

Listening Sessions - Understanding the RRC-20251112_184746UTC-Meeting Recording

November 12, 2025, 5:57PM

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Scott Sroufe 0:13

Good morning, everyone.

Thank you for joining us for our listening session today. If you are just joining in, we still have a few minutes left before we begin.

We're going to begin right at 12:00.

I'm going to continue allowing people to come in through the lobby once they sign on, but thank you for joining us.

We'll be going in just a few moments.

For those of you who are just logging on, I want to thank you for being here this morning.

We will begin right at noon.

We're allowing other people who are joining in to enter through the lobby. So thank you for being here with us.



Bryce Dubee 3:32

All right, I know we have a few folks still joining in, but good afternoon and welcome to the first ever Railroad Commission of Texas listening session.

We are honestly so glad you're all able to join us here today for anyone who is joining and would prefer Spanish language option when you first log in on teams, you should see a pop up that should ask about a for a language option. If you click on.

That it should allow you to switch over to Spanish audio once we begin our presentation.

My name is Bryce Duby.

I'm Roc agency spokesperson and I will be your.

Host for today's event, the schedule for today's session will be start with a brief presentation on RC jurisdiction and move into our public comment period. After that, if time allows, we'll move into a brief comment and Q&A period for any remaining attendees who didn't register to.

Provide a comment beforehand, but before we begin, I'd like to take a quick moment

for a little bit of housekeeping. As you may have noticed, when you logged on all participants, cameras and microphones have been turned off. For those who have registered.

To provide a comment or question later in the meeting when we open our comment section, I will call you by name once your time to speak and one of our staff will temporarily restore your camera and microphone after you've spoken your camera, microphone will begin be turned off.

And I would note that if you don't want to have your camera on while you're speaking, or if you're dialing in from a phone, that's totally fine as well as we do.

All we do ask, though, is that your comments be made in a respectful manner towards the staff and all present here today.

I would also note that we have a Spanish language option for today's audience.

And for asking questions as well, which my colleague Rafael Navas with the Office of Public Engagement, will now briefly explain over the Rafael.

Thanks Raphael. Now at this time, I'd like to introduce you to our panel, which you can see on the screen of our subject matter experts who are here representing their divisions here at the RRC and will take your feedback back to their respective offices. Joining us from the.

Oil and gas division are Paul Dubois, Heath may, David Linley, and Jared Ware from surface mining and reclamation. We've got Kimberly Jackson, Katie Upton.

From communications in the Office of Public Engagement, we have Christian Goff. Madison, GA.

Scott Thrif from the Office of Oversight and Safety. We've got Stephanie Weidman and from chairman Wright's office. We've got Aaron kreci.

And most importantly, we do have all of you who have taken time out of your day to join us.

We do generally appreciate you coming and participating your interest in the Railroad Commission and we look forward hearing from you at this time. I will now hand things over to Scott who will be providing a brief overview of the Commission. Scott.



Scott Sroufe 6:41

Here at the Railroad Commission, we have a mission statement. However, our mission can really be summed up in one word, and that word is serve we want to serve in our stewardship of natural resources in the environment. Our concern for

personal and community safety, and we also want.

To serve enhanced development and the economic vitality for the benefit of all Texans.

We've been serving Texans since 1891.

We were established in 1891 as the very first Regulatory agency in the state of Texas. And we were initially established to regulate the railroads. However, over the time our railroad, our our regulatory authority has shifted somewhat and we have been evolving to where now we take on the oil and gas industry as we did in the early 1900s with the oil and.

Gas boom. And we also have.

The railroad was taken away from us or transferred away from us.

In 2005, I'll talk about more about our other jurisdictional authority here in just a moment.

But first, let me remind you that we are led by three statewide elected Commissioners, each one of our Commissioners serves a six year term.

Those terms are staggered so that one Commission seat is up for election or re-election every two years. As I mentioned, we do have jurisdiction over the oil and natural gas exploration and production industry in the state of Texas.

We also have jurisdiction over Interstate pipeline safety. Alternative fuels such as propane, compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas. The natural gas critical infrastructure designations and weatherization, natural gas utilities and coal and uranium surface mining operations. In addition, we also have jurisdiction over hydrogen and geothermal industries through.

The state.

There are some things that are not considered our jurisdiction, though. They're they're normally associated with the oil and gas industry.

One is roads and traffic noise, odors and lighting, and air quality.

Those are outside of our jurisdiction and are either county and municipal issues or under the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

We also have no jurisdiction over siting of oil and gas facilities, including pipelines or. Well pads or other issues with the oil and gas industry.

We do have no jurisdiction over those sightings.

We also have no jurisdiction over mineral interests, lease agreements or royalty agreements, and like I mentioned, no more jurisdiction over railroads.

Texas is the largest producer of oil and gas in the United States. We produce over 4.8

million barrels of oil each and every day and over 33.83 billion cubic feet of natural gas each and every day.

