# **Judge allows Kern to resume oil permitting**

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**Body**

Nov. 2—A court ruling issued Wednesday allows ***Kern*** government to resume oilfield permitting — a big win for an industry that has seen a significant slowdown in local activity after a local judge identified problems with an extensive environmental assessment undergirding the county's review process.

***Kern*** County Superior Court Judge Gregory A. Pulskamp discharged a writ that in October 2021 removed the county's authority to approve projects and returned it to state officials who local ***oil*** producers complained were taking too long to issue permits.

Pulskamp's finding Wednesday is the latest in a yearslong legal battle between the industry, which bankrolled the county's efforts, and a coalition of environmental and farming interests that promptly pledged an appeal.

"After years of litigation, the court's decision is an important milestone that allows production permitting to resume in ***Kern*** County in a manner that is fully protective of human health and the environment," President and CEO Catherine Reheis-Boyd of the Western States Petroleum Association trade group said in a statement.

A county spokeswoman noted by email staff are "very pleased" with the ruling, adding that more extensive comments will be provided Thursday.

Executive Director Caroline Farrell of the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment said by email it was disappointed the county "insists on moving forward with this misguided fast-track permitting scheme, which prioritizes the ***oil*** industry's interests above residents' health and the welfare of ***Kern*** communities."

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