance with applicable requirements. For these activities, unnecessary delay and uncertainty can create environmental safety and infrastructure risks, particularly when

an existing pipeline, cable, navigation channel, or marine facility requires timely maintenance or repair.

California's program should distinguish appropriately among new construction, routine maintenance, emergency response, and decommissioning. It should provide clear information requirements, early agency coordination, predictable review schedules, and workable procedures to work on [unintelligible].

Suitable sediment should be treated as a resource whenever practicable rather than material to be discarded. It can nourish eroded beaches, restore wetlands and wildlife habitat, strengthen natural and constructed shorelines, and improve coastal resilience. These projects can advance environmental restoration while protecting communities and vital infrastructure.

A successful coastal management program should therefore do three things well. Maintain rigorous environmental and safety protections, provide clear...[microphone turned off due to time limit]

Josh Lott37:14

Thank you, William. You've reached your three minutes. Thank you.

Our next speaker will be Dan Haifley. Dan, please unmute your mic and begin speaking.

Dan Haifley37:42

Thank you very much. My name is Dan Haifley and I've been involved in coastal and ocean protection and education programs since 1986. I served as the first executive director of Save Our Shores and later was the founding director of O'Neill's Sea Odyssey, which has taken 135,000 mostly low income, elementary school students on the Monterey Bay from the Santa Cruz Harbor for rigorous ocean science lessons since 1996. Your mandate to be here today is based on the false premise that California's review does not align with federal coastal and ocean priorities, and I reference the comments of the Commerce Secretary in a recent press release. In fact, it is rooted in them. The Coastal Commission reviews projects narrowly based on federally approved state policies. Those federally approved state policies support the economic engine that propels our nation, and this includes shipping, recreation, and fishing. And California's \$159 billion tourism industry, which provides 1.2 million jobs, is made possible by sensible management of our spectacular coast and ocean. And I would like to comment that I did work for 25 years in the Santa Cruz Harbor, and there is a mandatory dredge program there that supports the economy of both the working commercial fishing fleet, as well as other working boats that operate out of that port. It is a small harbor, but its relationship with the California Coastal Commission, as well as with the Army Corps of Engineers has been very smooth and the dredge program operates successfully because of that well-balanced relationship that exists. And I

referenced previous comments about dredging, very important for the economy of this harbor and for many of those working vessels.

So I would like to encourage you to be very, very efficient and very meticulous with your review, as I know you will as professionals. And thank you for your time and your consideration. And I hope that the outcome is that the California Coastal Commission and the partner agencies that it works with, BCDC and the California Coastal Conservancy, will be able to continue this very successful partnership. Thank you very much.

Josh Lott40:13

Thank you, Dan.

Our next comment comes from Michaela Coats. Michaela, please unmute your microphone. You'll have three minutes from when you begin speaking.

Michaela Coats40:27

Wonderful. My name is Michaela Coats. I'm a lifelong California resident currently residing in Tustin, and I'm here in support of California's coastal management program and specifically the California Coastal Commission. Growing up in Orange County, I was raised with the coast as my backyard. And as a kid, I didn't know how lucky I was to frequent a coastline where beaches were accessible to everyone and where our shores weren't dominated by high rises and private development. As an adult, I've come to understand that this coastline did not happen by accident. It is a result of decades of strong coastal protections, a framework that was established by California voters 50 years ago.

Thanks to California's coastal management program and the Coastal Commission, I can explore tide pools, snorkel in our kelp forests, and enjoy our beaches, knowing that these resources are protected for the public today and for future generations. I am also Surfrider Foundation's Southern California Regional Manager, helping to support six of our grassroots chapters from Los Angeles to San Diego. Through this work, I see firsthand how California's coastal protections enable our volunteers to access the coast, advocate for clean water and healthy beaches, and participate meaningfully in decisions that affect our coastal communities, just like this one. We can look to California's \$50 billion coastal economy as proof that protecting our coast does not come at the expense of businesses or industries. It is indeed what makes that economy possible.

But to provide a recent example demonstrating how the Commission is properly implementing its approved coastal program to protect our coast, in December of 2024, the Commission unanimously approved an amendment to an existing coastal development permit for maintenance dredging at Agua Hedionda Lagoon by Poseidon, the operator of the Carlsbad desalination plant. The amendment allowed additional dredging cycles of up to 500,000 cubic yards of sand to be

dredged per cycle and deposited on north, middle, and south beaches in Carlsbad. Surfrider San Diego chapter participated in the Commission's review and raised concerns about potential impacts to surfing conditions. The Commission listened to these concerns and included conditions addressing issues such as grunion spawning, invasive species, surf monitoring, and long-term sand movement. The Poseidon Mitigation Program is a key component in ensuring the Carlsbad Desalination Plant complies with Coastal Act requirements, and this is exactly the type of thoughtful, science-based decision-making that California's coastal management program was designed to facilitate. In this example, the Commission balanced the need to maintain an important coastal facility with the protection of beaches, marine resources, recreation, and public interests. Just as you concluded in your draft findings last year, and as this example demonstrates, the Commission is properly implementing the Coastal Act and successfully protecting clean beaches, safe recreation, and a healthy coastal economy throughout California for all. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to add my voice in support of California's coastal management program.

Josh Lott43:21

Thank you, Michaela.

Our next comment will come from Sarah Heintzelman.

Sarah, please unmute your microphone. You will have three minutes from when you begin speaking.

Sara Heintzelman43:56

Good afternoon. My name is Sarah Heintzelman, and I was born and raised in California, and I'm lucky enough to still reside in California. I support the work the California Coastal Commission is doing to protect my local beaches. The coast and ocean is an integral part of my family's life. We visit our local beaches to play, walk, swim, surf, paddle, tide pool, and gather with family and friends. I grew up enjoying our beaches with my parents and now get to share them with my own children.

The beaches and water that my family and I recreate in are cleaner and safer thanks to the Coastal Commission and California's Coastal Program. There are so many examples of Commission actions that have benefited California beaches and our coastal access. Today I want to highlight two recent examples.

First, in September 2025, the approved a permit for a beachfront homeowner in Santa Cruz with a condition that required an updated mean high tide line survey. The Commission also added clarifying language that the permit did not allow encroachment on public trust lands. Ensuring updated mean high tide line information, as the Coastal Commission did here, allows the State Lands Commission to require proper leasing and compensation when private structures encroach on our public tidelands.

Second, in April 2026, the Commission unanimously approved a new Beaches and Bluffs Hazards Adaptation Chapter of the City of Santa Cruz's Land Use Plan. The first update is part of the City's comprehensive Local Coastal Program update. Commission staff worked closely with the city and was receptive to feedback from local groups. The results set the standard for protective local coastal hazard policies and other regions that better protect beaches, surf breaks, and coastal access ways, and I think the Commission does that a lot. They set the standard by listening to the voices of the community and incorporating better solutions to move things forwards. These decisions, which are consistent with the California Coastal Act, protect the beaches and coasts that I care about and ensure that there will still be beaches to visit and clean water to swim, paddle, and surf in for my family and hopefully for all of our future generations to come. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA46:19

Thank you, Sarah. Our next speaker is Mary Jane Schramm. Mary Jane, please unmute your mic and share your comment.

Mary Jane Schramm46:57

Thank you. Sorry. Good day. I'm Mary Jane Schramm, formerly with NOAA's Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. For over 40 years, I've worked with state and federal agencies and science and conservation groups on oil spill response, ecosystem monitoring, shipwreck lightering, wildlife rescue, and communications. I've seen many impacts to this globally significant marine ecosystem, and I'm proud to have worked with NOAA to help prevent, mitigate them. NOAA's own mission and values statement highlights science, service, and stewardship. NOAA's stewardship mandate is, quote "to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources," end quote.

Note that conserve comes before manage for good reason. Failure to conserve actively now will leave us with fewer resources to manage. Our Coastal Commission reviews, regulates, and objects to offshore oil and gas exploration and other projects that conflict with California's strict environmental protection policies. Such activities threaten ecosystems and socioeconomic resources like fishing, recreation, and tourism. The Commission conserves and protects marine life such as seabirds, marine mammals, my favorite, and their habitats, and it encourages public stewardship through its many opportunities for personal involvement.

The Commission shares with NOAA many goals that can only be achieved through respectful partnerships, not by imperial dictums from an administration set on weakening states' rights and reducing public input, on the issues that affect us. This curiously timed special evaluation ordered by the Trump Commerce Department departs from the CZMA's statutory five to ten year cycle. It's been only a year and a half since the Commission passed its last evaluation with high

marks. This is part of a fishing expedition, a clear attempt to lower standards and move the goalposts to promote oil drilling and seafloor mining, deregulate coastal development and favor special interests. Still, I believe the evaluation can be fair, if NOAA will only exercise its direct authority to protect and restore marine ecosystems and endangered species, regulate and sustain our fisheries, and support our marine sanctuaries and other MPAs in partnership with the Coastal Commission. This will take courage, determination, and integrity under pressure. As a former NOAA colleague, I trust you'll stand by these values and conduct the evaluation accordingly. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA49:50

Thank you, Mary Jane.

Our next comment comes from Joanna Guerra. Joanna, please unmute your mic and provide your comment.

Joana Guerra50:12

Good afternoon. My name is Joana Guerra and I live in San Diego, California, and I'm here today to support California's coastal management program, especially the California Coastal Commission and the work it is doing to protect our communities and our coastal resources. I grew up 40 miles inland from my closest beach in Barrett Lake, in Hamul, and when I had the opportunity to visit our local beaches, my family and I enjoyed a whole day at Imperial Beach and Coronado Beach swimming and having an all-day carne asada. But as the years went on, I haven't enjoyed it as much because of the decades-long transboundary pollution crisis in South Bay. The California Coastal Commission has played a critical role over the past few years to protect not only our coastal resources, but public health where it's been threatened by sewage pollution from the Tijuana River watershed.

In October of 2024, the Commission voted to send a crucial letter to the Biden administration urging a declaration of emergency in light of the ongoing environmental crisis affecting Imperial Beach and the transboundary region. This was an important step to bringing attention and funding to the crisis that is harmful to the local communities by not only closing beaches, but by exposing residents to harmful fumes. Just this June, the Coastal Commission also approved an emergency permit for San Diego County to repair leaking sewer pipes near Saturn Boulevard in order to reduce toxic hydrogen sulfide emissions and foul odors. This is important to improve air quality and protect the health of all residents, but especially local children, many of whom suffer from asthma and other issues. These decisions, which are consistent with the California Coastal Act, protect public health and the beaches on the coast that I care about. For 50 years, these programs have protected our ocean and beaches and ensured public access to the coastal treasures that I get to call home. Thank you for your time and for keeping greedy hands off our California coast.

Joelle Gore - NOAA52:16

Thank you, Joanna.

Our next comment comes from Ashley Eagle Gibbs. Ashley, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Ashley Eagle-Gibbs52:31

Good afternoon, Mr. Lott. My name is Ashley Eagle-Gibbs and I am the director of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin. We're based north of San Francisco and we represent our local coastal communities and approximately 1,200 members. We support California's coastal management program, which works efficiently and successfully to bolster California's marine economy, providing over 40 billion in GDP annually. NOAA's 2024 Marine Economy Report shows that California's marine economy has provided increased businesses, jobs, wages, and GDP over the last decade. This is a sign of a flourishing coastal economy, not one that has been obstructed. Tourism and recreation employ the largest sector of marine economy workers and produce almost half of its GDP. People flock to California because of its plentiful coastal access points and the healthy environment, which are all maintained and improved through California's coastal management program, or CCMP. Importantly, the CCMP has concurred with the majority of federal projects it reviews, including space port infrastructure and undersea cables, and even during the very rare instances when the state disagrees, the federal government still has the ability to override that decision and proceed with its project regardless.

The federal-state partnership fostered by the act allows crucial state expertise to improve projects that could have harmful unintended consequences for California's valuable coastal resources and economy. The CCMP has provided the opportunity for federal projects to be modified to mitigate negative impacts to working waterfronts, commercial fishing, coastal habitats, and water quality. This has ensured that California's vital coastal economy functions effectively, not only for the benefit of Californians, but for the entire country and its national priorities. NOAA's 2025 draft review of the CCMP found that it was working efficiently and as intended. And this program places California and the U.S. on the world stage of coastal conservation and economic development. Federal resources and staff time should be used to continue support for this important federal-state partnership rather than a premature, unnecessary review. Thank you so much for this opportunity and for your public service.

Joelle Gore - NOAA54:54

Thank you, Ashley.

Our next comment comes from Trey Highton. Trey, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Trey Highton55:12

Good afternoon. My name is Trey Highton. I am speaking today in both my personal capacity as a private citizen and professionally as the senior communications manager at the Surfrider Foundation, which is based in San Clemente, California. Although I currently live in Virginia Beach, Virginia, I spent about half of my life, close to 20 years in California. Both of my kids were born there, and I originally moved there from the East Coast because, like many people all over the world, I was drawn to and chasing the quote unquote “California dream”, which is not an industrialized coastline, but one of open natural beauty that has been conserved and protected, and I would encourage the committee to keep that to mind because once it is developed, it is not something that easily come back.

I'd like to talk today about one decision in particular that stands out to me. In June of 2025, the California Coastal Commission properly objected to a federal consistency determination for a seven-year expansion of the Navy's offshore training and testing program. This program covered 330,000 square miles of California's coastal waters. The proposal would have allowed more than an estimated 38 million behavioral disturbances and thousands of injuries and deaths to marine mammals. Living in Virginia Beach, which is the East Coast center where the Navy SEALs train and right next door to Norfolk, Virginia, the largest naval installation of the world, I can appreciate the dedication of our service members and the need for them to train in order to maintain mission readiness. But it's also very important to me that coastal states like California and Virginia have the ability to put reasonable conditions on military training in order to protect our marine and coastal resources for all people. The power to have states weigh in on federal projects to ensure they are consistent with the state's coastal program designed to protect coastal resources is important to me as a Virginian who regularly visits California for both business and pleasure. I want to see both California and Virginia retain this power and would object to any efforts to strip this authority from the states. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA57:29

Thank you, Trey.

