

Conservationists Oppose Drilling Near Glen Canyon

*SALT LAKE CITY
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Members of conservation groups filed more than 79,000 written comments opposing oil drilling in a remote corner of southern Utah's Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

Denver-based Viking Exploration asked the National Park Service for permission to drill inside Middle Moody Canyon.

The site was leased in 1969, before Glen Canyon was designated a recreation area, but never drilled, which would require expansion of access roads across neighboring Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

Conservation groups are asking federal agencies to kill the project or at the minimum require Viking to pay for an environmental impact study. They also want public hearings for the project.

Much of the opposition came from people alerted by such groups as The Wilderness Society and the Natural Resources Defense Council to file protests by an Aug. 15 deadline.

The Park Service is taking the comments under advisement as part of a \$50,000 environmental review.