

Miami Herald

Posted on Mon, Jan. 06, 2014

Groups seek to stop Miss. offshore drilling rules

By JEFF AMY
Associated Press

Environmental groups want a judge to stop rules setting a framework for offshore gas and oil exploration in parts of the Mississippi Sound.

In a Monday hearing, the Sierra Club and the Gulf Restoration Network asked Hinds County Chancery Court Judge William Singletary to order the Mississippi Development Authority to reconsider the rules governing leasing certain tracts.

The opponents say MDA only considered the impacts of leasing — and not actual drilling — when leasing leads to drilling. They also say MDA should consider leasing fewer or no tracts.

The agency says opponents want it to improperly second-guess the Legislature, which in a 2004 law instructed MDA to issue rules. A lawyer says MDA doesn't have the capability to weigh environmental impacts, saying that's a job for other state agencies.

© 2014 Miami Herald Media Company. All Rights Reserved.
<http://www.miamiherald.com>