Our next comment comes from Steve Rusch. Steve, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Steve Rusch58:02

Hi, good afternoon. My name's Steve Rusch. I'm a native Californian. I'm here to speak today on behalf of Sable Offshore Corp. Thanks for the opportunity to provide public comment as part of NOAA's performance evaluation of California's coastal management program. I wanted to share my concern about a pattern of the state expanding its own authority past what the law allows, and what past permits have long established. The San Ynez pipeline system operated for decades in Santa Barbara County under permits issued by both local, state, and federal agencies more than

30 years ago. Those are not informal understandings. They're formal approvals that businesses and workers in this region relied upon, and when the state Commission claims years later routine maintenance under those existing permits suddenly require new authorizations, more process and delay, it does not just affect one company, it signals to every business operating under a state or federal permit in this state that the ground can shift under them at any time.

That kind of unpredictability makes it harder to invest, harder to plan and harder to keep good jobs in our region. Furthermore, when the US Secretary of Energy issued an order under the Defense Production Act in March 2026 of this year, Sable Offshore complied immediately, resuming the flow of oil through its onshore pipeline system the following day. That is exactly the kind of good faith compliance with federal direction that the system is supposed to reward, not punish. Instead, just months later, Coastal Commission staff alleged that this same compliance violated state law and notified Sable that it intended to pursue new penalties. When Sable asked the Commission to pause any proceedings until court could resolve the pending question of whether the relevant state law even applied to this pipeline, the Commission refused.

That sequence troubles me. The company complied with a national security order from the federal government and was met with new punitive action from the state just months later. I'm asking NOAA to look closely at whether California's coastal management program is maintaining or undermining the kind of stable coordinated permanent environment for major coastal industries that the Coastal Zone Management Act was designed for. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:00:38

Thank you.

Next comment comes from Mark Palmer. Mark, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Mark J Palmer01:01:12

I am Mark J. Palmer. I'm Associate Director of the International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute. We work to protect whales and dolphins globally. We're based in Berkeley, California. I think we all know why we're here, and I don't see any reason to mince words about it. As we all know, back in 2024, during the run-up to the election, credible news reports stated that Donald Trump met with members of the oil industry and asked them for campaign contributions amounting to \$2 billion. In return, he apparently told them that he would give them everything they wanted to the oil industry. I think this whole review of the California Coastal Commission as well as the other steps being taken by NOAA, the Department of Commerce, and by Interior are clearly aimed at continuing this effort, this political effort, to give the oil industry everything they wanted and I should note that I'm not trying to impugn anybody in the ranks of NOAA because I think it's clear that the dictates are coming from the White House and higher up in the hierarchy and has nothing to do with science or with resource

extraction or with good coastal management. It has everything to do with paying off the oil industry for their campaign contributions. Sadly, they only gave three quarters of a billion dollars to Mr. Trump, but apparently that was enough, and he is now our president, and we now have him paying off the oil industry, giving them everything they want.

We really should stop this. We really should tell you to go back to Washington and tell the White House, tell the upper management of the Interior Department that Californians protected their coast. I was there when we got the initiative set up and on the ballot and passed that established the Coastal Commission and now here I am many years later defending it along with all the other good people who are on this call. We don't want you to come and drill on our coast, we don't want you to come and put in space ports for Mr.....I can't even remember his name now. In any event, we all know that these things are moving not because of the management principles. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. I appreciate it.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:04:02

Thank you, Mark.

Our next comments come from Karina Johnston. Karina, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Karina Johnston01:04:24

Hello, my name is Karina Johnston. I'm the executive director of Heal the Ocean, a coastal ecologist, and a mom. Heal the Ocean represents thousands of stakeholders across Santa Barbara County, California, and we're here today in strong and unequivocal support of the California Coastal Commission, the Coastal Act, and California's solid and decades-long implementation of the Coastal Zone Management Act across multiple agencies. The Coastal Commission and its partner agencies should be celebrating 50 years of incredible accomplishments for California right now, instead of going through an extra federal review. The successes of our CZMA implementing agencies include excelling across difficult challenges that they undertake to equitably balance economic development and growth with natural resource conservation.

California is the world's fourth largest economy, contributing \$4.4 trillion annually to the United States economy and GDP, which accounts for about 14% of the entire U.S. output and is a primary driver for national growth. California plays a vital role in funding federal programs, and CZMA management is dependent on a balance of economic growth alongside environmental health and coastal access. Coastal tourism, recreation, fishing, many other resources are significant components of this value and are protected by California's environmental laws and regulations. The CZMA agencies are vital to protecting economic benefits while appropriately managing our coastal resources. The Commission is a vital regulatory agency and has a long and successful track record of equitable balance across these goals. I urge NOAA to recognize these

accomplishments and successes, and thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments as part of the evaluation.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:06:20

Thank you, Karina.

Our next comment comes from Lydia Ponce. Lydia, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Okay, we will move on to the next speaker. Lydia has dropped from the call.

Our next speaker is Stephanie Katers. Stephanie, please unmute your mic.

Stephanie Katers01:07:54

My name is Stephanie Katers. I live in Santa Barbara. I've raised my family here, frequenting our gorgeous beaches, and I am employed by Sable. I've worked in Las Flores Canyon for almost 15 years. The opposition tries to make it sound like the San Ynez pipeline system is somehow unsafe for operation and that oil transportation should stop. The federal government and dozens of other regulatory agencies say otherwise. Sable undertook repair and maintenance activities along the onshore pipeline consistent with federal regulations in 2024 and 2025. The County of Santa Barbara confirmed that the onshore repair work was authorized by the pipeline's existing permits. Federal agencies confirmed that offshore repair work in federal waters was also authorized by existing permits. Once those repairs were completed, PHMSA inspected the onshore pipeline, approved a restart plan, and issued a permit to operate.

Meanwhile, the California Coastal Commission disagreed as to whether the repair work was already authorized, issued a cease and desist order, and imposed the largest administrative penalty in the Commission's history, over \$18 million for work that was required to take place out of a consent decree. I'm not a lawyer or an engineer, but I know what it looks like when federal pipeline safety experts say something is safe and authorized and another body overrides that finding based on its own interpretation of its own authority. I'm asking NOAA to weigh that imbalance seriously.

This year, the Coastal Commission faced two major losses in one week from our state Supreme Court. The Coastal Commission has earned a reputation as the most oppressive land use authority in the United States. Many say that the Coastal Commission has exceeded its mission through overreach. The California Coastal Commission's push to stop Sable's oil pipeline and prevent oil and gas production is short-sighted and dangerous to our energy infrastructure. The Coastal Commission has caved to political dogma which somehow thinks they're helping the environment by forcing oil to be imported from halfway around the world rather than producing it right here where we have the most stringent environmental regulations in the world. This renewed scrutiny of the Coastal Commission's authority is of the utmost importance for

determining our energy independence. NOAA is required to ensure that states give due consideration to national infrastructure and economic needs. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:10:48

Thank you, Stephanie.

Our next comment comes from Noah Boland. Noah, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Noah Boland01:11:01

Hi there, my name is Noah Boland and I'm the programs manager at Heal the Ocean, a nonprofit focused on reducing sources of ocean pollution and strengthening coastal resilience in Santa Barbara, California. I'm here speaking on behalf of Heal the Ocean and on behalf of our thousands of supporters to say that we need the California Coastal Commission. It is invaluable for protecting California's coastal resources and protecting the public's right to access the coast. The California coastal management program is one of the most successful management programs in the world.

Hundreds of public beach access ways and trails to and along the coast have been saved and expanded. Vital wetlands, unique terrestrial habitats, and threatened and endangered species have been protected from encroaching development. Thousands of acres of stunning rural and agricultural landscapes have been preserved.

California has also led the way regulating new offshore oil and other harmful industrial activity in the coastal zone. In Santa Barbara, the Coastal Commission is working to protect our coastline from the threats of oil and gas expansion. We're especially grateful for this work because the Santa Barbara Channel is a unique biodiversity hotspot that provides unmatched ecological and cultural significance. And we have unfortunately already experienced the devastating impacts of offshore oil development through two massive oil spills. That said, California's coastal management program has a decades-long record of approving well-sited projects and objecting only when there's documented harm. The program is essential to ensure collaboration between federal and state governments and agencies to work together to manage coastal resources. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:12:51

Thank you, Noah.

Our next comment comes from Liz Shields. Liz, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Liz Shields01:13:06

Good afternoon, my name is Liz Shields and I'm representing the Monterey Bay Aquarium as the Ocean Conservation Policy Analyst. I appreciate the opportunity to address this administration's

redundant review of California's coastal management program under the Coastal Zone Management Act, a program whose long-standing reputation and progress has earned exceptional reviews to date, including in the most recent review in 2024. Our team at the aquarium is extremely concerned about the statewide ramifications of the potential defunding and decertification of the state's coastal management program. This federal review threatens the future management of our vulnerable coastline, further exposing it to the impacts of climate change escalated by current federal efforts to introduce new offshore oil drilling, illegally restart the Sable pipeline, risk fossil fuel extraction from aging infrastructure, consider deep sea mining, and construct offshore infrastructure for space exploration.

California has concurred with the vast majority of proposed projects in these fields over the nearly 50-year history of its coastal management program, contributing local knowledge and expertise to significantly improve the projects. By singling out California for a new review out of the standard sequence of CZMA evaluations, NOAA and the administration are sending an alarming message that any state's rights and responsibilities to manage their coastal resources can be undermined at any time if the federal government disagrees with state oversight. Even though the state is subject to precise public planning processes, and robust feedback from their local and impacted communities. This is a clear effort to target one of the most effective tools for states to protect local coastal resources. Americans view the coast as a treasured place to live, visit and participate in a diverse coastal economy. The public recognizes coastal resources can coexist with responsible development. The CZMA and coastal management programs are essential to ensure the public and states have a voice in federal planning. If NOAA proceeds with this evaluation, the consequences extend beyond the ocean ecosystem and coastal habitats. This impacts states, local communities, and their ability to engage with federal activities to apply local knowledge and protect their unique economic, cultural, and natural resources. We ask that NOAA withdraw this evaluation and issue the final report from the 2024 review of California's coastal management program as part of the regular process under CZMA. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:15:22

Thank you, Liz.

Our next comment comes from Nina Atkind. Nina, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Nina Atkind01:15:36

Good afternoon, my name is Nina Atkind and I live in San Francisco, California. I am here today to support the California Coastal Commission and the work it does to protect our beaches and coastal resources. I surf, swim, and dive along the California coast, and the beaches and water I recreate in are cleaner and safer thanks to the Coastal Commission and California's coastal program. As just one example of how the Commission is protecting beaches and equitable access, in March of 2025, the California Coastal Commission approved a five-year beach

management plan for cowl and main beaches in Santa Cruz. The plan governs beach grooming, event permitting, sand recontouring, and recreational programming. It also introduces explicit equity measures, including ADA beach mats, multilingual outreach, and protection of nonprofit beach access. It codified free access for nonprofit surf equity groups, which reduces real barriers for communities of color and working class youth to safely and consistently access the beach. This beach management plan represents a significant advancement for equity-centered beach access, formalizing inclusive practices already in place and sending a signal to other jurisdictions. This vote shows the Commission taking environmental justice seriously and prioritizing access for all. The Coastal management program gives us an important legal framework for keeping public beaches in place, even as climate impacts intensify.

At San Francisco's Ocean Beach, it's been used to require the Public Utilities Commission to keep their pending seawall buried in sand and to initiate long-term planning for relocation as sea levels rise. It's currently requiring the Parks Department to begin restoring the dunes along Ocean Beach, and it will be leaned on to dictate what equitable management of the space looks like in years to come. We would love to see something like Santa Cruz's Beach Management Plan in San Francisco, and we need the Coastal Zone Management Program and the Coastal Commission to do it. This review is a politically motivated federal action to target California's coastal protections at the direct expense of beach access, ocean health, and the health of our communities. Please respect the will of California's voters, protect states' rights, and stop this review. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:18:12

Thank you, Nina.

Our next comment comes from Emily McCardy. Emily, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Emilie McCardy01:18:36

Hi, my name is Emily McCardy. I'm an ocean conservation intern with Environment California, a statewide environmental group that works for all Californians to ensure clean air, clean water, and a livable future, which requires a healthy coast. I'm also a student at UC Davis studying environmental policy and a lifelong Californian. The coast is important to Californians. The Public Policy Institute of California recently found that 93% of people in the state believe that the conditions of our oceans and beaches are very or somewhat important to California's economy and future quality of life. California's coast is home to incredible wildlife, many of which are at risk of extinction.

Being from Southern California myself, I can't imagine our coast without orcas along Southern California or the sea otters near Morro Bay. Our coast also provides many people with immense joy through its breathtaking views and recreational activities like swimming and surfing.

Unfortunately, our coastline is under threat, putting the future of many species living off the coast and all of the coastal recreational activities that people enjoy in jeopardy. California is burdened with oil spills every year, killing wildlife and preventing people from enjoying all the coast has to offer. The threat that oil spills pose to California's coast is why following the worst oil spill in our state's history, President Nixon enacted the Coastal Zone Management Act giving state and local governments a say in what happens to our oceans. More than 50 years ago, California decided to protect our coast and pass the Coastal Act with overwhelming support on the ballot.

California has since continued to support protecting our oceans, but in order to continue to do so, local communities and residents need to retain their right to have a say in what happens to our oceans. Californians don't want more oil spills. They want to avoid more disasters like the Amplify and Plains oil spills so that way we can keep our coasts healthy and continue to enjoy. enjoy California's coast for generations to come. Californians deserve to have a voice in what happens to our oceans. This is why I must strongly oppose any changes to the Coastal Zone Management Act that would cut out the voice of local communities and residents from having a say in the future of our oceans. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:20:47

Thank you, Emily.

