

Suit: Offshore drilling done in absence of required report

by Kevin McGill | AP June 21

NEW ORLEANS — Three environmental groups have announced a federal lawsuit saying the government has failed to comply with environmental law governing drilling in the Gulf of Mexico.

The suit filed Thursday in Florida says federal wildlife agencies have not completed a timely, formal consultation with the agencies regulating drilling. It says the Endangered Species Act requires such consultation — and publication of an opinion on possible effects of drilling on wildlife. It says the last consultation was in 2007, three years before the Deepwater Horizon disaster spewed millions of gallons of oil.

The suit contends hundreds of offshore energy projects have been approved relying on outdated information. It seeks an order requiring completion of a consultation in 90 days.

One agency named as a defendant declined comment. Another didn't immediately respond to a query.