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## Court orders Shell to delay drilling

Shell Oil was ordered to halt its exploratory drilling program off the north coast until an Aug. 14 hearing in San Francisco on environmental concerns raised by conservation groups.

“Vessels currently located in the Beaufort and Chukchi seas shall cease all operations performed in furtherance of that program, but need not depart the area,” the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals said.

Shell spokesman Curtis Smith said that company officials were obviously disappointed.



## Court halts Shell's drilling off Alaska

Royal Dutch Shell was ordered yesterday to cease its drilling operations in offshore Alaskan oilfields by a US federal appeals court. The Anglo-Dutch oil group is facing a legal challenge to its activities in the Beaufort Sea by a group of Alaskan native groups and environmentalists. They claim that Shell's drilling plans are damaging the area and that impact studies conducted by the company are inadequate. The oil group had expected to start a controversial three-year programme next month with a small armada of ships drilling a dozen wells in the Beaufort Sea, 30 miles off the Alaska coast. (Robin Pagnamenta)