Our next comment comes from Lydia Ponce. Lydia, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Lydia Ponce01:21:22

Good afternoon. I just want to uplift the comments with the exception, of course, of Sable employees and pro-Sable oil industries. I really respect and am honored to speak today before you because I am a Yaku Mayu Quechua, and Scottish Indigenous beach woman who basically grew up first in La Jolla, and I had such a beautiful underwater world. And, you know, here and right there in La Jolla at the Cove, where the sea lions here in 2026 are just fighting for their right with their babies for a space to be, and in the most beautiful natural space in the beautiful part of the 1,100 miles of the ocean of our coast. San Pedro and Venice also offered priceless family and community memories. The memories without extractive industries, desal, dredging, Pacific Ocean floor mining. The California coast is a global public space for everyone all over the world to come. The CCMP for 50 years, the California Coastal Commission have offered an open invitation for all children to play at the coastal beaches. So I have to ask, what is sacred when we try to live in balance? Because Indigenous people coexist with nature. And, you know, all of this policy and ordinances where our state has defended, protected, and honored the natural marine and coastal land relatives, the ones who can't speak for themselves. But that's for all seven generations. It's not just for one White House admin or two or three, whatever the future holds. We should be leaving something remarkably healthy for the children from all over the

world, let alone the ones who decided to call California home. And I thank you, and I'm sorry about the...the disconnection previously.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:23:22

Thank you, Lydia.

Our next comment comes from Barbara Collins. Please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Barbara Collins01:24:08

Thank you. My name is Barbara Collins. I live in Oceanside, California. I've been here for 28 years. And I love our beaches and our coastal lagoons that are teeming with wildlife. In Oceanside, like many coastal cities, the beach and the ocean are the lifeblood of our economy. Tourists from all over the country flock here to enjoy it, play in the surf, and wonder at the natural beauty of our coast. Our coasts are a national treasure. They provide a wealth of benefits for everyone when they're managed well, and California has an excellent record of coastal management for five decades. This review of California's coastal management bears all the hallmarks of a politically motivated pretext to give the fossil fuel industry and other cronies of this administration another obscene handout from our national treasury.

Our coastal zone management was reviewed two years ago, and that review verified California was managing the coast effectively and it's in compliance with federal requirements. That report was mysteriously declared null and void this year. Normally the coastal management review would not happen again for five to ten years. Yet here we are two years later, with another review based on Secretary Lutnick's arbitrary determination. He certainly didn't base it on California's excellent record. If NOAA finds California out of compliance, this lawless dictatorial administration will try to impose offshore drilling and the industrialization of the coast down our throats. We're all too familiar with the destruction to our coast that will come from that. For those reasons, I urge NOAA to certify again that California is doing a good job managing the coast for the benefit of all our citizens. California is in compliance, the coast is protected, and all of the economic interests that are dependent on the coast are protected, not just the administration's cronies who pay to play. But that's not how this administration operates. This looks like another looting of a national treasure to give the crony capitalists more of our nation's wealth. We will fight and we will win in the courts because we do still have the rule of law in the United States. We will stop the crony capitalist pay-to-play takeover of our coast. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and voice my support for California's excellent coastal management.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:26:39

Thank you, Barbara.

Our next comment comes from Mike Umbro. Mike, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Mike Umbro01:26:58

Good afternoon. My name is Mike Umbro and I'm speaking today on behalf of Fieldview Capital Advisors. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment as part of NOAA's performance evaluation of California's coastal management program. Congress passed the Coastal Zone Management Act to strike a balance. States can weigh in on federal actions that affect their coasts.

But the authority comes with responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is giving priority consideration to national defense and energy related uses that need to be located on the coast. States are supposed to work with federal agencies on these objectives, not against them. This is not my interpretation. It is written directly into law, the law Congress passed.

This issue is exactly what NOAA is reviewing today. The extent to which California has addressed the coastal management needs identified in the CZMA and the Department of Commerce has confirmed that this review should include how California's coastal management practices have addressed or failed to address compatible economic development and federal priorities including offshore oil production and pipeline maintenance. I am here because I believe the record shows California and specifically the California Coastal Commission has not lived up to that responsibility. The Commission has repeatedly attempted to assert new authority and oppose new requirements intended to delay and ultimately stop energy-related activities that federal and local agencies already reviewed and approved. That directly conflicts with what federal law requires, and NOAA's evaluation should take that seriously. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:28:36

Thank you, Mike.

Our next comment comes from Jay McCord. Jay, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Jay McCord01:28:51

Good afternoon. My name is Jay McCord. I am a native Californian. I'm speaking on behalf of the SYU project as an ExxonMobil annuitant. I joined SYU at the Las Flores Canyon in 1992 as a construction safety advisor. We had over 1,000 workers building the SYU facility up to nuclear specs with 100% x-ray testing on all the welds, far exceeding the federal requirements. The record of SYU's success operating in Santa Barbara channel has been impeccable. The Las Flores Canyon and SYU project within Exxon was known as the crown jewel of ExxonMobil in the United States.

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to provide this public comment as part of NOAA's performance evaluation of California's coastal management plan. The issues surrounding the Santa Ynez pipeline and offshore drilling in general are not just about permits and paperwork.

These issues touch directly on national security, and I do not think we should take that lightly. In March 2026, the U.S. Secretary of Energy issued an order under the Federal Defense Production Act directing Sable to prioritize and allocate pipeline transportation services for the San Ynez pipeline system. That order was based on a national emergency declaration finding that insufficient domestic energy production, transportation refining, and generation poses an unusual and extraordinary threat to our nation's economy, national security and foreign policy. That is about as serious a determination as it gets. The Defense Production Act is not used for routine matters. It is reserved for situations the federal government considers critical to national security. Sable offshore complied with that order and resumed petroleum transportation through the onshore pipeline segments the very next day. That is a company following a direct federal directive tied to national security. I believe NOAA should weigh heavily in the fact that California's coastal management program has continued to obstruct activity and that the federal government has formally identified it as a national security priority. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:31:46

Thank you, Jay.

Our next comment comes from Matt Koller. Matt, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Matt Koller01:32:01

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Matt Koller and I'm the California Offshore Drilling Campaign Manager for the Surfrider Foundation. I'm speaking today on behalf of our members who work to protect and enjoy California's ocean, waves, and beaches with their friends, families, and communities every single day. California's coastal management program has received glowing reviews from NOAA through decades of Section 312 evaluations for one reason, because it works. It ensures Californians have a voice in how our coast is managed, protects public access to our beaches, and supports a thriving coastal economy worth more than \$50 billion annually.

I'm originally from the East Coast, where beaches are not always as accessible and the public's access rights are not as protected as they are here in California. When I was a graduate student at UC Santa Barbara, one of my favorite ways to decompress was spending an afternoon at Haskell's Beach in Goleta, where families gathered alongside guests staying at the nearby Bacara Resort, sharing the same stretch of coastline. In many parts of the country, that hotel would have tried to keep its beach exclusively for hotel guests and off limits to broke graduate students like myself. Instead, the California Coastal Commission required that the Bacara maintain a public parking lot and a beach access trail, ensuring that our coast was available to everyone, not just a privileged few.

As Californians, that's just one example of our vision for our coastline, that it belongs to everyone. This public access doesn't happen by accident. It's something that Californians have fought for over generations, and it's something we must continue to defend. Our beaches, fisheries, marine ecosystems, and world-class recreational opportunities support a coastal economy that draws visitors from around the world. We welcome economic development, but we wanted to proceed thoughtfully, using the best available science and balancing economic opportunity with the protection of the resources that make our coast so special. That is exactly what the coastal management program has accomplished for the past 50 years. Just as importantly, the coastal management program ensures that Californians have a meaningful voice in federal decisions affecting our coast.

Whether the issue is offshore drilling, rocket launches, desalination projects, or undersea cables, Californians deserve a seat at the table to ensure that these projects are responsibly developed in a way that reflects our state's values.

On behalf of the Surfrider Foundation and our members, I urge NOAA to continue its longstanding partnership with the state of California and to reaffirm its support for our coastal management program. Together, we can continue protecting the public access, healthy beaches, vibrant coastal economy, and shared vision for California's coast that generations of Californians have worked so hard for. Thank you.

Joelle Gore - NOAA01:34:46

Thank you, Matt.

Our next comment comes from Annemarie Weibel. Annemarie, please unmute your line to provide a comment.

Annemarie Weibel 01:35:21

Good afternoon. I strongly support the continued full certification of the CCMP. To possibly reopen Section 312 evaluation just one year after NOAA's 2025 finding that California effectively implements its program is uncalled for. Over the past 50 years, the California Coastal Commission has successfully balanced federal and state coordination, approving or successfully negotiating 96% of federal action. The Coastal Commission's programs could be decertified or they could lose the 10% of their budget that comes from federal grants. Its partner agency could also lose federal funds. It could set a terrible precedent for other states all around the country.

The California shoreline is one of the most valuable resources drawing millions of tourists and locals and contributing tens of billions of dollars to the economy annually. Voters created the California Coastal Commission in the 1970s to maximize public access to the coastline. In 1972, 55% of California voters voted for Proposition 20, the Coastal Zone Conservation Act. I strongly oppose any federal effort to strip California of its authority under the Coastal Zone Management Act to fast track fossil fuel production, offshore drilling, or industrial infrastructure directly

undermines the safety, economic stability, and environmental health of our coastal communities. The state must regain its rightful voice in federal consistency reviews to protect its coast from ecological disasters. I urge NOAA to validate CCMP's historic effectiveness and maintain its current standing. I participated in 1988 at the four-day hearings in Fort Bragg, California, along with at least 400 people all opposed to the possibility to lose 223 coastal tracks of Humboldt and Mendocino counties to the highest bidder. There were no three-minute laws. There was no age discrimination and no time limit set, as I mentioned, on the speakers. We will do everything in our power to make sure that we will not have oil rigs in the ocean. I've seen how Santa Barbara beaches looked like after the oil spill. Multiple presidents have placed restrictions or bans on new oil drilling off the coast, while our president uses tax dollars, money to pay off wind companies to abandon their projects. I'm a mother, teacher, grandma, voter, and resident and I thank you for your time and consideration.

Josh Lott01:38:32

Thank you, Anne-Marie.

Our next speaker will be Tiffany Curry. Tiffany, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Tiffany Curry01:38:43

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment. My name is Tiffany Curry, and today I'm speaking on behalf of the San Diego, California-based nonprofit, Outdoor Outreach, and on behalf of the California-wide coalition, the Surf Justice Collective. California's coastal management program ensures that public coastal access is protected for all people, regardless of background. I've seen firsthand why that protection matters. Just recently, I joined an outdoor outreach program with a group of high school students who are about to surf for the very first time, and when they arrived, they were quiet and unsure, but soon the water was filled with laughter and cheers as they caught their very first waves, and by the end of the day, nobody wanted to leave. Their joy, confidence, and connection transformed before my eyes. That is what meaningful access to California's coast can provide, and California's coastal management program helps make experiences like this possible.

I also have worked closely with the California Coastal Commission on environmental access issues affecting youth and communities across the state, and I've seen firsthand the Commission's ability to engage the public, provide transparency, and ensure that communities impacted by coastal decisions have the opportunity to be heard. That role is particularly important when projects involve federal actions or funding. Federal Consistency Review Authority matters for projects and activities ranging from offshore oil development, energy infrastructure, military operations, federally funded transportation projects, and other activities that can have significant impacts on California's coast. And these impacts are not abstract. Oil spills can close beaches and prevent communities from safely accessing the water. New infrastructure can create additional

risks to coastal resources and public access. Major federally funded transportation projects can change how people reach and experience the coast.

California needs a strong, transparent process for ensuring that federal activities are consistent with the protections Californians have established for our coast. The Commission's federal consistency authority gives communities a meaningful voice that would otherwise be made without sufficient consideration of our coastal resources, public access, and the people who depend on them. For young people, like the students I surfed with, coastal access is not a technical policy issue. It's a chance to build confidence, connect with nature, and feel that the coast is for them too. So today we urge NOAA to maintain California's federally approved coastal management program and preserve the California Coastal Commission's ability to conduct meaningful federal consistency review. Protecting this authority protects not only California's coast, but our ability to participate in the decisions that shape its future. Thank you.

Josh Lott01:41:32

Thank you, Tiffany.

Our next comment is from Julia Stalker. Julia, please unmute the microphone at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Julia Stalker01:41:46

I'm Julia Stalker and I'm a marine ecologist in the San Francisco Bay region, and I just want to say that the preservation, protection, and in some cases, the restoration of the California coast and bays through the Coastal Zone Management Act has allowed appropriate and safe development and activities, along with equitable access, to coexist with a healthy and natural marine ecosystem. This beautiful, thriving coastal ecosystem in turn attracts millions of people to coastal California to visit, live, start businesses, work in good jobs, grow crops, prosper, and recreate. It also supports fisheries, major military bases and activities, top educational institutions, and major tech companies. This gives California the largest economy in the United States and the fourth largest economy in the world.

In 2024, through income and business taxes, California residents and businesses provided about \$805 billion to the federal government. That's 15.8% of the total from all states. \$255.6 billion more was given to the federal government than California took from it. So please continue to provide the necessary support and funding to the coastal management program to allow the important protections of the California coast and to allow the economy of both California and the entire country to continue to reap the benefits of what a well-protected, researched, stewarded, regulated, and thriving coastal and marine ecosystem attracts and provides. Thank you.

Josh Lott01:43:42

Thank you, Julia.

Our next comment will be from Diana Curiel. Diana, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Diana Curiel01:43:57

Hello, I'm here to comment on offshore and coastal petrochemical production in California. As a person who is educated in the sciences, I'm aware of the impacts of petrochemical pollutants on our climate, as well as the health of our ecosystems and communities. I currently live in Oakland, but was raised in Santa Barbara. It was in elementary school when the catastrophic oil spill of 1969 released more than 3 million gallons of crude oil into the Santa Barbara Channel, killed thousands of birds and animals, and covered the beaches with oil. My best friend's father was a commercial fisherman and depended on a healthy coastal environment to catch swordfish. Even at that young age, I understood that Santa Barbara's local economy depended on the fishing and tourist industry and the draw of its natural beauty and access to coastal waters and beaches.

