

# [This of 49.5 gigatons of carbon dioxide](https://assignbuster.com/this-of-495-gigatons-of-carbon-dioxide/)

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This month, the U. S Department of Interior proposed anambitious plan to open federal offshore waters to drilling and fracking withinthe next 5 years. The plan has been publicly opposed by the governors ofCalifornia, New Jersey, Oregon, Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Washington, and South Carolina. The Center for Biological Diversity estimatesthat the opening of these leases could potentially lead to with the release of49.

5 gigatons of carbon dioxide and pollution into the environment, which wouldthreaten delicate biodiverse ecosystems, harm fisheries, and inhibit thetourist economy. Most people remember the Deepwater Horizon oil rig thatexploded in 2010 killing 11 people spewing enough crude oil into the Gulf ofMexico to wipe out thousands of marine animals. If the plan is adopted it would create a financial bonus forthe oil and gas industry and drastically change current energy policies thathave been in effect for over 30 years. It would also overturn a permanent banon drilling in the Atlantic continental shelf that was issued by Obama in thelatter part of 2016. The Trump administration is also considering allowingseismic testing that is so loud it can drown out whale songs. Lawsuits are certain to follow. The state of California andthe Center for Biological Diversity have already filed a challenge to thepending approval by the federal government. Even though full production wouldbe 10 to 15 years away, the urgency to intervene now is critical.

The furtheralong the acceptance of the proposal gets, the harder it is to reverse. Because fracking has been so successful in boosting oil andgas production, it is used more frequently than ever before. The process is toxicand involves using high pressured water to extract natural gasses from theearth.

The water is mixed with “ fracking fluids” that are unknown andunregulated. After the process, the water is extremely polluted and dumped intowaste wells and aquifers. Out of the 280 billion gallons of water required tocarry out the process, six to seven percent of that water leaks out into thesurrounding environment. This equals about 9 billion gallons of contaminatedwater containing unknown toxins heavy metals into local watersheds each year. Most experts agree that the costs of fracking far out way the benefits ofbecoming the world’s dominant energy producer. More than 16 cities in California alone have adoptedresolutions opposing new drilling and fracking of existing offshore wells.

California already has 43 oil wells located off its coast, along with hundredsof miles of gas and oil pipelines. Residents, environmental groups, andcompanies all over the nation have pledged to defeat local drilling in court. It will take about a year for the Department of the Interiorto issue a final plan detailing the auctions and lease sales that will beoffered. At that time, Congress will be allowed 60 days to review any new leaseplan.

Seven of the areas offered for leasing are located in the Pacific, justoff California. Drilling has been banned there since the oil spill near SantaBarbara in 1969. Hopefully, with enough pressure from environmentally consciousindividuals and organizations, these changes willhalt and our environment will be protected.