

CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

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Established in 1938

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U.S. SUPREME COURT FIXES THE OFFSHORE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND CALIFORNIA

Sacramento – On December 15, 2014, the United States Supreme Court entered the joint supplemental decree submitted by the United States Solicitor General's Office and the California Attorney General's Office in the case of *United States v. California*, No. 5, Original, 381 U.S. 139 (1965). This action by the United States Supreme Court permanently fixes the offshore boundary between the United States and California, resolving a dispute that began in 1935 with the discovery of oil in Wilmington, California.

The initial dispute over the location of the offshore boundary resulted in the landmark 1947 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *United States v. California*, 332 U.S. 19, which held that California wasn't entitled to submerged lands seaward of its coastline. That case was effectively overturned by the Submerged Lands Act in 1953, which provides that each coastal state is entitled to the submerged lands extending three geographical miles from its coast line. The State Lands Commission has been working with the federal government since that time to locate and fix the offshore boundary.

With this recent Supreme Court action, there is now a fixed boundary off the coast of California extending from Mexico to Oregon. Having a fixed boundary will provide certainty to state and federal lessors, regulators, lessees, and operators of federal and state mineral and renewable-energy leasing programs, and will prevent future litigation concerning the submerged-lands rights of the parties.

The State Lands Commission is extremely pleased that the United States and the State Lands Commission were able to partner to achieve the certainty to all stakeholders involved inherent in fixing the offshore boundary between California and the United States.

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