

Listening Sessions - Understanding the RRC-20260915_171343UTC-Meeting Recording

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BD

Bryce Dubee 4:47

Hi, good afternoon, everybody. Thank you so much for joining us today for the Railroad Christian Texas listening session. We are really happy you're able to join us both in person and virtually. My name is Bryce Duby. I'm the RRC Agency spokesperson, and I'll be your host for today's event. The schedule for today's session will start with a brief presentation on RRC jurisdiction and then move into our public comment period and Q&A session if time allows for remaining attendees. Before we begin, just a little bit of housekeeping. As you may have noticed for folks who joined online, your cameras and microphones are turned off by default. For those who have registered to provide a comment or question later in the meeting when we open our comment period,

I'll call you by name, and when is your time to speak, one of our staff will temporarily restore your microphone and camera access. After you've spoken, your microphone and camera will be turned back off. And I would note, if you don't want to have your camera on while you're speaking, that's totally fine as well. All that we ask is that you present your comments today in a respectful manner to urge our staff and all who are present.

today. At this time, I would like to introduce you to our panel of subject matter experts who are representing their divisions here at the RC, and we'll take your feedback to their respective offices.

I'm not seeing the names on the slide.

So we have Keith May from Oil and Gas and Kendall Smith from...

Pipeline Safety, Madison Georgi Gito from Communications, Scott Sroff from the Office of Public Engagement.

I apologize, I'm not seeing the slide here for the... Oh, there we go.

Sorry about that. David Lindley from Oil and Gas and Mark Everts from Pipeline Safety as for Motorsight and Safety. And most importantly, we have all of you here who have taken time out of your day. We appreciate your patience with our open meeting today running a little longer. So thank you for taking time out of your day to share your thoughts with us. We look forward.

to hearing from you, your interest in the Railroad Commission. And at this point, I will now hand things over to Scott, who will be providing A brief overview of the Commission.

KK Katherine Kopec 8:47

Hey, Scott, if you're presenting right now, we cannot hear you online.

SS Scott Sroufe 10:33

How about this? Can you hear me now?

BD Bryce Dubee 10:35

Loud and clear.

SS Scott Sroufe 10:36

All right, thank you.

KK Katherine Kopec 10:36

Gotcha.

JW J Ware 10:36

Yes.

SS Scott Sroufe 10:51

Right, we'll just start from here. Texas is the largest oil and gas producer in the state. We produce.

Production 36% of the gas production by producing 5.1 million barrels of oil each day and 37.3 million.

Cubic feet of gas.

I'd like to take the next few minutes.

About the regulatory division.

We have 4 regulatory divisions, and they are the Oil and Gas Division, Oversight and Safety Division, Technical Infrastructure Division, and the Surface Mining and Reclamation Division.

Oil and Gas Division consists of three Department. Administrative compliance serves as the recordkeeping arm of the division. They process organization reports, process

drilling permits, production reports and other required forms. Technical permitting is much like it applies, all the technical

Including plastic carbon storage well.

Also waste and recycling permits and technical permitting houses are.

Geologic Advisory, which works to protect our sources of underground drinking.

Field operations is by far the largest group in our oil and gas division, and they consist of operators or inspectors working across the state out of

Oil and gas are the field of operations, as I was saying, is our largest department within the oil and gas division, and they consist of operators or inspectors working across the state in areas of cleanup, site remediation, well plugging, and of course, oil and gas inspections, also responding to incidents and complaints.

Our oversight and safety division also consists of three departments. Pipeline safety inspectors do not only standard and routine inspections on pipelines and facilities, but they also complete numerous inspections, including new and construction inspections, pipeline integrity inspections, and even drug and alcohol.

drug and alcohol inspections of oversight of operator staff. Our pipeline safety inspectors are trained to the standards of the Pipeline Hazardous Material Safety Administration, also known as PHMSA, who regulates interstate pipeline. Our regulation of interstate pipelines

It meets or exceeds them to standards.

Alternative Fuels Department provides training.

testing, certification, and licenses to employees within the alternative fuels industry.

Our alternative fuels inspectors inspect storage and dispensing.

and they also investigate incident. Market oversight works to ensure that Texans have a safe, continuous supply of natural gas at the lowest reasonable price. They review appeals on natural gas distribution company rate requests, administer the gas utility pipeline tax, and

perform gas utility audits. Like our oil and gas division, we have 7 pipeline safety regional offices throughout the state so that we are ready and able to serve you.

