# **Kern Co. Preps Fixes to Restart Oil Production Permitting**

Energy Monitor Worldwide

July 26, 2022 Tuesday

Copyright 2022 Global Data Point Provided by Syndigate Media Inc. *(Syndigate.info)* All Rights Reserved



**Length:** 397 words

**Body**

Regulatory patches are being proposed to bring Kerns ***oil*** and gas permitting system up to the states environmental standard and potentially let the county resume approving new drilling.

A public notice the county paid to have published Thursday listed four steps intended to fix holes in the countys blanket environmental review as identified in early June by ***Kern*** County Superior Court Judge Gregory Pulskamp. That was after the judge halted local permitting in October, returning review authority to the state and effectively restraining production in the heart of California ***oil*** country.

The notice set an Aug. 23 public hearing of the county Board of Supervisors, and a public workshop Aug. 1, on a proposal that would require removal of idle oilfield equipment on certain ***oil*** permits on farmland. Another mitigation measure proposed to soften the industrys local impact would adopt a regional agreement on fine particulate pollution; two others would remove then replace a community drinking water grant program.

***Kern*** County is committed to environmentally protective ***oil*** and gas permitting in full compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, Lorelei Oviatt, director of the countys Planning and Natural Resources Department, said in a statement. She added that details will be disclosed in a staff report due for release Aug. 18.

Unlike the states slower, well-by-well review process, Kerns system allowed ***oil*** producers to get permits over the counter as long as they abided by local regulations and paid substantial fees to help compensate for the pollution their activities caused.

The zoning ordinance was in effect for more than four years until an appellate court suspended permitting in early 2020. The county enacted changes before putting a revised system in place early last year, only to have Judge Pulskamp rule the county had to stop until its changes could be reviewed by the court.

His June rulings represented a mixed result for the county, giving it victories on several issues but requiring still more work in the areas of fine particulates, removal of old oilfield equipment and investment in drinking water infrastructure in disadvantaged communities.

The countys notice of public hearing refers to changes affecting each of those concerns. Ultimately, it will be up to the judicial system to decide whether ***Kern*** has done enough to meet the terms of CEQA.

**Load-Date:** July 26, 2022

**End of Document**