

# Butte County releases draft anti-fracking ordinance

**Roger Aylworth, Chico Enterprise Record, 10-2-14**

**OROVILLE** >> Butte County officials have released a draft ordinance that could ban all hydraulic fracturing within the county's jurisdiction.

The draft zoning ordinance was released this week by the county's Department of Development Services.

In April, on a 4-1 vote with Chico Supervisor Larry Wahl the lone nay, the supervisors directed the county staff to craft an ordinance banning the process of hydraulic fracturing, often called "fracking," which is used to enhance the release of oil or natural gas from a well.

The proposed ordinance expressly prohibits fracturing which involves injecting quantities of water, sand and chemicals into a well under high pressure to shatter the subterranean rock strata.

The draft also forbids the use of "acid well stimulation" which requires one or more kinds of acid be introduced into a well or geologic formation to increase the production of oil or natural gas.

While not citing any sources the draft ordinance says "these practices may result in adverse environmental impacts, including but not limited to, the contamination of groundwater supplies and an increase in seismic activity, as well as result in the production of hazardous wastewater which can contain radioactive substances and toxic chemicals."

It also asserts the process "can create nuisance and environmental impacts to property owners who reside on, or own property above" locations where the techniques are used.

Advertisement

The proposal will go before the Butte County Planning Commission for a public hearing at 9 a.m. Oct. 23 in the county Administration Building, 25 County Center Drive in Oroville.

After the Planning Commission hearing the matter will be taken to the Board of Supervisors some time next year.

The draft ordinance can be read on the county's website at <http://goo.gl/991aVq>.

After the April vote to have staff create an anti-fracking ordinance, and organization called "Frack Free Butte County," collected enough signatures to have an initiative before the voters that would also ban hydraulic fracturing.

In August the supervisors voted to put the initiative on the ballot, but the timetable meant it would not go up for a public vote until June 2016.