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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER

Dozens of groups call for offshore fracking halt

Thursday, December 12, 2013



Andrea Weber, right, protests against fracking as Emily Jeffers, left, looks on during a demonstration outside a Fisherman's Wharf hotel where the California Coastal Commission was meeting Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013, in San Francisco. More than 150 environmental groups are asking coastal regulators to halt offshore fracking, saying the practice violates state law. Fracking involves pumping huge amounts of water, sand and chemicals into deep rock formations or old wells to release oil or natural gas. Photo: Eric Risberg, AP

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — More than 150 environmental groups are asking California coastal regulators to halt offshore fracking, saying the practice violates state law.

Wetsuit-clad demonstrators holding surfboards submitted the letter to the California Coastal Commission on Thursday before its meeting in San Francisco.

Fracking involves pumping huge amounts of water, sand and chemicals into deep rock formations or old wells to release oil or natural gas.

While the state oversees oil wells, there have not been specific rules governing fracking.

Recent reports by The Associated Press documented hundreds of hydraulic fracturing jobs in the Santa Barbara Channel, the site of a disastrous 1969 oil spill that spurred the modern environmental movement, and other nearshore waters.

The coastal commission has launched an investigation into the extent of fracking in federal and state waters.