

## State might sue feds over fracking study

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New York state will sue the federal agency regulating gas drilling in the Delaware River corridor if it doesn't commit to a full environmental impact study of its proposed regulations within 30 days, state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said.

Such a study of the impact of more than 15,000 wells that could be drilled along the Delaware could take years and thus delay drilling for at least that long.

The agency that's the target of Schneiderman's lawsuit, the Delaware River Basin Commission, has said its regulations could be ready by the end of summer.

Those regulations primarily apply to the controversial horizontal drilling method of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, which critics say can pollute water.

"Both the law and common sense dictate that the federal government must fully assess the impact of its actions before opening the door to gas fracking in New York," said Schneiderman.

"New Yorkers are correctly concerned about fracking's potential dangers to their environment, health and communities, and I will use the full authority of my office, including aggressive legal action, to ensure the federal government is forced to address those concerns," he said.

A cumulative impact study of more than 15,000 wells in the basin was a key demand of anti-drillers at recent public hearings on the DRBC regulations.

Rep. Maurice Hinchey, D-Hurley, also made a similar request, which was rejected months ago by a federal representative to the DRBC, an interstate commission.

Much of Sullivan County sits within the river basin.

Those in favor of drilling not only were opposed to such a study, they said the proposed regulations with requirements for 500-foot setbacks from waterways were too restrictive.

The DRBC, as of late Monday afternoon, had not yet seen Schneiderman's letter pledging to sue and could not comment on it, said spokesman Clarke Rupert.

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