Another section within our Oversight and Safety Division is our Pipeline Damage Prevention Team. This team provides outreach and education to professional excavators and homeowners alike to help prevent pipeline damage by calling 811 before any excavation. And they also process reporting of damage incidents.

The Critical Infrastructure Division exists to ensure that an uninterrupted supply of

natural gas is available throughout the year, especially during times of energy emergencies. They do this in three ways. Ensuring that all natural gas suppliers meeting certain requirements for electrical production are designated as critical. Processing reports of critical entities that include operating procedures in case of a stoppage and weatherization plans to help prevent stoppages. Inspections of facilities to ensure that weatherization is in place. Our inspectors will visit over 7,000 facilities to prepare for the winter season alone.

Our inspectors work out of four, one of four regional critical infrastructure offices throughout the state.

Surface and mining and reclamation truly lives out our mission of stewardship for natural resources and the environment. They are responsible for both mining and reclamation permits, as well as inspections. In Texas, we mine for a lignite coal, which is primarily used for production of electricity. The abandoned mine land program completes restoration

and safety procedures on mines across the state that have been left as safety hazard. We currently have no active uranium mines in Texas, but our team is involved in overseeing and inspecting any exploration projects.

Reclamation of mines take former surface mining sites like the Jewett Mine in Jewett, Texas, and turn them into usable land space, such as the Dewey Prairie Garden, which now sits on approximately 10 acres of this former mine and provides food for over 3,000 residents in Freestone and Limestone County.

If you would like to know more about the activity of the Railroad Commission of Texas, we have several one-pagers on our website at www.rrc.texas.gov. Please feel free to contact us at any time using any of the methods you see here on the screen. Thank you. Bryce.

BD **Bryce Dubee** 17:15

Thank you so much, Scott. At this time, we will now open the floor for your comments. I would ask that all comments be presented with dignity, courtesy, and respect for the commission, agency staff, and others present. Participants will have approximately 3 minutes to speak, and if you exceed your time, you will be asked to quickly conclude your comments so that all registrants have time to speak. I will now call participants.

by name to provide your comments. As your name is Carl Lowis, just a moment to turn on your microphone. Again, you don't have to turn on your camera if you don't

want to, but you will have that opportunity when you are unmuted.

And we don't have any comments that were submitted in advance, so we will just move directly into this. And with that, our first comment today, or our first registrant, is Melanie Oldham.

I am not seeing them online. I don't know if they're in the room or not.

Check my little sheet here.

Unclear if they were registered virtually or in person, so we'll just keep going down the list. Do we have, oh, go ahead.

BD

Bryce Dubee 18:43

Okay, not a problem. Well, then we will go to Will Kroll, who is registered virtually not seeing them online.

Just gonna go and go between the two, actually.

And it may be Scott because of our registrants.

I'm not sure who is there in person versus, I see who's in there in person versus virtually. None of the folks who registered virtually are, I'm seeing as an attendee right now. We do have two attendees. If they would like to speak, if you can hit the raise your hand button or the Q&A button, we can give you an opportunity. And I'm. If not, Scott, I will defer you for any folks who are in the room.

SS

Scott Sroufe 19:35

Is there anyone here in the room that would like to speak? No.

Stand right there at the podium, if you would. Yes.

Have questions?

Am I on or what? Yes. Bryce, can you hear? Can you hear me, Bryce? Okay. Okay. I just got out of a meeting from the commissioners where they voted to accept a permit for Exxon Mobil for stashing CO2 on the ground.

BD

Bryce Dubee 19:53

I can hear it loud and clear.

SS

Scott Sroufe 20:05

Um...

To get the carbon credits, the carbon credits last 12.

Twelve years.

After 12 years, there's no economic justification for any company like Exxon Mobil to continue that. What happens to these abandoned these wells when they're no longer used? Who's the oversight? How are they? How are they maintained? What happens to the?

pipelines going into them. How is Texas Railroad Commission involved in that?

What is the end of life requirement? People operate these wells.

Is that protocol established for CO₂ injection?

Keith, can you speak to any of that? I know all of our SIP people are out today heading to a public comment meeting.

Okay.

We will definitely take your comments.

We will get back to you.

Pass those 18.

Mail address? I don't do not. Please make sure you...

Really?

Is there anyone else here in the room that would like to speak?