I'm frustrated to hear of the politicization of the Federal Review of California's coastal management program. This plan helps ensure that local community interests, tribal interests, economic opportunity, public access, and environmental protection are all considered in decision-making about coastal lands and waters. NOAA has routinely evaluated California's coastal management plan every five to ten years for decades. The California plan has earned excellent reviews, including in NOAA's 2025 draft report. So why has the U.S. Department of Commerce directed NOAA to conduct an additional unnecessary evaluation of California's plans? Because the current federal administration wants to exploit our coasts for unwanted, polluting, dangerous petrochemical development. After the disastrous Santa Barbara oil spill, more spills took place in 1971, 1990, 1997, 2007, and the Refugio oil spill in 2015. Our communities do not want dangerous offshore oil drilling, illegal starts of oil pipelines, the exploitation of our coastal lands for oil and gas development, or the extraction of oil from aging infrastructure.

In Oakland, where I live, we don't want an oversized coal terminal which will expose our community to toxic coal dust. California has a \$51 billion coastal economy. This economy depends on the integrity of our environment, our public health, and our safety. The attempt to politicize the federal review of our coastal management program and possibly decertify our state's program would be to deny communities the right to meaningful engagement and input in considering the ecological, cultural, health, and economic impacts of coastal development projects. We who live in California communities are the stakeholders. Our communities require the continued right to have input into the stewardship of our coastal lands and offshore waters. Thank you for your public service.

Josh Lott01:47:04

Thank you, Diana.

Our next comment comes from Eugenia Ermacora. Eugenia, you have three minutes once you start speaking.

Eugenia Ermacora01:47:18

Good afternoon. My name is Eugenia Ermacora. I proudly call California home for the past two decades, and I serve as the Los Angeles chapter manager for the Surfrider Foundation.

I currently live in Los Angeles. I strongly support the work the California Coastal Commission is doing to protect clean beaches, clean water, plastic-free, accessible beaches, and affordable housing along our coast. I spent a huge part of my life on California's beaches. It is where I surf, swim, play volleyball, volunteer alongside hundreds of community members and spend time with friends and family, and where I go whenever I need to recharge. The coast isn't just where I work, it's where I found community, purpose, and some of my happiest moments of my life. The beach is cleaner, more accessible, and better protected because of California's coastal program and the California Coastal Commission. As just a couple of examples, in February, the Commission approved a permit for filming a new Baywatch TV series at Venice Beach. Consistent with the Coastal Acts mandate to maximize public access and protect coastal resources, the Commission included protective conditions requiring filming to occur only on weekdays. The Commission was also receptive to Surfrider's input prohibiting single use plastics on set and require additional measures to reduce the risk of plastic pollution on the beach.

As another example, in December 2024, the Commission properly approved a local coastal program amendment and coastal development permit for the Venice Dell Community Housing Project as consistent with the Coastal Act. This project includes 120 restricted affordable housing units and represents a significant step towards addressing the housing crisis within the coastal zone while following the Coastal Act requirements for public access and environmental protection. As NOAA concluded in its draft findings last year, and as these examples demonstrate, the Commission continues to properly implement the Coastal Act. Its work protects the beaches that mean so much to me and to millions of people who rely on our coast, not only for recreation and time with loved ones, but also for their livelihoods, local businesses and the vibrant coastal communities that depend on a healthy and accessible shoreline. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to add my voice to this process.

Thank you Eugenia. Our next commenter is Jason Wall.

We'll come back to Jason Wall.

Next in the queue to comment is Michael King. Michael, please unmute your microphone and top of the screen and begin your comment.

Michael King01:51:02

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to comment. My name is Michael King, and I am a conservation organizer with the Sierra Club of San Diego, and I'm representing our members and supporters throughout the region. We urge NOAA to maintain the federal approval of the California coastal management program. California's full authority under the coastal zone act. For nearly 50 years, this program has represented what Congress intended, a strong partnership between the federal government and coastal states. California knows its coasts, its communities, and its natural resources. The Coastal Commission provides the expertise and public process necessary to ensure that federal activities affecting our coast are consistent with California's protections. This is especially important in San Diego. Our coastline is fundamental to our region's identity, environment, recreation, and economy. From our beaches and bluffs to San Diego Bay, coastal lagoons, wetlands, and sensitive wildlife habitat, these resources face enormous and sometimes competing pressures. Development, erosion, sea level rise, population habitat loss, and demands for public access all require thoughtful long-term management. San Diego therefore has an enormous stake in maintaining a strong and effective system of coastal management.

Weakening California's authority would not improve that system. It would remove an important layer of local and state expertise from federal decisions with lasting consequences for our communities. We stand with many Californians who believe our coast should remain protected for everyone, not only today, but for future generations. Federal consistency is not an obstacle to responsible federal action. It is a safeguard that gives Californians a meaningful voice when federal decisions affect California's coast. We ask NOAA to respect the purpose of the Coastal Zone Management Act, maintain the existing approval of California's coastal management program, and preserve California's full federal consistency authority. Please maintain the successful federal-state partnership and California's strong voice in protecting our coast. Thank you.

Josh Lott01:53:08

Thank you, Michael.

We'll now go back to Jason Wall to provide comment. Jason, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Jason Wall01:53:35

My name is Jason. Good afternoon. I'm Jason Wall speaking today on behalf of Doty Brothers and all the other supporting local union employees and members in Southern California. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment as part of the NOAA's Performance Evaluation of California's coastal management program. I'm here today because of the continued confusion and misunderstanding around who actually has the authority to make decisions along

the nation's coast and to remind the decision makers today and beyond that this confusion has consequences for real people and real jobs, not only in the community, but also in the country.

The County of Santa Barbara was the original permitting authority for the onshore segments of the Santa Ynez pipeline system. The county is also the delegated local authority under the California Coastal Act. When the Coastal Commission claimed that Sable needed brand new authorization for routine repair and maintenance work, the county disagreed. Yet, the county later confirmed that the work fell within its permits it had already issued. So, we had the local government that originally approved this pipeline saying the work was authorized and yet a state agency overriding that conclusion anyway. And the state's agency's action ignoring federal priorities about promoting domestic energy production. When the Coastal Commission steps in to override the local government closest to the ground and ignores current federal policy, that raises a real question about whether the Coastal Commission is exercising its authority the way that Congress intended when it set up the whole system in the first place. Thank you for your time.

Josh Lott01:54:59

Thank you Jason.

Next to provide comments is Penny Elia. Penny, please unmute your microphone at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Penny Elia01:55:37

Yesterday you heard several hours of stunning testimony addressing an attack on our coast that could ultimately leave our ocean resources unprotected from inappropriate development and industrialization. I trust that testimony allowed you to reflect on your 2024 review. It found absolutely no issues with the Coastal Commission's performance. Based on the comments made by the current administration, this type of testimony is considered environmental extremism. We are deemed obstructionists. We, the people of California, are told we need to allow the dismantling of our well-established environmental protections. It appears that another review by NOAA has been identified as the mechanism by which this dismantling will be accomplished.

Please keep in mind as you carry out the task you have been assigned by the Commerce Secretary that this may be the only instance in which the federal government has attempted to strip a coastal state of its rights under the Coastal Zone Management Act. What happens following this hearing could establish a precedent for the relationship between the federal government and coastal states everywhere. All 34 states with a CZMA could be impacted based upon your review. NOAA is no stranger to attacks by this administration, and your agency is in jeopardy, just like the Coastal Commission. In April, this administration released its fiscal year 2027 budget request to Congress. The proposal calls for a 26% reduction to NOAA's budget, and the elimination of 35 programs and institutes more than \$1 billion in cuts. Combine these budget

and staff cuts would weaken NOAA's ability to carry out its vital mission. This sounds very similar to what you are being asked to help this administration do to our Coastal Commission. Not just weaken the Coastal Act, but virtually destroy it.

For 50 years we have relied on the Coastal Commission and our CZMA to protect our oceans. Without this, we are left vulnerable to ultimate destruction of our coast through increased offshore oil operations, poorly planned desal projects, increased rocket launches that create ocean and space debris, and undersea cables. And these are just a few of the negative consequences. Please remember Peter Douglas's words as you continue this review process, and I quote, You can't take our relationship with the coast for granted because it took a lot of sweat, blood and tears to preserve it, so we have what we have today. These things didn't just happen. The coast is what it is because a lot of people worked really hard and sacrificed to protect it. And if we want it to be there for our children, we have to keep fighting to protect it. And that way, the coast is never saved. It's always being saved. Thank you very much.

Josh Lott01:58:34

Thank you Penny.

The next comment will come from Vicente Villasenor. Vicente, please unmute your mic at the top of the screen and begin your comments.

Vicente Villasenor01:58:52

Good afternoon NOAA representatives, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Vicente Villasenor, and I'm a water quality associate specialist for a local nonprofit, Heal the Bay. With over 41 years of experience, Heal the Bay has worked to make our local coastal waters and watersheds safe, healthy, and clean. I was born in California and have lived in the state my whole life. I am grateful for the protections provided to the California coastline by the California coastal management program, that I have spent my entire lifetime. These benefits include protecting the environmental foundation of California's coastal economy, protecting significant coastal resources, and ensuring public access to California's beaches. And much more to include in this comment, but not enough time. This current review of the California coastal management program is inappropriate. The California coastal management program was just evaluated in 2024 and the evaluation found that the program was working exactly as intended. This is a waste of taxpayer dollars and goes against your agency's own findings.

In doing so, you are placing the California coast at risk of irreparable damage to the precious ecosystem and economy that depends on these protections. This is happening without need. California's coast and oceans are already under attack from pollution, ocean warming, sea level rise, ocean acidification, and more. Organizations like Heal the Bay and people like myself are trying so hard to address these threats to protect the ocean and the services they provide for us

all. Please leave California's coast alone and let us get back to this important work instead of defending the coast from our own federal government's special interests. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:00:34

Thank you, Vicente.

The next comment will come from Elliott Wright. Elliot, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen. We'll come back to Elliot.

The next comment will come from Elena Toomes. Elena, please unmute your microphone at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Elena Toombs02:01:27

Thank you for this opportunity. I appreciate it. I am grateful for California Coastal Commission, and according to articles I've read, they started in the seventies. I also started in the seventies. So 51 years of enjoying the beaches, enjoying the ocean. Now, I wouldn't agree that its extreme environmentalism. However, I have witnessed and experienced extreme environmentalists. So as much as I have appreciated that private sector businesses do not infringe on the public's access to our beaches, I have seen environmentalists...they're trying to promote something that they see in the environment, protection of animals, protection of the ocean. And they're trying to get legislation done in this case, in those cases. But without the law being changed, I've seen them yell at beach goers to stay off the beaches. So that extremism I have seen as a beachgoer, as a Californian.

But I heard recently that California is, this is a different subject, but California is a leader in the sustainability and development goals of the UN. And that is true, very true with environmental. And so I just, I would encourage NOAA to really investigate. There's also the side of the sustainment development goals that has to do with people. And when 60 or little over 60% of a person's gross income, average person, goes to their mortgage in California, it's extremely expensive. Also, gas prices are amongst the highest in the nation. This concerns me. So I'm wondering even if California was able to use the oil production even to help its own people in California and help the economy in that way as well. And so just to balance that out, because with their environmental strength, they can regulate these things. That's something that I have been wondering, and I know we're not asking questions, but that would be my rhetorical. So please NOAA, investigate these, just to make sure that they are not overlooking the ability to use a natural resource to help the economy of California. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:04:21

Thank you, Elena.

First back in the queue is Elliot Wright. Elliot, if you can hear me, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Okay, at this time, we'll go to the next person in the queue, N. Okeda. N. Okeda, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen and begin your comment.

N Okeda02:05:00

Okay, hi. My name is Nancy Okada, and I want to thank you for allowing me to speak today. First, I want to support the Coastal Commission's exceptional use of the CZMA in working with federal agencies to preserve California's coastal resources for not only Californians, but for all US citizens and international visitors who come to California for both business and pleasure. While others have spoken at length about the value of the Coastal Commission and its mission to protect access, coastal habitat health, and maintain the breathtaking coastal beauty we all enjoy, I want to touch on the process the CZMA provides that guarantees everyone can trust the coast is in good hands.

The CZMA involves the Coastal Commission staff meeting with various federal agencies to discuss project specifics that relate to coastal resources. Depending on the agencies involved, the staff samples comments and issues a staff report. The report is then scheduled to be presented to the public at an upcoming monthly meeting. In this way, the public is given a chance to better understand coastal activities that are proposed and planned. At the public meeting, written comments as well as public comments are discussed by coastal commissioners. Even if an item is placed on the consent calendar, the Commission allows public comment before a vote. The value of this information pipeline helps all parties understand what activities are planned. This is a valuable public service that fosters cooperation and coordination between the federal and state government.

In fact, because this information was publicly presented, the public learned how the Coastal Commission worked to protect public access to beaches during the increased SpaceX launches at Vandenberg Air Force Base. The Coastal Commission information also helped inform the public about the increased rocket launches and sonic booms that rattled nearby homes, shaking some off their foundations. Recently, after learning about planned development of a huge Sudden Valley Space Force Center on the Vandenberg site, a number of local residents tried to obtain information about the project. After trying disconnected phone numbers and emails that bounced, they gave up. There was no information publicly available about this Vandenberg project, unlike the information that is available in Coastal Commission reports on previous SpaceX launches from Vandenberg.

This is the public relations value of having the CZMA. It helps both the public and the federal government. In fact, the U.S. Navy recently took advantage of the opportunity to make a detailed presentation about planned expanded Navy activities. After explaining the various operations and increased military use of the coast, the Navy representative took questions from the

commissioners. The staff will be reviewing details of future activities and providing input on protecting habitat and marine life. Thank you for considering my comments. Please continue the successful Coastal Commission partnership through the use of the CZMA. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:08:04

Thank you, Nancy.

Next in our queue to provide comments is Lauren Parch. Lauren, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Okay, Lauren, we'll come back to you.

The next speaker to provide comments is Megan Durbin. Megan, please unmute your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Okay, next in the queue to provide comment is David McGuire.

