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Butte Environmental Council

### **Butte Environmental Council and Other Groups Raise Concerns Over Proposed California Fracking Regulations**

The Butte Environmental Council has submitted comments on the California Department of Conservation's proposed regulations for statewide hydraulic fracturing. BEC's letter cites 10 points of concern with the presented regulations.

More commonly referred to as "fracking," hydraulic fracturing is an oil recovery process in which large amounts of water treated with chemicals are blasted deep into the ground, shattering shale rock and releasing oil and gas trapped underneath.

According to [Title] Dave Garcia, the rules are riddled with loopholes that do not sufficiently safeguard the health, welfare and property of California citizens.

"The proposed rules continue to shroud the oil and gas industry's activities, allowing them to claim the toxins used in the process as 'trade secrets,'" Garcia said. Protected by these claims, the regulations would absolve companies involved in the practice from the responsibility of sharing with the general public what chemicals are injected into the ground.

Fracking, used for decades around the country, has come under scrutiny from numerous environmental groups, including BEC, concerned with water supply and contamination.

Already banned in the state of Vermont and cities such as Buffalo, N.Y. and Pittsburgh, BEC suggests a moratorium on fracking in the north state until the additions and amendments in the organization's comments are addressed.

BEC Executive Director Robyn DiFalco urges the public to get informed about fracking.

"Many people don't realize that fracking is taking place across California and even as close to home as the Sutter Buttes and Glenn County," she said. "Those fracking wells are tapping oil below the Tuscan Aquifer, which could contaminate our primary source of drinking water."

Other points of contention BEC finds with the proposed regulations concern establishing systems monitoring groundwater quality before and after fracking, forming air quality

protections or pollution limits, evaluating potential fracking sites on multiple points of earthquake safety and protecting Northern California's water supply.

Butte Environmental Council also signed on to a jointly drafted comment letter representing the combined effort of a number of environmental groups, community organizations, and physician/public health organizations.

"Water used for fracking is permanently polluted, cannot be cleaned or treated, and is thus permanently removed from the hydrologic cycle," DiFalco said. "We can't afford to waste our limited water resources this way."

Attachments:

- BEC Comment Letter
- Coalition Comment Letter

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