We have 4 regulatory divisions within the Railroad Commission. Our oil and gas division oversight and safety division, critical infrastructure division and surface mining and reclamation divisions.

I'm gonna talk about each one of those beginning with oil and gas division.

Oil and gas division consists of three separate departments, administrative compliance, which is pretty much the record keeping arm of the oil and gas division. They handle all of our P5 organization reports for every operator operating in the state of Texas.

They also handle drilling permits, production reports, completion reports and other reporting duties.

Technical permitting is much like the name.

Insists it is covering all of our technical permits, such as special injection permits, underground injection permits, waste and recycling permits, as well as they house our geologic advisory unit, which is in charge of protecting the groundwater. Our field operations is our largest department.

Within the oil and gas division, we have 10 distinct district oil and gas offices throughout the state.

Which house inspectors who are boots on the ground for us on hand?

24/7 to respond to incidents and complaints.

Our inspectors not only are on hand to to on call, but they are also inspecting oil and gas facilities throughout the state, as well as providing clean up operations.

Surface remediation operations and well plugging operations.

Our oversight and safety division also has three distinct departments. We have over half a million, or nearly half a million miles of pipeline in the state of Texas.

Our pipeline safety inspectors inspect all Intrastate pipelines. Interstate pipelines however are covered by FEMA, which is the pipeline hazardous Material Safety Administration, a federal agency, however, all of our pipeline inspectors are trained by.

FEMA and they keep our regulations.

At or above FEMSA standards, in addition to regular comprehensive and standard inspections that are pipeline safety inspectors.

Do they also handle specialized inspections, such as new construction inspections, integrity inspections, and even drug and alcohol inspections of operators?

Our alternative fuels department within oversight and Safety Division, handles all of those things relating to propane, compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas. Such as certification registration, training exams and licensing. They also.

Handle inspections for storage facilities, dispensary facilities, even those facilities that sit outside Lowe's, Kmart, Walmart, whatever.

I guess there's no Kmart's anymore, but you know those propane exchange tanks?

Those are considered storage facilities that our inspectors are a part of.

We also have our market oversight department within oversight and safety.

50 Division Market oversight ensures that we have a traditional service of gas at just and reasonable rates.

They handle gas utility complaints as well as performing market oversight audits.

One more section in our pipeline of oversight and safety division is our pipeline damage prevention section.

They are out doing enforcement and education and outreach to not only professional excavators, but also homeowners.

Like yourselves, making sure that we dial 811 before any digging takes place.

They also respond to excavation related incidents through reporting and also sometimes administrative fines.

Our Critical Infrastructure division has three separate functions.

1st is the critical designation of those that are on the natural gas supply chain.

Those mean those operators or facilities or?

Anything that has to do with creating electricity during weather emergencies, those must be designated as critical.

We also have reporting functions that they do all of those who are critical do reporting back to us in our agency to make sure that they have the standard operating procedures or emergency operation plans on hand to ensure that we have a safe steady supply of natural.

Gas.

They also are involved in inspections. In fact, our inspectors from Critical Infrastructure Division completed over 7000 inspections just in preparation for this year's winter season.

Our surface mining and Reclamation Division is our last regulatory division within the agency and they are in charge of mining and reclamation permits.

They also do inspections of mines.

They also.

They also use our abandoned mine land program, making sure that abandoned mines are sealed or and safe for the general public and all of all Texans.

They also oversee our uranium exploration program.

Currently we have no active uranium mines in Texas, but we do have some exploration sites that surface mining and reclamation overseas.

One of the things that they do, like I said, is reclaiming mine lands. This picture that you see on the left of your screen is the former Jewett Mine, a 35,000 acre mine facility that now part of that mine land, serves as the Dewey Prairie Gard.

Serving over 3000 residents, 10,000 lbs plus of food each and every year. This is a nonprofit organization that feeds what is now considered a food desert.

In three specific counties in Texas.

If you have any other questions about our agency or our regulatory authority, please feel free to contact us at any time, either by e-mail, at publicassist, at rrc.texas.gov, the contact US form on the our agency website or you can scan the QR code that you.

See on this screen and you'll be able to contact us with any inquiry, comment or complaint at any time. We promise that we will try to do our best to ensure that all of those inquiries are responded to within 24 to 48 hours. We also encour.

You to check out our website www.rrctexas.gov.

We have several 1 informational 1 pagers on our website.

One in particular is called RRC, one O 1 or understanding RRC that has many different informational aspects about what our regulatory authority is and what it is not.

Again, www.rrc.texas.gov.

Is our website scan that QR code?

Contact us at any time.

I'm gonna turn things over to Bryce now. Again, Bryce.



Bryce Dubee 16:44

Thank you so much, Scott.

We are now going to open up the floor for your comments.

I would ask that all comments be presented with dignity, courtesy and respect for both the attendees, Commission and agency staff participants will have approximately 3 minutes to speak, and if you exceed your time, you'll be asked to quickly conclude your comments to the all registrants do have an.

Opportunity to speak. We do have a decent number of folks who have registered to provide comment today. So we're we are going to kind of enforce that on.