David, please unmute your microphone by hitting the icon at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

David McGuire02:10:01

My name is David McGuire. I was born, grew up, and live in California, including Santa Barbara, where an oil spill killed thousands of sea birds, marine mammals, and caused extensive habitat damage when I was a boy. That disaster led to the designation of the first West Coast National Marine Sanctuary and inspired me to become a marine biologist. In 2016, I started a nonprofit in shark marine protection called Shark Stewards, now part of the Earth Island Institute, representing hundreds of students, divers, surfers, and ocean lovers. I'm speaking in support of California's coastal management program, which works cooperatively with the federal government supporting California's marine economy. This thriving coastal economy of over \$40 billion in gross domestic product annually exists because of the health and management of our ocean resources.

The NOAA's 2024 Marine Economy Report shows that California's marine economy has improved the economy while allowing resource development and extraction. This is a sign of the California Coastal Commission being cooperative, not obstructive of commercial interests. Tourism and recreation employed the largest sector of marine economy workers and produced almost half its GDP. Shark Stewards works with NOAA and leads trips into our Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, employing commercial fishermen and introducing our community to the beauty of our sanctuary. Oil development or bottom damage would threaten a million-dollar wildlife viewing industry worth over \$50 million across the state.

The CCMP and California Coastal Commission has provided the opportunity for federal projects to be approved with oversight by federal agencies and the state to work in an effective

partnership. This has allowed our state coastal economy to flourish, support well-managed projects, and support the health of Californians and the coastal marine ecosystems we rely upon. NOAA's own 2025 draft review of the CCMP found that it was working efficiently and as intended. NOAA resources and staff time should be used to continue this important federal-state partnership rather than an unnecessary review or weakening of the Coastal Management Act. As a teacher, I want my students and the youth I mentor to enjoy the health and economy of our coastal ocean into the future. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Josh Lott02:12:29

Thank you David.

We'll now go back and try again the people who did not respond before.

Okay, the next person in the queue is Lee Danielson.

Lee Danielson, please unmute your microphone at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Lee Danielson 02:15:43

My name's Lee Danielson, and I am from Santa Barbara, California, and I want to say I grew up in the Santa Barbara area, I grew up in Ventura. I used to surf there, and the tar on my feet never bothered me. I think that a lot of people don't know really the history of the oil and gas industry in Santa Barbara County. And I know there are a number of teachers here, but I think the history lessons should be taught to everyone. And we wanna keep that the things that made Santa Barbara County continue to make Santa Barbara County. We are deeply involved in making certain that the county can grow, that there be adequate businesses, adequate housing, adequate everything in Santa Barbara County. So to my end and from what I can see, rather than a bunch of talking points, we should be dealing with the actual issues that affect us all in Santa Barbara. And I think that what's occurred even with the past two oil spills that have been referred to, that people still, the fish are still there, people still need their oil and gas to fly airplanes to come see and make it a \$51 billion economy that they keep talking about. And that Santa Barbara has been a leader in this community and will continue to be so. So I hope that all combined will make this continue to be what we want to be. So thank you very much.

Josh Lott02:17:37

Thank you, Lee.

Next in the queue is John Carter. John, if you can hear me, please unmute your mic at the top.

John Carter02:17:56

Thank you. I'm here today representing Amigos de Bolsa Chica, a grassroots Environmental Organization formed in 1976, celebrating our 50th anniversary of advocating for full protection and restoration in Bolsa Chica, and educating our community [unintelligible] its ecological

value. We share this 50th anniversary with the California Coastal Act, which amongst other things, codified the California Coastal Commission as a permanent state agency with broad authority to regulate California's coastal development. The Coastal Commission along with the California Coastal Conservancy and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, comprise the agencies within the California Coastal Management Act. And for almost 50 years, cooperation between these state agencies and the federal government has given Californians a voice in coastal planning while recognizing that the federal government has their role to play as well. This cooperative relationship has helped reach agreements on nearly all projects of mutual concern. This relationship also allows for federal to state cooperation on smaller projects, for administrative approvals, with consistent programs, saving taxpayers the cost of potential drawn out court fights.

This cooperative relationship has been maintained in both Republican and Democratic leadership at the state and federal level. It will be a tragedy to scrap such a successful relationship or alter the terms that covers a thriving \$50 billion coastal economy that benefits both the world's largest and the world's fourth largest economies. While still taking into consideration long-term protections for public access to California's varied and different coastal environments. I want to thank you for your time and consideration.

Josh Lott02:19:40

Thank you, John.

From now on, I'm going to announce the next two speakers at a time to provide a little warning. Our next speaker will be Sarah Starr. And after that, Laura Tam.

Sarah, please unmute your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Sarah Starr02:20:06

Hi, thank you for being here, and having us all come. I want to say, we Californians, have contracts already for offshore wind farms to bring blue energy to California for our state goal of having 100% clean electricity by 2045. And we have five leases for Morro Bay and Humboldt. Morro Bay is already a defined space for the first of these offshore wind farms. And you know this, NOAA. And there are already seascape maps for the platforms. And you must also know that this administration has now just bizarrely reneged on its contracts so that the German company, RWE, has just walked away from building our wind farms. This has just happened. The question is, who is obstructing whom?

If our national security was truly at stake and we needed this energy so much, then this administration would not be at war and would be working quickly to create our offshore wind farms. In these United States, it's the job of our federal government to support the states, not disempower them. And NOAA has been wonderful in working for and with us, the taxpayers, for the oceans, the air, for the people, for reality, not for a political or corporate agenda. And so we

would like NOAA to put its resources to helping California restore these contracts. Clean blue energy is the only way for the future and California. The Golden State is bathed in free, intense solar and wind energy every day. And the technology now exists to retrieve that energy. And you can use it at the point of generation and transfer it directly to electricity. This is not extremism. This is called civilization. So the dredging of the sludge oil from the bottom of the sea and transporting it in leaky pipes with excess methane emitted and burned to release carbon. Oil spills, it tars everything it touches. We Californians, we're not doing that anymore. And we love our Coastal Commission. And it's been key in saving the commonwealth of our California coast. This is civilization, It's not privatization, industrialization. And we would hope that NOAA can continue to support our coastal commissions and help us protect our coast. We support all the efforts for NOAA to stay true to its integrity and be champion of our wild seas. Thank you so much.

Josh Lott02:23:06

Thank you, Sarah.

Our next speaker will be Laura Tam. And then after that, we will go back to Lauren Patch.

Laura Tam02:23:21

Great, third times the charm. Thank you so much. Good afternoon. I'm Laura Tam and I'm the CEO of the Bay Planning Coalition. BPC represents business, public agencies, ports and infrastructure providers, private industry, and local governments in and around San Francisco Bay, which contains over a thousand miles of California's coast. We urge NOAA to affirm California's continued participation in the Coastal Zone Management Act and the continued role of the three key agencies within California's coastal management program. This program plays an important role in decisions that shape the Bay Area's communities and our economy. It provides the state with visibility and the ability to review major public and private investments in navigation, flood protection, shoreline resilience, transportation, habitat restoration, and waterfront development. BPC is not an organization that believes every regulatory process is working perfectly. Over the last four decades, we have advocated strongly for permitting reform, clearer requirements, faster decisions, and better coordination among agencies. But reforming a system is very different from defunding and destabilizing it. And the framework we have has produced very practical results.

For example, San Francisco Bay cannot function economically without reliable navigation channels. Dredge sediment is also a valuable resource for restoring wetlands and building flood defenses. Through sustained federal, state, and regional coordination, over the last 20 years, more than 30 million cubic yards of sediment have been beneficially reused instead of being simply treated as waste. That is what good coastal governance and a functioning system of cooperative federalism can accomplish. Keep commerce moving, restore habitat, and build resilience at the same time. California's coastal management agencies provide funding, technical

expertise, and partnership capacity that helps communities and infrastructure providers actually get complex projects built. Reducing federal support for that work would not somehow make California's coastline easier to manage. It would make many projects harder to deliver. Weakening the coastal management program across the board is a blunt instrument and dismantling a functioning system in the name of efficiency would be a strange way to pursue efficiency. Federal agencies, local governments, ports, businesses, and project sponsors already navigate a complicated web of federal, state, and local requirements, creating new uncertainty about which policies apply, where authority resides or how conflicts will be resolved is not a recipe for better project delivery. It is a recipe for delay, additional cost, and litigation. We do not support creating uncertainty and calling it reform. We urge NOAA to maintain California's coastal management program and CZMA authority, recognizing the practical value it brings to our community. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:26:22

Thank you, Laura.

Our next speaker will be Lauren Partch, and then after that, Jill Heaps.

Lauren, please unmute your mic and begin your comments.

Lauren Partch 02:26:41

Thank you. I appreciate you calling my name again. I was having difficulties with my computer microphone. Good afternoon. My name is Lauren Partch and I'm a staff attorney and the Environmental Justice Program Outreach Coordinator at the Environmental Defense Center in Santa Barbara, California. There is no need for NOAA to review California's coastal management program at this time. And in fact, it's improper for it to do so. California was already subject to review for the period between July 2018 and August 2024, and that resulted in draft findings produced in May 2025. That process has not been completed and yet NOAA announced this new public comment and review process. Issue or problem-specific reviews may sometimes be appropriate, but such reviews are only intended to occur between reviews and not during an existing review process.

NOAA's May 2025 draft findings appropriately recognized the outstanding success of California's program, including in relation to public access and sea level rise. These findings should not be disregarded. The last completed review process which was published in 2019 found that California is a leader in quote "addressing environmental and social justice issues and bringing underserved communities into the decision-making process" unquote. The Coastal Zone Management Act passed in 1972 is aimed at protection, preservation, and restoration of coastal resources. California's program is a huge success and is inappropriately being considered at this time. Thank you very much.

Josh Lott02:28:30

Thank you, Lauren.

Our next speaker is Jill Heaps. And after that will be Teresa Brady.

Jill, you may unmute your mic and begin your comments.

Jill Heaps02:29:02

Okay, hi. Good afternoon. My name is Jill Witkowski-Heaps. I'm the Senior Legal Director at Surfrider Foundation, whose headquarters is in San Clemente, California. I currently live in Buffalo, New York, but California's coast holds a special place in my heart for many reasons. I lived in San Diego from 2010 to 2013. When I wasn't surfing, I spent all my free time swimming in the ocean and bays and biking and running along the coast. In the past two years since I joined Surfrider, I've visited California six times. During every visit, I've enjoyed walking and running along the coastal paths, and I've been surfing at San Onofre and Doheny as well. I'll be visiting California again at least twice in the next six months. I strongly support the California Coastal Commission and oppose this unprecedented process where NOAA is initiating an additional review focusing on specific industries after doing a regularly scheduled review of the state's coastal program and giving that program glowing remarks.

The impacts of these hearings are not limited to California. Instead, these hearings will have serious and far-reaching implications for the meaning of cooperative federalism and states' rights in this administration. The threat this process presents to California's ability to protect its coastal resources for its residents and visitors reverberates to every coastal state across the country. Indeed, the process itself, regardless of its outcome, will have a chilling effect on every single state with its own coastal management program that uses its federal consistency power to put conditions on projects to protect its own coasts. I know this to be true of the program in New York, which has already faced pressure to approve pipeline projects under this administration that it previously denied because of environmental reasons under prior administrations.

To give NOAA one recent example where the Coastal Commission made a right decision related to a spaceport infrastructure project, that was the August 2025 decision denying SpaceX's request to increase the launch frequency at Vandenberg. A huge problem with the application was the lack of an updated analysis of the marine debris impacts from the proposed 100 Falcon 9 launches. The supplemental environmental assessment relied on a 2023 analysis looking at only 36 launches, which could result in up to 17,700 pounds of marine debris per year. There was no analysis of marine debris impact of 100 launches per year on our coast. There was also no analysis of the impacts to our beach access and recreational use from the 100 launches. The lack of that data and analysis meant the Coastal Commission could not approve the increased launches while protecting the coast.

These hearings were unnecessary, given the glowing review that California received in the NOAA's 2025 draft report, naming the program one of the best in the country. Based on the comments at the in-person hearing yesterday and the overwhelming comments today, there's overwhelming support for California's coastal program. There's no evidence that California's program is in any way insufficient or worthy of any sort of penalty, nor is there any justification for revoking the program. To do so on the evidence in the record would be arbitrary and capricious. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:31:55

Thank you, Jill.

Our next comment will come from Teresa Brady.

And then Andrew Johnson.

Theresa, please unmute your mic and begin your comments.

Okay, our next commenter in the queue is Andrew Johnson. Andrew, please unmute your mic and begin your comment.

Andrew Johnson02:33:28

Again, my name is Andrew Johnson with Defenders of Wildlife, submitting comments on behalf of Defender's 2.1 million members and supporters. The Trump administration's pursuit of new and expanded offshore drilling in California violates the state's long-held sovereignty through its coastal management program, which allows the state to negotiate with the federal government on resource use and coastal development. The current out-of-cycle review threatens California's critical environmental laws and undermines coastal and resource protections that Californians value. The Department of Commerce's sudden disregard for establishing consistency places resource exploitation and economic gain for the fossil fuel industry ahead of the economic and lifestyle benefits of California coastal communities. This extraneous review undermines elements of the California Natural Resources Agency, in particular the Coastal Commission, which has operated in good faith for decades to help advance national interests. The state of California has worked hand in hand with the federal government to accommodate development and national defense initiatives.

Rarely has California refused to support national needs other than by suggesting ways to mitigate potential harmful actions and ensure protections for coastal wildlife and habitats. This is not environmental extremism, the unfair and unsophisticated characterization shared by Secretary of Commerce Lutnick. Instead, it is an effort to preserve the natural resources and attractions of the California coast. California has concurred with 96% of federally regulated projects, while using the small remainder of cases to secure economic and science-based protections for coastal resources, economies, and coastal communities, reducing risks to wildlife, fisheries, and other public resources.

That said, Californians maintain an aversion to offshore drilling and do not wish to see new oil and gas leases open on the Outer Continental Shelf. The risks exceed the rewards to the state and to the nation.

