

TAKING ON THE PROBLEM OF OIL...& ALSO STYROFOAM



TREADWELL-March 22, 2019
34.418238, -119.599141

Aerial of Treadwell spewing oil off Summerland Beach/Harry Rabin/On the Wave Productions

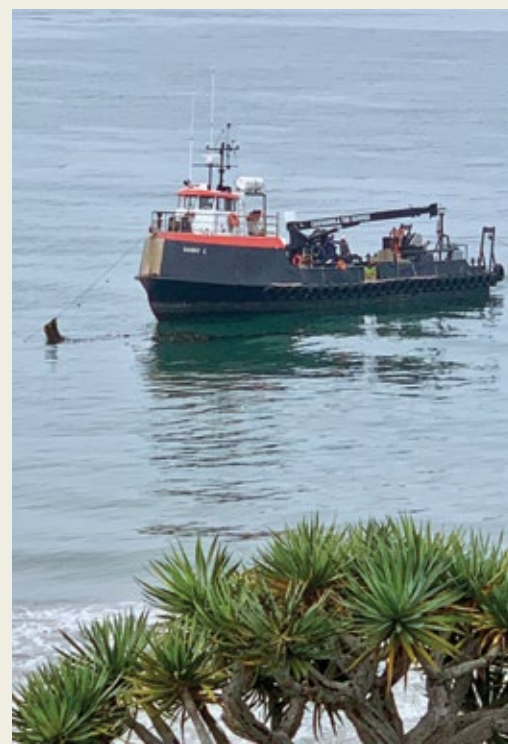
SUMMERLAND "LEGACY" WELLS

Summerland would be the perfect beach – that expanse of oceanfront that stretches from Shark’s Cove, Montecito, to the cliffs of Padaro Lane. Depending on the tides, it’s a great walk and a great place to play in the sand.

The only problem is the oil that bubbles up offshore – from old, improperly abandoned oil wells and seeps that work their way up through fissures and cracks in the ocean floor. The oily beach at Summerland is an environmental puzzle. Heal the Ocean continues to work on with the **State Lands Commission (SLC)**, whose charge it is to tackle the problem of leaking “legacy” oil wells and other hazards along the California coast.

Becker Well was capped in 2018 with other funds approved by then-Governor Jerry Brown, and then SLC gave us room for input as to the next project. **We have insisted on Treadwell**, a hole unfortunately sunk into an apparent earthquake fault. The aerial drone image captured by HTO Advisory Board member (and ace photographer/filmmaker) **Harry Rabin/On the Wave Productions** illustrates the nastiness of this leak.

SLC has hired **InterAct** to engineer the oil well capping, and Harry Rabin has been contracted for continuing aerial and underwater drone work, coordinating with **InterAct engineers Mike Giuliani and Eric Kroh**, to accurately identify project site(s).



Commercial divers from Global Marine investigate Treadwell oil leak in May 2019 as part of State Lands study of how to best cap the well (Photo by Nora McNeely Hurley)



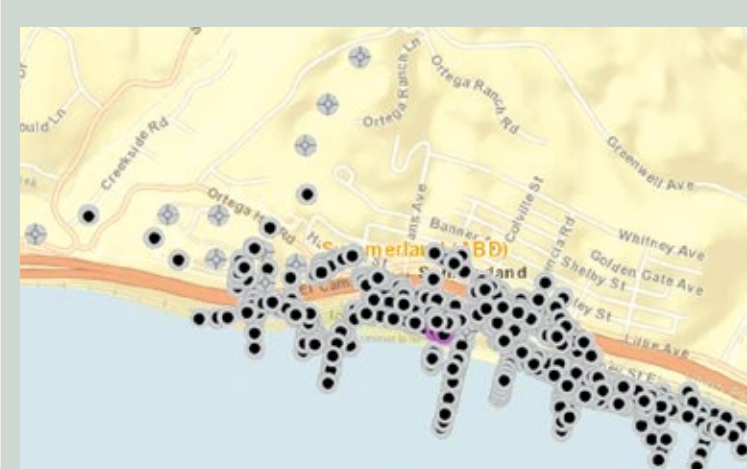
Harry Rabin (center) with InterAct engineers Mike Giuliani (left) & Eric Kroh



Planck Aerial of Summerland oil 2017

THE PLANCK STUDY

In 2017 HTO commissioned the Planck Aerial Survey, which helped push **SB 44 (Hannah-Beth Jackson)** through legislative hurdles, which resulted in \$2 million per year for 7 years to cap these leaking wells. The Planck images not only provided the bill with the necessary support to see it through, but it also gave SLC the funds to work with, and gave us distinct targets.



Oil, oil, everywhere....the black dots are the spots where oil was drilled for in the not-so-good old days

THE PROBLEM WITH SUMMERLAND

We call the above graphic the Summerland Beach “**Measles Picture.**” In the late 1890s, oil was discovered in Summerland, but the “Oil Rush” didn’t begin until 1930, when wildcatters flocked to the area and poked holes anywhere they could (just like gold rushers did when they stampeded to Alaska in the 1890s) to dig and stake claims. **State Lands Commission petroleum engineer Steve Curran** tells us the oil on and offshore Summerland was, and is, shallow, practically oozing onto the sand, such that old-timers would poke hollow steel pipes into the beach sand and light the natural gas at the top to create torch lights by which they could play ball on the beach at night. These guys were having fun, but this little story illustrates the problem – and challenges – of Summerland.

...AN OILY MESS OF ANOTHER (HORRIBLE) KIND



Heal the Ocean’s Alison Thompson (L) and Wendy Pelayo breaking up Styrofoam to prepare for shipping

During the public debate and hearings in the city of Santa Barbara about limiting the use of single use plastic bags, straws and cutlery, **HTO asked that NO Styrofoam** be permitted beyond the suggested 1-year grace period.

Styrofoam is the worst substance for the environment and it is particularly lethal for sea life. Polystyrene is made of oil, and it never dissolves. It crumbles into smaller and smaller pieces, can disperse with the slightest breeze, and eventually flies into the ocean through storm drains, and other channels. The smaller each piece gets, the more it looks like plankton.

And all sea animals live on plankton.

HTO put out a plea for **No More Styrofoam In The Trash.** We asked everyone to consider shipping it to a company, **Foam Fabricators, in Compton, CA**, where it is repurposed into picture frames, moldings, surfboards, etc. We also said, “bring it to us” – and we’re living with the results. In the first week alone, we shipped over 13 large boxes of compressed and broken-down pieces of Styrofoam to Foam Fabricators.

Given that shipping Styrofoam through the mail is less than efficient, HTO is in discussion with **MarBorg Industries** about the possibility of developing a **Styrofoam recycling/repurposing facility in Santa Barbara.**