

US agrees to environmental review of offshore oil fracking

January 29 2016, by Brian Melley

The federal government has agreed to stop approving oil fracking off the California coast until it studies whether the practice is safe for the environment.

The agreements filed Friday in Los Angeles federal court settle lawsuits brought by environmental groups that challenged the approval of the practice off Ventura and Santa Barbara.

The deals require the Department of Interior to review whether well stimulation techniques such as fracking threaten [water quality](#) and marine life.

The Environmental Defense Center says the practices have been conducted for years in federal waters with no environmental review and were revealed through the organization's public records requests.

Federal agencies will have to complete the review by the end of May and determine if a more in-depth analysis is necessary.

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