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## Feds launch CA fracking study

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**Fracking foes in California have long called on the state to study the possible hazards of the oil-and-gas production technique.**

On Friday, they got their wish. Or at least a version of it.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management reported that it will commission a statewide study of fracking and other oil production processes in California. On a more local level, the bureau will also consider changing its requirements for oil companies that want to frack the Monterey Shale on federal land along California's Central Coast.

Fracking opponents had taken the bureau to court over fracking — and won. In April, a federal magistrate ruled that the bureau broke the law by leasing land to oil drillers in Monterey and Fresno counties without studying fracking's potential risks to the environment. The new study should rectify that.

Of course, many environmentalists want an immediate fracking ban in California, not just a study. But barring an executive order from Gov. Jerry Brown, who has been notably quiet on the issue, that seems unlikely. All the bills in Sacramento that would have halted fracking have either died or been amended to remove that threat.

So what possible risks will the new study examine? And who will do the research?