The administration's short-sighted support of special interests ignores the impacts of spills, harms to ecosystems, and conflicts with other high-value economic activities along the California coast. The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act established a process that brings federal agencies, coastal states, tribal governments, and others into the decision making process before federal actions become final. This has been successful for the past five decades, and the government should abide by the status quo and not seek to bypass it. Defenders of Wildlife requests that NOAA and the Department of Commerce preserve the integrity of the CZMA, consistent with long-term practice. Please respect existing laws and the will of Californians. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:36:24

Thank you, Andrew.

We'd like to try one more time to go back to Elliot Wright. Elliot, if you can hear me, please unmute your microphone at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Okay, our next two speakers, excuse me, will be Zanagee Artis. And then Rose Winn. Zanagee, please unmute your microphone at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Zanagee Artis02:37:10

Thank you. My name is Zanagee Artis. I am the fossil fuels policy advocate at NRDC, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and I'm testifying today in strong opposition to dismantling or weakening California coastal management. This is one of the nation's most successful coastal programs, which has protected the public's coast, supported a thriving economy, and ensured that federal actions respect state coastal policies for nearly 50 years,, just as Congress intended under the Coastal Zone Management Act. Like tens of millions of Americans and visitors from around the world, I have enjoyed time with family and friends along California's coasts. From San Francisco's Presidio Trust to Santa Barbara to Santa Monica's iconic pier, I have had rich memories and experiences on California's coast. And these experiences and the experiences of millions of others were made possible through the effective stewardship of California's coasts by the state of California.

Offshore drilling carries an unavoidable risk. Spills happen and when they do, the damage to coastal communities, marine ecosystems, fisheries, tourism, and local economies can last for years. California's program is the proper forum to weigh these risks. The program also recognizes that Californians do not want more oil rigs off their coast. Never again should the California coast and the marine environment here suffer another devastating oil spill.

Californians still remember the Santa Barbara oil spill, which ignited a national movement for environmental protection. And they remember the Refugia oil spill and the Huntington Beach oil spill.

For decades, California's coastal management program has delivered effective governance, science-based decision-making, meaningful public participation, and stewardship that has helped coastal communities thrive. In fact, just last year in a draft evaluation, NOAA itself concluded that California is, quote, successfully implementing and enforcing its federally approved coastal management program. As commenters have already made clear, California's authority over its coast has been earned through decades of successful implementation, open public process, and proven results. It is also firmly grounded in federal law. The strength of California's coastal economy, the resilience of its communities, and the enduring value of its natural resources are evidence that this program works. NOAA's review should not be used to undermine that success. California's coast is not a political bargaining chip. It is a public trust, an economic engine, and an irreplaceable natural legacy. The federal government should not weaken the safeguards that have protected it so successfully for decades. The people of California and people across the nation do not consent to this federal power grab invented to pave the way for destructive industry to exploit California's coasts. I urge you to reject any effort to roll back coastal protections or expand offshore drilling.

Thank you.

Josh Lott02:40:09

Thank you, Zanager.

Our next two speakers are Rose Winn and Susan Kirks.

Rose, you may please unmute your microphone and begin your comments.

Rose Winn02:40:25

Thank you. Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to comment. My name is Rose Winn. I'm a lifelong resident of California's Central Coast, and I serve as the Natural Resources Consultant for California Four Wheel Drive Association. I represent tens of thousands of responsible off-road enthusiasts and public land and recreationists throughout California. I want to emphasize that Cal4Wheel strongly supports conservation of California's extraordinary coastal resources. We also support responsible recreation, science-based stewardship, and meaningful public access. These are not competing values. They're complementary goals, and Congress recognized that balance when it enacted the Coastal Zone Management Act. Likewise, the California Coastal Act expressly protects recreation, visitor serving facilities, and maximum public access alongside environmental protection of California's coastal lands.

Our concern is not with the existence of the California Coastal Commission. Our concern is with the repeated overreach of the legal limits of its jurisdiction beyond the authority that is delegated

by Congress through the Coastal Zone Management Act and the California Legislature through the Coastal Act. A standard example of the California Coastal Commission's gross abuse of their limited jurisdictional authority occurred at Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. California State Parks is a legislatively designated agency that is responsible for managing the state park system, the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program, and Oceano Dunes. Yet in 2021, the Coastal Commission attempted to eliminate motorized recreation, which is a legislatively authorized recreation program at the dunes, by amending a coastal development permit. California courts ultimately concluded that the Coastal Commission exceeded its statutory authority by attempting to permanently prohibit OHV recreation through a permitting mechanism. That decision reaffirmed a fundamental principle, which is that permit conditions cannot be used as substitutes for legislation, nor can they redefine the statutory mission of another public agency.

Unfortunately, Oceano Dunes is not an isolated concern. Since the inception of the California Coastal Commission, the Commission has increasingly used permitting authority to influence operational decisions that affect public lands, visitor-serving facilities, campgrounds, parking, recreation infrastructure, and local government planning in ways that extend far beyond regulating coastal development itself. These actions have contributed to an increasingly adversarial and litigious environment between the Commission, local governments, recreation organizations, businesses, public land managers, and private citizens. So we appreciate and applaud NOAA's current review of the California coastal management program and California Coastal Commission. NOAA's role today is not to decide whether California should protect its coast. Its responsibility is to evaluate whether the coastal management program is being administered in a manner that is consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Act. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:43:29

Thank you, Rose.

Our next two speakers will be Susan Kirks and then Richard Friedman.

Susan, please unmute your microphone at the top of the screen.

Okay, we'll move on to the next speaker. Richard Friedman and then Alan Peevers.

Richard, please unmute your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

richard friedman02:44:13

My name is Richard Friedman. I'm a former Los Angeles deputy city attorney and a resident of Santa Monica. The late Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, taught me when she was a professor at Columbia Law School that when it comes to analyzing public policy, two competing elements need to be focused upon. One, whose interest would be served? And two, whose ox is being gored? The ox in this scenario is the unique

California coast which dramatically contributes to California's economy, which sends billions upon billions to the federal treasury compared to the much lesser amount sent to California from the federal government. Why would the federal government want to kill the ox, or in this case of the goose that is laying the golden egg for all other states. In contrast, whose interest would be served by endangering one of the nation's greatest natural resources? A dinosaur fossil fuel industry that will likely no longer exist one day. Please keep in mind that you cannot un-destroy that which has been destroyed. Thank you.

Josh Lott02:45:26

Thank you, Richard.

Our next speaker, two speakers will be Alan Pevers and then back to Susan Kirks.

Alan, I see you've unmuted your mic. You may continue in your comment.

Alan Peevers 202:45:38

Thank you so much for all you do at NOAA. I've been a big believer in the agency's mission for as long as I can remember. My name is Alan Peevers and I've been a California resident for 36 years. I'm a retired engineer, a loving husband, and a father of two young children who deserve a thriving coastal ecosystem. My family and I have enjoyed our pristine coastal areas countless times. We do not need more fossil fuels to run our economy and increased energy demand due to AI and data centers can well be met by wind, solar, batteries, geothermal, nuclear even, and other renewable energy sources.

Okay, so that said, while I'm concerned about environmental and local economy impacts of the five proposed project areas, I want to address the legal standard, not the projects. NOAA's own regulations define what a federal consistency failure looks like. 15 CFR § 923.135 (a)(3)(i)(D) i is little i... The indicators are quoting, a) not reviewing federal activities, federal licenses and permits, or b) employing review procedures that are not in accordance with state and NOAA regulations. That is the test NOAA wrote for itself. Not reviewing, or reviewing the wrong way. Those are the two. California reviewed. Every Vandenberg consistency determination was docketed, staffed, publicly heard, and decided on the record through the procedure NOAA's regulations prescribed. No one contends otherwise. The complaint is that the Commission reached an answer the Department of Commerce disliked. Objecting is the exercise of federal consistency authority. It is not a failure to implement it. A state that reviews and concurs and a state that reviews and objects have discharged the same duty. If frequency of objection were the standard, NOAA would have written that indicator. It did not.

The same is true of offshore oil. The Commission's objections there rest on a documented evidentiary record. Staff analysis, public hearing findings tied to the enforceable policies of the program NOAA approved. That is what compliance with this regulation looks like. NOAA is free to disagree with how the Commission weighed that evidence. But disagreement with a

state's conclusion is not an indicator of non-adherence under any criterion in subpart L. The regulation lists seven indicators and not one of them is objected too often, end quotes.

Second, the record already before you, NOAA's 2019 final evaluation findings for California, still the most recent findings published on NOAA's own page, contains zero necessary actions, not one. Under NOAA's own definition, a necessary action is what you...[microphone turned off due to time limit]

Josh Lott02:48:42

Thank you, Alan. Thank you, Alan. You've reached your three minutes. Our next speaker will be back to Susan Kirks. And then after that, Angela Howe.

Okay, we will now go move on to Angela Howe and after Angela will be Mark Fina. Angela, please unmute your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen and begin your comment.

Angela Howe02:49:25

Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Angela Howe. I'm a coastal law attorney. I've taught as an adjunct professor ocean and coastal law for the past 10 years. I've also led the legal department at Surfrider foundation for over 10 years formerly, and now I'm at the California attorney general's office in the environmental justice and protection section. But I'm not speaking on behalf of the attorney general's office today, and I'm speaking in my personal capacity. The California Coastal Act has performed exceedingly well at balancing economic development and resource protection. In fact, the successful protection and sound stewardship of California coastal resources has led to over 50 billion in coastal economic value for California every year. It supports more than half a million jobs, and a large percentage of that is driven by coastal tourism dollars every year. The value of offshore energy production, space exploration, infrastructure, and other coastal development must be weighed against the potential resource destruction and degradation including to economic sectors such as fisheries, agriculture, recreation and tourism.

The threats have been seen all too clearly. From the 1969 oil spill that helped usher in the Coastal Act and other national resource protection legislation, to the more recent 2015 Refugio pipeline spill, also in Santa Barbara. And in October of 2021, the Amplify energy spill, closer to me in Huntington Beach. The coastal management program is the mechanism used by the people of California to protect the coast they love in the face of overdevelopment threats like spaceport development, offshore oil drilling and infrastructure, desalination, and undersea cables. Finally, the Coastal Act is one of the strongest, if not the strongest coastal management law in the nation, allowing for beach access, public participation, thank you for this meeting by the way, resource protection, and coastal development where appropriate, successfully over the past 50 years. In fact, through the years other nations have visited California. We're the envy of foreign nations.

They visited the California coast and spoken to Coastal Commission leaders to learn about coastal management structure employed by California since the law has been so very successful. In the book entitled Coastal Sage which was written about Coastal Act co-author and former California Coastal Commission executive director Peter Douglas and authored by Thomas Osborne. Osborne recites that Peter Douglas' wise counsel on coastal management was sought by the foreign governments of Japan, Turkey, Israel, Vietnam, and also created a China-United States panel on integrated coastal management. Peter Douglas' legacy lives on with the Coastal Act and the California Coastal Commission implementing strong coastal management practices that has led to a thriving economy and beautiful coastline for the public to enjoy. Thank you very much for your time.

Josh Lott02:52:30

Thank you, Angela.

Our next comment will come from Mark Fina. And then after that, Mary Valdemar.

Mark, please unmute your microphone and begin your comments.

Mark Fina02:52:43

Hi, my name is Mark Fina. I work for the California [unintelligible] Association. We are an association that represents squid, sardine, mackerel, and anchovy fishermen and processors off the California coast. I don't know if you've heard from other fisheries interests during this meeting. I wasn't able to log on in the early part of the meeting. I'm not an expert on CZMA, I can only provide input based on my experience with it. And so I'll do that briefly. I will say that the CZMA process has yielded some things that really have helped fishermen over the years. We've had both research funds and some development funds supported by CZMA, funds that were allocated to fisheries mitigation through the CZMA process. When you've had development off the coast, that has really paid benefits to my association at times. Another thing that I would point out is that if you, my guess is if you poled the fishermen involved in these processes, you wouldn't see anything universal. You'd see some fishermen who were happy with outcomes, some fishermen who were very dissatisfied. Hopefully you'll hear some of that testimony as this goes on.

I would say that despite that, dissatisfaction or satisfaction, what you will find if you dig a little deeper is that it's promoted some dialogue between developers and fishermen. And that dialogue, I think, has yielded benefits to both the fishermen and the developers. There are times when we actually see close to eye to eye on some issues. And that's been revealed by the process through the CZMA. The conversations tend to be much more local and focused when it's done through the state, the Coastal Commission. And I think that in and of itself has some benefit that I hope you consider as you go through this process. I think that's all I have and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Josh Lott02:55:05

Thank you, Mark.

Our next two speakers are Mary Valdemar and then Carol Rose.

Mary, you may please unmute your microphone and begin your comments.

Okay, we'll move on to the next speaker, Carol Rose, and then after that, Elena Danielson.

Carol, you may please unmute your microphone at the top of your screen.

Next in the queue is Elena Danielson. Elena, if you can hear me, please unmute the mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Elena Danielson02:56:47

Okay, wonderful. Good Afternoon. I believe we all have witnessed how the California Coastal Commission has moved dangerously far from the noble purpose for which it was created in 1972. Protecting our magnificent coastline is important. But protection should not mean obstruction. Regulation should not mean paralysis. And environmental stewardship should not become a justification for endless bureaucracy, litigations, and delays. For many Californians, the Coastal Commission has become an agency perceived as lacking common sense, hostile to reasonable development, and increasingly disconnected from the people and communities affected by its decisions. We saw the consequences of its regulatory culture after the devastating Palisades fire. Families who lost everything need government agencies focused on helping them rebuild their homes and their lives, not creating another maze of permits, studies, and delays while allowing other expensive projects of questionable, practical value.

Santa Barbara provides another example. Environmental organizations, including the Environmental Defense Center in Santa Barbara, have every right to advocate for their beliefs. But the question is, do they have an incentive to actually solve environmental problems or to keep the conflicts going because those conflicts generate fundraising opportunities and allow them to sustain themselves? The Sable offshore situation deserves particular federal scrutiny. We all know that the oil seepage and tar has been known around Santa Barbara beaches for centuries. Sable has invested millions of dollars repairing and upgrading infrastructure associated with the Santa Ynez oil operation and its pipeline system. Yet, instead of establishing the clear and technically grounded path towards safe operations, California regulatory process has produced continued litigations and disputes. The goal cannot simply be to prevent something from operating indefinitely. We need to acknowledge reality.

