



MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

Opposing Offshore Oil & Gas Drilling

There are many myths and misconceptions about the offshore drilling issue. You only need to look at the damage done by the Deepwater and Santa Barbara spills to see the harm offshore drilling will have to our coastal communities and economy. Below, some of the most frequently misunderstood concerns about offshore drilling are addressed.

MYTH: North Carolina will receive significant revenues from oil and gas drilling.

FACT: It would take a new law passed by the U.S. Congress. President Obama announced¹ earlier this year his intent to revoke the revenue sharing plans that have been in place for Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama since 2006. With this new plan, the 37.5 percent of oil revenues that are currently going to these four Gulf States would go back to the federal government.

In addition, recent efforts by some lawmakers in Congress to pass new laws to direct additional oil and gas revenues to North Carolina and other states have stalled.

MYTH: Drilling off our coast will lower the price of gasoline.

FACT: According to a 2009 study by the U.S. Energy Information Agency (EIA)², opening up all offshore areas (Pacific, Atlantic, as well as eastern and central Gulf) to oil and gas drilling would not significantly lower gas prices. If all of these areas were opened, gasoline would be 3 cents cheaper at the pump, in 2030.

MYTH: We need to become energy independent.

FACT: The amount of oil and gas estimated to exist off our coast is just a small portion of the global energy market. According to a 2011³ study done by the state of North Carolina, the Carolina Trough (south of Cape Hatteras) has a potential to fulfill our country's demands for just 36 days of oil and 246 days of natural gas.

Working toward eliminating our dependence on foreign oil by reducing energy consumption is the best method for moving toward energy independence.

¹ "Obama budget would reallocate offshore royalty payments for Louisiana and other Gulf states to 'entire nation.'"

http://www.nola.com/politics/index.ssf/2015/02/obama_budget_tries_to_realloca.html

² Annual Energy Outlook, 2009, With Projections to 2030.

[http://www.eia.gov/oiaf/archive/aeo09/pdf/0383\(2009\).pdf](http://www.eia.gov/oiaf/archive/aeo09/pdf/0383(2009).pdf)

³ "Report of the Governor's Scientific Advisory Panel On Offshore Energy. 2011."

<http://www.nccommerce.com/Portals/14/Documents/OffshoreEnergy/12-13-2011%20Offshore%20Energy%20REPORT%20FINAL.pdf>

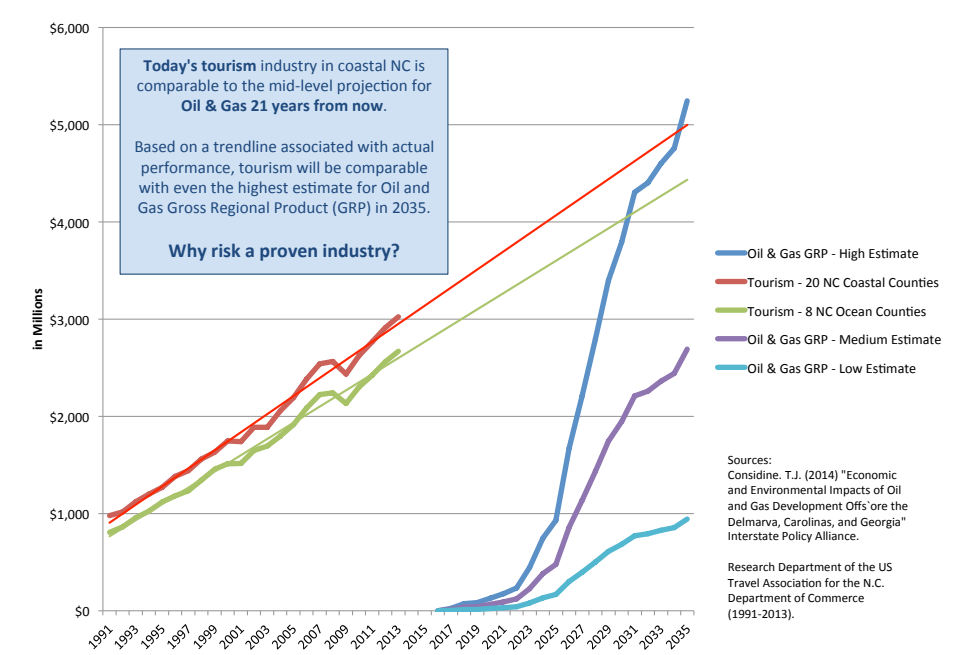
MYTH: Seismic Exploration Surveys are harmless to marine life.

FACT: According to federal government estimates, just one seismic survey could disrupt the behavioral patterns of approximately 1,151,442 bottlenose dolphins, affecting their migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, and feeding. Plus, nearly 11,748 individual dolphins could be severely handicapped or killed.⁴ There are currently eight seismic surveys proposed to occur offshore of North Carolina.

MYTH: Our state will add 30,000 jobs from the drilling industry.

FACT: Based upon the American Petroleum Institute (API) study,⁵ the offshore oil and gas industry in North Carolina estimates the potential to provide up to 30,000 jobs. However, this study fails to reference the fluctuation of the oil markets⁵.

Countering this number is the fact that in 2012, the North Carolina tourism economy directly provided 283,297 jobs⁶. The potential risk of job loss in tourism, fishing and other industries that depend on a clean coastal environment far outweighs potential economic benefit of oil and gas industry jobs, many of which are specialized positions and will be hired from out of state.



⁴ William Brown, Chief Environmental Officer, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. March 9, 2015. <http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Science-Note-March-2015/>

⁵ http://www.caesarrodney.org/pdfs/East_Coast_Energy_Study_FINAL.pdf

⁶

<http://www.nccommerce.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=EYKPCly1ts%3d&tabid=1547&mid=4666>