



## Lawsuit over Exxon spill sent back to state court



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A federal judge has returned to state court a lawsuit by Montana landowners whose property was contaminated with crude oil from a broken Exxon Mobil pipeline.

U.S. District Judge Richard Cebull's Feb. 16 ruling is an early victory for the plaintiffs.

They are seeking damages against Exxon for not preventing the July 2 spill and then allegedly botching the cleanup. More than 1,500 barrels

spilled into the river, fouling 70 miles of shoreline.

The case originally was filed in state court in Yellowstone County, then transferred to federal court at the request of Exxon.

Plaintiffs' attorney Cliff Edwards says he wanted the case heard by a jury made up of residents of Yellowstone County, where the spill occurred.



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