Go ahead. Please state your name when you come to the microphone.

Yes.

Three minutes.

Hello, all. My name is Greg Goodnight. I'm a retired chemical engineer from the Pearland area. And I did speak at this morning's meeting, and I want to talk a little bit about what's called the social cost of carbon. I am a member of what's called the CO₂ Coalition, which is a think tank.

Marty and I, my colleague Marty Cornell, showed up this morning and we gave testimony. And we talked a little bit about what the reality of CO₂ and the attempt to sequester CO₂ in the ground to impact the

the climate. Quite honestly, CO₂ is not a poison. It's not a pollutant. And the amount of CO₂ that would be sequestered in the ground is small enough where it will not make a meaningful change in the global surface temperature or

what's called extreme climate events. There's been quite a bit of, I would call it propaganda, that takes the science and sort of stretches it and means to imply that CO₂ is bad. Actually, CO₂ is good. Some of the impact of CO₂ is you have improved crop yields.

You have a slightly longer growing season. And we've seen in the past century or so, we've seen 1 degree centigrade of global temperature rise. But the majority of this, we believe, is natural in nature. And we've recovered a little bit of temperature from what was called the Little Ice Age. If you recall, Washington and Valley Forge and Napoleon marching his troops back from Moscow, freezing to death, that was the so-called Little Ice Age. Well, we've had a temperature increase for the last 250 years. But we've only had fossil fuel usage accelerate since the end of World War II. So the advocates for this global warming narrative say, okay, we've correlated fossil fuel usage with temperature increase. But I got a question for everyone. If you have temperature increase beginning 250 years ago, but you only have CO2 from fossil fuels increasing only after World War II. Shouldn't A cause precede an effect? Shouldn't the CO2 have come first? So we believe that there's credible scientific evidence that says the CO2 causing global warming is not accurate. One of the ways they've tried to quantify the effect of CO2 is what they call the social cost of carbon. This is the basis for all of the aggressive environmental policies that you got. And I would consider carbon sequestration in the ground, which is expensive, I would consider that aggressive because in reality it accomplishes absolutely zero in terms of climate change. If you took the models as they are, which are overstating the actual temperature impact of CO2, what you would find is if you run it through the models, which overstate reality, you almost get no discernible or measurable effect on CO2. So therefore, we believe that sequestration is a monumental waste of money. I mentioned the social cost of carbon, which is the parameter or the metric that the folks use, the government uses to quantify the so-called negative effects of carbon. Well, the problem is, is that's based upon economic models, climate models, assumption after assumption. And the reality is, and what Trump said, is the social cost of carbon cannot be accurately measured. And in fact, in his executive order 14-154 on unleashing American energy, which he issued in January of 2025, what he said is that we will no longer use the imaginary and highly based upon assumptions, social cost of carbon to regulate. Now, this brings us to this week, which is an amazing week. The EPA has rescinded Biden error regulations on coal and gas that would mandate the so-called carbon sequestration

for new coal plants and new gas plants. We think this is a fantastic issue, a fantastic step forward. We believe that Trump is on the right track with energy abundance, and we believe it's going to take a while for the legislature to catch up, but the legislature will catch up. Okay, so that's what I had to say. That's a summary. Question? No, thank you. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

All right, Bryce, I have no other questions or comments from here in the room. So if you have any others online, I'm going to turn things back over to you.

BD **Bryce Dubee** 27:30

I'm not seeing anyone else online. We've got Sylvia Calderon. If you would like to speak or have a question among for your entities here, feel free to. Either add it into the chat or a Q&A. or raise your hand if you'd like to speak. If not, I think we are good Q&A wise here. I'm not seeing any of our other registrants. We've got. Three people who should be in person potentially, Scott. Okay. Not here, okay. Yeah, and actually one of them just spoke, so I think...

SS **Scott Sroufe** 28:04

No, they are not here.

BD **Bryce Dubee** 28:13

pending anything online. That is all we have as far as public comment today.

SS **Scott Sroufe** 28:18

All right. Thank you, Bryce. Thank you all for being patient with us as we had some extraordinary things happen this morning. And normally we will start right on time and we appreciate your participation here today. Seeing no other comment, we're going to go ahead and close the meeting.

And we appreciate you, but we will have another open listening session on October 13th. Registration is open now on our website, rrc.texas.gov. Go ahead and register for that next open listening session on October 13th. Thank you.

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