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From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: Federal court knocks down trio of LNG challenges

By Darius Dixon

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A three-judge panel ruled against the Sierra Club this morning in three lawsuits the environmentalists had filed challenging the Energy Department's approval of liquefied natural gas exports to non-Free Trade Agreement countries.

The court's decision to side with DOE in an earlier legal challenge regarding the Freeport LNG project "largely governs the resolution" of these more recent cases, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals judges wrote in today's [four-page judgment](#).

All three cases, which challenged DOE's approval of the Cove Point, Sabine Pass and Corpus Christi LNG export applications, had their Oct. 18 oral arguments canceled early last month.

Environmentalists have argued that the agency didn't properly estimate how the gas shipments might increase prices domestically, potentially boost coal use in the power system or increase greenhouse gas emissions. DOE had defended itself by saying that producing the numbers Sierra Club is seeking would be so speculative as to be meaningless.

The decision isn't a big surprise after the Sierra Club lost its Freeport LNG lawsuit against the agency in August, *Sierra Club v. DOE*, 15-1489. The group did not appeal that decision.

WHAT'S NEXT: Sierra Club has a 45-day window to file for a rehearing on the court's decision.

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