The world remains dependent upon oil, commercial airplanes cannot presently operate on batteries, breaches, medical equipment, computers, transportation ships, etc. California cannot demand these products while pretending the infrastructure necessary to produce energy should exist somewhere else. And also, today's global political environment makes reliable domestic

energy infrastructure a matter not only of economics, but national security and stability. We need regulators who solve problems instead of creating permanent obstacles. I respectfully ask NOAA to examine whether California's coastal management program still fulfills its purposes of the Coastal Zone Management Act or whether bureaucracy, litigations, and obstruction have overtaken those purposes. Thank you very much.

Josh Lott02:59:52

Thank you, Elena.

Our next comment will be from Lauri Kamiel, and then we'll try going back to Carol Rose.

Lauri, please unmute the microphone at the top of your Adobe Connect screen and begin your comment.

Lauri Kamiel03:00:15

Okay, wonderful. Thank you so much. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Lauri Kamiel, and I am a native Californian, a graduate of UC Santa Barbara, go Gauchos, and a University of California climate steward. Being raised in California, protected coastlines have been a priceless part of my upbringing. I think all of us here, no matter where we came from or our circumstances, can agree that one of the greatest assets to California is our coastline. How many of us have precious memories of spending time on the beach with our families, or in my case, building sandcastles in the 1980s at Point Doom in Malibu? The coast provides a long list of benefits that we've heard today, including recreational activities, social and family opportunities, mental health benefits, and greatly enhances our quality of life. In addition, our coast is a major tourism destination. The Visit California website states, California's coastal tourism is a massive economic engine driving a record \$1.59 billion in statewide travel spending, supporting roughly 1.2 million jobs. The value of our protected coasts is evident in the amount of passionate speakers that have quickly mobilized and are here today and have rallied in recent days due to the threat to our coasts.

That threat exists because of data from the past, real environmental disasters that have happened, like the 1969 oil spill in Santa Barbara that galvanized the environmental movement. We must do everything we can to safeguard our coasts for generations to come. So our children and our grandchildren can safely build sandcastles on the beach. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:02:31

Thank you, Laurie.

Our next speaker will be Carol Rose. And then after that, Sheri Hafer.

We will move on to Sheri Hafer. And then after that will be Amy Wynn.

Sheri, please unmute your mic at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Sheri Hafer03:03:30

My name is Sheri Hafer. My family has been involved with commercial fishing for over 40 years along the California coast. Our boat is based in Morro Bay. The last 11 years, we have been dealing with the coming of offshore wind energy. I want to comment on the process for permitting mapping for offshore wind leases areas and cable routes. In order to expedite the permit process to please the governor and wind developers, the protections of California coastline and fishing rights were ignored. It seems there is hypocrisy in permitting depending on whether you are liked or not. A permit by the Coastal Commission was given to wind developers to map with AUVs over 200,000 acres of ocean 24-7 for eight months in 2024. These AUVs were allowed to send loud sound signals over 200 decibels, penetrating 150 feet, only 40 feet off the bottom. This was done based on a NOAA review in 22 that did not include AUV technology.

Later, after the mapping had already been completed, another review by NOAA that did include AUVs stated that they do cause damage and should have had a buffer of 250 feet, not 40 feet. Future AUV mapping needs to have this buffer required. Fishermen are still suffering from lower catches, especially among ground fish and invertebrates. Another permit issued to wind developers to map their cable routes allowed them to map Estero Bay in order to land their high voltage cables at Dog Beach. This area was purchased by the California Coastal Conservancy between Morro Bay and Cayucos. That area has strict restrictive covenants protecting the land and wetlands from any type of development. The permit to do this mapping should have never been approved before better analysis of the situation.

In the future, the entire scope of an offshore wind project should be required before any permits are issued. That includes all changes to the beaches and port infrastructure. There should be more understanding of the technology involved with offshore wind development. It is highly destructive to the ocean and an economic disaster. Floating technology isn't even developed yet for these deep of waters. Some coastal cities require a majority vote of the people for onshore facilities supporting offshore wind development. The permit issued by the Coastal Commission to allow mapping of the cable routes was based on an outdated 2014 CEQA template and it was only 32 pages long and took less than one month. That's ridiculous. And there should also be time. There should also be time series collection of data with before-after control impact studies before any permits are issued. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:06:30

Thank you, Sherry.

Before we move to the next speaker, a couple reminders. If you are in the meeting room and you wish to speak please make sure your hand is raised and you will be called on in the order in which you appear in the queue. Also, if you have already provided a comment, you will not be called on again, provide a second comment.

With that, we'll move on to the next speaker, Amy Wynn, and after Amy will be Anna Citrin. Amy, please raise your hand at the top of the Adobe Connect screen.

Amy Wynn03:07:16

Yay. Okay. Thank you. My name is Amy Wynn. I'm a land use consultant based on the Mendocino coast in Fort Bragg. From my professional vantage point, California's coastal management program is part of the national coastal zone management program has been performing well, meeting the goals of the CZMA. I'm speaking to express my strong opposition to any expansion of offshore oil drilling leases, as well as spaceport infrastructure off the California coast. With alternative and clean energy so readily available to us, offshore oil drilling is no longer essential to maintain economic viability. And with the climate challenges that we have here on Earth, I don't think we need to expand our space port infrastructure to the detriment of our environment. Our remote Mendocino County Coastal community depends largely on the health of our ocean. Our local economy relies heavily on commercial and recreational fishing, as well as a thriving ecotourism industry. Visitors come from all over the world to experience our pristine marine environment, including our unique coastal trails, tide pools, and whale watching. Allowing expanded offshore drilling directly threatens our livelihood by economic devastation, habitat destruction, visual and environmental impact.

Offshore drilling makes up a tiny fraction of the state's coastal economy, which generates \$51 billion a year. As Business Alliance for Protecting Pacific Coast Grant Bixby said, should we put 99% of our other employment at risk for the benefit of one dirty industry, especially when we have clean energy alternatives such as electric vehicles and wind power, etc. As land use consultants, I work with property owners who are often building their homes with incredible, gorgeous views. We have Fortune 500 people that invest and buy property up here, especially for the beauty of our environment. We have economic development here. Multiple presidents have placed restrictions or bans on new oil drilling off of the California coast. And please, the California coastal management program must remain committed to safeguarding our coastal economies and marine resources from the risks of fossil fuel extraction. Thank you very much for your time.

Josh Lott03:09:35

Thank you, Amy.

Our next two speakers will be Anna Citrin and then Shirley Weiss.

Anna, please unmute your mic and begin your comments.

Ana Citrin03:09:53

Great. Good afternoon. I'm Ana Citrin, Legal and Policy Director for the Gaviota Coast Conservancy, a Santa Barbara County-based nonprofit dedicated to permanently protecting the

rural character and environmental integrity of the Gaviota Coast for present and future generations. The Gaviota Coast is a 76-mile stretch of mostly undeveloped coastline between Goleta and Guadalupe, and the largest intact rural Mediterranean coastline remaining in the nation. The Gaviota Coast is a biodiversity hotspot and refuge to many threatened and endangered species. On the Gaviota coast, this extraordinary biodiversity thrives alongside working farms and ranches that help feed our nation.

The majority of the Gaviota Coast, including Vandenberg Space Force Base and the Los Padres National Forest, is federal land, and a network of national marine sanctuaries exists offshore. In this way, the very future of the Gaviota Coast depends on a robust coastal management program, effective collaboration between state and federal governments.

With collaborative management, oversight, and public involvement, which has existed for decades across many administrations, through successful implementation of our current federally certified coastal management program, the Gaviota Coast can endure as a biodiversity hotspot, a recreational destination, and as a working agricultural landscape. Without these things, this incredible coastal area and its agricultural and tourism economies could be damaged beyond repair.

We ask that NOAA find that California is successfully implementing and enforcing its coastal management program and that NOAA retain the state of California's full federal consistency authority. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:11:55

Thank you Anna.

Our next speaker is Maria Brown. And then after that, Jay Hislop.

Maria, you may unmute your mic and begin your comment.

Maria Brown03:12:16

Hello, good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Maria Brown, and I have spent more than 40 years studying and working for California's Coast and Ocean. I began my career with the California Coastal Commission. In graduate school, I analyzed and wrote about the success of California's implementation of the Coastal Zone Management Act and the establishment of the highly successful Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the California Coastal Commission. And I spent my career working for NOAA at the intersection of California State and Federal ocean and coastal policy. I have seen firsthand what happens when federal agencies, state agencies, scientists, fishermen, and women, conservationists, businesses, tribes, and coastal communities work together. I have participated in federal consistency hearings and federal reviews of California's coastal management program. And I know how much we can lose if those voices are pushed aside. And that's why I'm here today. I strongly urge NOAA to reject any effort to weaken or decertify California's coastal management program and instead

reaffirm the federal-state partnership that has strengthened our coast and California's economy for nearly five decades.

The Coastal Zone Management Act was designed to recognize something fundamental. Coastal resources are shared resources, and the people who live and work along the coast must have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect them. It is also fundamental to our democracy. People deserve a voice in the decisions that affect their communities, their livelihoods, and their future. I have spent much of my career working with NOAA. I believe deeply in the mission of our federal marine agencies, and I have seen the incredible things that can happen when federal leadership is combined with state expertise and local knowledge. California's coastal management program is an example of that partnership working. Since 1978, California has operated under a federally approved program. The state has worked with federal agencies on military activities, ports, fisheries, offshore energy, habitat protection, public access, and countless other coastal issues. This process means asking the right questions before decisions are made, and the record shows that California has concurred with the vast majority of projects reviewed through this process. Those questions don't obstruct progress. They make projects smarter, safer, and more durable.

I have spent decades working in this policy arena. I know that decisions made hundreds of miles away can have very real consequences for people who fish for a living, an endangered whale and her calf migrating along our coast, a community dependent on tourism, or scientists trying to understand the changing ocean. That is why the coastal... And we need, we need, I believe public protection is not a burden on coastal management, is one of our greatest strengths. It is why democracy works. So I respectfully and very strongly urge NOAA to end this unprecedented review. After nearly five decades of partnership, the answer should be more cooperation, not less. Our coast and our citizens deserve nothing less. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:15:23

Thank you, Maria.

Jay Hislop has dropped out of the queue, and so our next two speakers will be Susan Kirks, again, will try, and then Norma Jellison.

Susan, please unmute your mic.

Susan Kirks03:15:48

Thank you so much. I'm Susan Kirks. I'm calling from Northern California today to participate in your meeting. I'm honored to follow Maria Brown. I've never met her, but I certainly know of her work and dedication and hope you will take her comments seriously. To the NOAA staff and management, thank you for hosting these meetings. I, like many, believe the recently completed California coastal management program eval should be finalized, not opened for re-review. Your foci for these meetings and reopening the review of the CCMP are spaceport, oil drilling,

pipeline maintenance, desalination, and deep sea cables. Today, Nancy Okada, a highly respected conservationist in California, commented about process of the Coastal Zone Management Act, and community leader Lydia Ponce commented about coexistence of humans and our precious ocean, bays, marine life, and coast. Please remember these comments and know that we in California, at least the majority of persons you have heard speak yesterday and today, whom I found very impressive and actually educational, even though I thought I knew a lot... Please know that we support democracy, not corporatocracy. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak.

Josh Lott03:17:30

Thank you, Susan. Our next speaker will be Norma Jellison, then we'll go back to Jay Hislop. So Norma, please unmute your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Okay, next in the queue is Jay Hislop. And then Kurt Hoffman.
Jay, please unmute your mic and begin your comments.

Jay Hislop03:18:26

Josh, good afternoon. I'm Jay Hislop. I'm speaking in support of NOAA and the coastal management program, which has been an outstanding success. I hate seeing NOAA abused by a political movement that wants to allow environmental deterioration in favor of the accumulation of private wealth. I'm a native Californian, a lifelong ocean offshore fisher, a surf zone fly fisher, an open water swimmer, a surfer, an ocean kayaker, and a scuba diver. I use ocean resources from San Diego Bay to Pelican Bay, all recreationally, and I know most of the coasts like my own garden. I'm also a hunter, skier, mountaineer, and whitewater canoeist. I'm opposed to unregulated development and industrialization, especially when it's against the public interest and destructive to the coastal and global environment. And I don't even live on the coast. I'm from Stockton, California, the heart of the Central Valley. I'm a member of the Surfrider and the Surfers United Rotarian Fellowship, Friends of the River, Monterey Bay Aquarium, the Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Environmental Defense, Defenders of Wildlife, and numerous other environmental organizations. It's my passion. I think I have much in common with millions of Californians who, like me, enjoy our outdoor resources from the Sierra to the Pacific.

I'm 74 and still very active and have watched other coastal areas of the nation degrade and lose their open spaces and wild places, while California has developed in the fourth largest economy in the world, all the while preserving wilderness, beach access and recreational opportunity for over 40 million Californians and millions of Americans who love our state. But states like Florida, where a population that ignores environmental stewardship now have rows of beachfront hotels and closed beach access for hundreds of miles from Miami to Daytona. This unbridled economic development led to degradation of the beaches, exclusive access for the wealthy, and pollution of the waters of the coastal Atlantic. Meanwhile, California, through our careful

stewardship of resources, including coastal resources, is an example of environmental responsibility that the nation should be trying to emulate, not to destroy. We have shown environmental stewardship that can be accomplished without compromising economic growth and prosperity. The current review is improper. The 2025 draft finding from NOAA's 2024 review found California successfully implemented and enforced its program. That report was never finalized, and this review comes much sooner than the typical cycle. We all remember Refugio Beach in 2015. Let's make sure that that doesn't happen again. And we need the California Coastal Commission, NOAA, and the CCMP to assure that.

Josh Lott03:21:30

Thank you for those comments.

Our next commenter will be Kurt Hoffman, followed by Norma Jellison again.

Kurt, you may unmute your mic and begin your comment.

kurt hoffman03:21:46

Thank you. My name is Kurt Hoffman. I consider myself an ocean access advocate.

I'm a native San Diegan, and I appreciate NOAA for hosting this hearing and Marie Brown for their work to protect the incredible California coastline and marine environments. I would like to emphasize that the Coastal Marine Act is not part of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The MMPA of 1972 was a much needed and very successful piece of legislation to protect whales and pennipeds. Both populations have rebounded tremendously and NOAA deserves much credit for this very successful implementation of this landmark legislation. The California Sea Lion U.S. Stock Report revised in 3/18 of 2019 outlines overpopulation of sea lions along the West Coast. The population of sea lions has only increased over the past 12 years. This study must be updated as the last count of sea lion pups and population estimate was completed in 2014. We cannot continue to favor pinnipeds over all other species in our management practices, just as we cull deer in the wild, roosters and bulls in our domestic flocks and herds, we now need to implement culling tactics with the California sea lions. Protection of the marine environment and access to our coastline is the basis of the founding of the California Coastal Commission. And now the Coastal Commission needs to return to its roots and protect the environment for all species and discontinue the protection of California sea lions over all other species.

As we discuss and develop this new paradigm of complete marine environmental protection with NOAA and the California Coastal Commission working together to reverse practices of instructing municipalities to implement protectionist measures that encourage more sea lions to congregate on our shores and in our marinas, we need to consider all marine species and the marine environment holistically. As we remove humans from our shoreline, we encourage sea lions and birds to take over more territory along our delicate coastal tide pools and bluffs. This is adding to air pollution, water pollution, as well as desecration of our fragile tide pool ecosystem, especially at Point La Jolla as a prime example of the desecration in the photos I submitted. The

once stellar tide pools at Point La Jolla with extreme biodiversity are now frankly full of shit. All of the intertidal species have been decimated by the invading sea lions. Humans have been forced off Point La Jolla by the Coastal Commission's suggestion to the city of San Diego to implement a closure of Point La Jolla and Boomer Beach, as well as bluffs in the area. Alan Browning, Scripps Park...[microphone turned off due to time limit]

Josh Lott03:24:50

Thank you, Kurt, for your comments.

Next in the queue is Norma Jellison. And then after Norma will be Shirley Weiss.

Norma, if you can hear me, please unmute your mic and begin your comment.

Norma Jellison03:25:33

So I am a 30-year resident of Bodega Bay on the Sonoma County coast and also volunteer with a number of state park programs that interpret the coastal environment for residents and visitors. I support the California Coastal Commission whose staff has shown time and again their expertise in protecting the California coastal environment, its healthy ecosystems, and protecting the natural and cultural resources of California's coastal bioregion. We must continue to support the Coastal Commission to implement the CZMP to protect marine and aquatic ecosystems as well as terrestrial ecosystems adjacent to the coastal zone which support local coastal environment and resources that support the economies of coastal communities and its residents who depend on them for jobs, food, and recreation. The Coastal Commission allows for regional and local stakeholder engagement to identify sustainable development for our coastal communities and the local economies that they depend on and the coastal resources that provide jobs, such as commercial and recreational fishing, visitors serving, hospitality, and recreation. We must keep autonomy local with the Coast Commission where impacts are felt most. They are closer to the problems and closer to the people.

Our coastal management program is a shining success story of state and federal cooperation to realize the shared goals of economic prosperity and environmental protection. The most recent review of the CZMP in 24-25 indicated California has successfully implemented and enforced the program. This is true in 2026 as well. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:27:41

Thank you, Norma.

I would like to remind the participants if you are still in the meeting room and wish to make a comment, please use the raise hand function at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Our next commenter will be Shirli Weiss.

Shirli Weiss03:28:00

Good afternoon. My name is Shirli Weiss. I live in San Diego, grew up in Boston, Massachusetts, and lived for years in Miami, Florida, all coastal cities. I practiced law in California for over 45 years.

First, I rely on and have faith in the integrity and credibility of NOAA as an agency and on the personal integrity of its executive leaders. It is apparent you were pressured to conduct, to reopen this inquiry by Secretary Lutnick. But I trust your findings will be based on facts, not on this administration's pressure or its extremism.

Second, don't fix what's not broken. The facts and statistics elicited yesterday and today show that the CCMP is working as a premier example of a successful state-federal partnership. No program is perfect. This administration will pass, but the destruction it could wreck on California's coast will last for generations. Don't be its tool.

Third, to the administration, I say this. What goes around comes around. There are 35 states and territories with a coastal management program. Theirs was carefully and thoughtfully adopted by the leaders and citizens of those states, just like California. Some of them are red states. You wouldn't want a new administration to come in someday and start dismantling those programs. So stop trying to normalize vengeance as a political tactic. Citizens see through that.

Fourth, Americans want to continue to lead the world in research and technology. And yet this administration has severely reduced funding for scientific research. We're going to have an exodus of talent. China is taking over the automotive world with their electric vehicles and evolving batteries, and this administration wants to drill baby drill, at proven and dire risk to our environment. Purchases of U.S. gas-powered vehicles are way down worldwide and other countries' vehicles are way down. When we pursue an oil-driven future, electric vehicles are way up. This is good economics. This is the result of an enormous campaign contribution by the oil industry, not advancing the interests of this nation, we were being led off a cliff.

I'm in favor of space exploration. I think we should transfer Mr. Musk to Mars as soon as possible. California is one of the most successful states in history of the planet in furthering commerce and technology and simultaneously balancing devotion to the environment. Indeed, our economy and innovation is furthered by our devotion to the environment. This is a Swiss watch precision balance. Please don't mess with it. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:31:03

Thank you, Shirli.

Our next comment will be from Richard Sadowski. Richard, please unmute your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Richard E.T. Sadowski03:31:45

Okay, this is Richard Sadowski, Homefront EJ, Morro Bay. I would like to support...We have support for the Coastal Commission here in California. We have historically been a leader in California on environmental issues and ocean protection. We are in... This is a global issue is ocean acidification. And one of the things that we need to take a leadership role is in getting baseline data and continuing the study of ocean acidification and how it affects the California coast. The California coast has a unique position to help with that understanding. And the Coastal Management Act and the Marine Protected Areas have been very successful throughout the years. I just would like to see NOAA not fall pressure to the administration and help us protect the California coast for the betterment of our future generations. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:33:05

Thank you, Richard.

Now one more name in the queue, that's Theresa Brady. Theresa, please unmute your mic and you may provide comments. Teresa's mic is not currently unmuting. We will move on. We've had another person join the queue, Pauline Seals. Pauline, please unmute your mic and you may begin giving your comments.

Pauline M Seales 203:34:47

I want to thank NOAA and all the previous speakers. A lot of people have managed to say something similar about supporting the Coastal Commission and add quite amazing variety of details. Personally, my name is Pauline Seales. I live in Santa Cruz. Since I retired from science teaching, I have been a docent at the NOAA facility, the National Marine Sanctuaries Exploration Center, and I've learned a lot more about the ocean and the creatures. The coastal management plan has kept the California coast available to all the people, not just the ones who live on the coast, but the many who live in a rapidly warming central valley and manage trips to the coast frequently where they get pleasantly cool. And this will become increasingly important resource in the future. If we hadn't had the California coastal management plan and the CCC, we would have wall-to-wall, expensive private developments and resorts, and much of the coast would be unavailable. We need to keep the coast. It's an excellent resource for our people and for the many thousands of visitors every year. Of course, we don't want the coast spoiled by this extraction industry for offshore drilling, deep sea mining, offshore nuclear, I heard that one recently. This is just ridiculous extraction industry stuff at a time, as some of your speakers have pointed out, climate change is accelerating. We need to be switching away from oil and gas as fast as possible, not starting new ventures to find more. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. Keep doing the good work.

Josh Lott03:37:01

Thank you Pauline.

We have a new speaker in the queue, Mary Jack. Mary, please unmute your microphone at the top of your screen and you can begin your comment.

Okay, we'll come back to Mary. We have another person who entered the queue. Annestacia Komarovsk. You may begin your comment by unmuting your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen.

Annestacia Komarovsk03:38:33

Hello, NOAA. I've been watching your hearing yesterday and today. I'll tune in tomorrow. I just want to thank you very much for bringing this to everyone. And let's all please help make California great again. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:38:49

Thank you for your comment.

Mary Jack. Mary, if you can hear me, please unmute your mic.

Mary Jack03:39:02

Well, thank you so much. Thank you to all of you on the staff for conducting two very long days of hearings. We so appreciate you giving us the opportunity to be heard. I too will voice support for the coastal program as it is now. As many, many speakers have expressed, our coastal governors, for lack of a better word, have a really delicate balancing act that they do so well year after year after year at great expense to their mental and physical energy for the jobs that they do. This is just such a blatant political power grab. You know, this administration does not treat the citizens of this country with respect. They don't treat the people of California with respect. So Californians are not going to treat this administration with respect. We are going to fight this power grab with everything we have. An excellent speaker in yesterday's live hearing said, what is our plan B? What do we do if this power grab goes the Fed's way? And that is we're going to fight this to the bitter end. We are not going to treat them with respect. So please continue to allow our coastal program to continue the way it is. It's not perfect. Nothing ever is, but you know, that's no reason for Howard Lutnick and his friends to come in and make money off our backs. Sorry that Elon is sad that he can't shoot off his rockets all the time. But I do thank you for listening. We'll be watching. We'll be fighting. Thanks again.

Josh Lott03:41:19

Thank you, Mary.

At this time, we do not have any speakers in the queue. NOAA will keep the meeting room open for 10 more minutes until 5:45 Pacific time. If we don't get any more speakers at that point, we will close the meeting. So please, if you're interested in providing a comment, raise your hand.

We have someone who's entered the speaking queue. Elliot Wright, if you can hear me. Please unmute your mic at the top of your Adobe Connect screen and provide your comments.

Elliott Wright03:45:18

Great, this is Elliott Wright. Apologies, I tried to get on earlier. I couldn't, a friend, let me know that you guys are still accepting comments. Just wanted to leave a comment as a California resident. The oceans have always been, the ocean, the beaches here, has always been super important throughout my entire life. And as a surfer, I appreciate surfing breaks that have clean water, easy public access, reduced, you know, trash and development on our beaches. So the work of the California Coastal Commission and the enforcement of the Coastal Act is near and dear to my heart. For 50 years, we know it's done a very good job for the entire state of California. This was kind of mentioned in some earlier testimonies, but, you know, the ocean really is kind of a free therapist. And, during an era when more and more people are disconnected from the natural world and more and more people are spending time on their phones and looking at screens and, you know, being outside and connecting with nature is more important than ever. As a society, it's something that I think we should go towards.

On a personal level, you know, there's people that come from all over the world to California to experience these beaches. My father being one of them, he immigrated here from Europe and was drawn to California for its natural beauty. He passed away, and when he did pass away, he wanted to donate his body to science. He donated his body to UCLA, and following the medical research that the school did, we were alerted as a family that his remains were cremated and scattered at sea. So it's kind of nice to know that he's nearby in the Pacific, as are so many others throughout millennia that the ocean is kind of their final resting place. And so... For these reasons, I feel like it's very important that we respect these cherished natural resource and the idea of offshore oil drilling that could occur across the entire state of California, which would very much pollute these waters. In a way, it's kind of disrespectful to the final resting place of so many through time immemorial. Like I said, the California Coastal Commission and the Coastal Act are extremely important to ensuring that California remains as beautiful as it does. Thanks so much for allowing me to speak. And I hope NOAA takes these notes into consideration.

Josh Lott03:48:16

Thank you, Elliot. We've had someone else under the queue, Ben Pridonoff. Then if you can hear me, please unmute your mic at the top of the screen.

Ben Pridonoff03:48:27

Hi, everyone. My name is Ben Pridonoff. Thank you, NOAA for hosting this forum. I'm a lifelong California resident who's lived in LA, the Bay Area, and Humboldt, and I'm honored to be on this call amongst so many decorated scientists, lawyers, and ocean advocates. I speak in support of our current approved coastal management plan. I myself am a marine ecologist and wildlife biologist and have worked in environmental consulting for about five years. And my work and livelihood has been because of our federal and state government regulations, these common sense regulations that require us to do our due diligence to evaluate the impacts of development. They aren't, in my mind, antithetical to infrastructure, but they do require that these projects are in line with our state values.

I cannot provide more detailed expertise than many of those who have already spoke, but what I can say is that I and many of my fellow early career professional peers are willing and able to do the hard work of evaluating impacts and aid in common sense development that aligns with our state values. However, recent federal policy changes take away funding and opportunities from young, hardworking Californians who want to do the work. And that may be true of the proposed changes to our coastal management plan as well. We are trained and prepared to implement the CZMA or California coastal management plan, ESA, CESA, NEPA, CEQA, MMPA, all of these effectively on projects that the state deems a good fit, not just for profit, but for all Californians. I also just want to add briefly that I work as a kayak guide on ocean tours. And to echo the last speaker, so many people come here as tourists to explore California's intact habitats along the coast. These protected habitats are here thanks to the current coastal management plan, and I think that should be really remembered. In the interest of good science and good jobs and good tourism, please reject the reevaluation of our coastal management plan. Thank you.

Josh Lott03:50:57

Thank you, Ben.

Reminder that if you're still in the meeting room and wish to provide a comment, you may, raise your hand and enter the speaker queue. NOAA will keep the virtual meeting room open for a few more minutes if anyone else decides to join the queue.

At this time, we don't have any further comments in the queue, and so we will conclude this virtual public meeting.

Thank you for participating in today's virtual public meeting. As a reminder, a transcript of today's meeting will be available by request via email to czma.california-evaluation@noaa.gov. Written comments for the record may be submitted by email to that same address by 11.59 PM Pacific time on August 22nd, 2026. For those who did not make comments today, there is an opportunity to do so at the second virtual public meeting that will be held tomorrow,

August 12th at the same time from 2 to 6 p.m. Pacific time. Registration details for that meeting are available in the *Federal Register* notice NOAA published on June 26th announcing these meetings.

Thank you. This concludes the virtual public meeting.