Just keep an eye on things.

I will call participants by name.

We've got a list here based on when folks provided their comments.

So as your name is called, please allow us just a moment to turn on your microphone again.

You don't have to turn your camera if you don't want to, but you will have the opportunity to do so when your mic is unmuted.

Your mic and camera will be turned off at the conclusion of your comments.

We also do have a few comments that were submitted in advance to the Commission to be read out during our comment period, so we'll be including those as well with all of that being said, our first comment today comes from Jay Allison over to you, Sir.

 **Jay Allison** 17:51

Can you hear me?

 **Bryce Dubee** 17:55

Loud and clear.

 **Scott Sroufe** 17:55

Yes, we can, Jay.

 **Jay Allison** 17:56

Oh, OK.

Actually I I don't have a comment other than to thank you all for starting this program.

I think it's very beneficial for the residents of the city to understand what the railroad Commission does.

So thank you very much.

 **Bryce Dubee** 18:16

All right.

Thank you for that. Going next to Jason Hale.

 **Jason Hale** 18:24
Hey, can you hear me?

 **Bryce Dubee** 18:27
We've got you.

 **Jason Hale** 18:28
OK, awesome.
Yeah. So hi.
My name is Jason Hale.
Live in Corpus Christi, TX, one of the best places to go birding on the coast.
And so we've had oil and gas activity in our bays since the 1900s and there are studies that document that abandoned wells in the Bay are leaking into our Bay and causing water quality issues.
And they did this by tracer studies and all that kind of stuff.
They're looking to see if groundwater was causing.
Water quality issues from like below surface discharges.
Anyways, I was just kind of wondering like what can I do to get these abandoned wells plugged so they can stop?
Kind of like messing up the water quality in our base.
It's an important day.
It's like the nursery habitat for juvenile wildlife in the area.
That's it. Thanks.

 **Bryce Dubee** 19:27
Great. Thank you so much for your question.
I'm not sure we have anyone from oil and gas division who wants to chime in just on on the question side of that on what what can someone do for an abandoned well in their area.
All right, go ahead, Keith.

 **Keith May** 19:45
Well, Jason, I think if if you have any specific wells in mind, you could always reach out to the District office to let them know.

So typically you know we're trying to the Bay and offering ones are a little more difficult to get to just of of cost, but there's a big project we're gonna get started on soon. But I would definitely reach out to your district office and and let them know. Which specific ones you have problems with?
Her concerns with.

 **Jason Hale** 20:09
Family district office.

 **Bryce Dubee** 20:13
We've got that information on our website and we can we can provide that to you. But if you look actually right on the website, there is a section I believe is under the oil and gas that actually has a full breakdown of all of that, but it's it.

 **Keith May** 20:13
So are we. Yeah, go ahead, Bryce.

 **Bryce Dubee** 20:24
Is on our website all the break the contact information for all their respective districts.

 **Jason Hale** 20:28
Awesome. Thank you so much.

 **Scott Sroufe** 20:29
Look, Jay, on our website under locations under the about US tab at the top of the website.
You'll see locations if you click that. There's a list of district offices by county.

 **Jason Hale** 20:36
4.

 **Scott Sroufe** 20:41
So you could look up your county and find out the district office that's represented there, and then you'll find the district office contact information in the list provided on that same page.



Jason Hale 20:53

Awesome. That's perfect. Thank you so much.



Bryce Dubee 20:58

Thank you.

All right. David, did you have anything you wanted to add on all of that?



David Lindley 21:04

No, I thought.

Well, I was going to mention the supplemental funds, the \$100 million that was made available.

Part of that is for high H2S wells, but it is also offshore and Bay wells so well, I'm not 100% up to speed on what the schedule is gonna be. We are ramping up to to get some of the get some of those off.

And Bay Wells plugged so.

With with the available funds for the next well, it was a two year program that started in June.

We should be able to to knock out quite a few of those wells.

I just don't have a schedule of what we're going to address at this time.



Bryce Dubee 21:53

All right.

Thank you so much for that.

Our next comment is one of the ones I mentioned that was pre submitted.

So we're that, they requested it be read during this listing session.

So I will hand it over to one of our staff, Katie, who's going to read this comment on behalf of Haley.



Katherine Kopec 22:09

Yes, this comment is from Haley, a ratepayer from Houston.

She I want to thank the Commission for holding open meetings like this and for accepting public comments, especially remote input.

Making these forums accessible allows more Texans to participate in decisions that affect our health, safety, and energy future.

I'm submitting this comment to express my concern about methane leaks in Texas oil and gas system.

As someone who spends a lot of time outdoors, I care deeply about the air we breathe and the health of our communities.

Methane is a powerful climate pollutant more than 80 times stronger than carbon dioxide in the short term.

And it's also wasted energy. Every time it leaks from a pipeline that's fuel Texans have already paid for that never reaches homes or businesses.

The EPA's new methane standards call for states to take stronger steps to detect and repair these leaks.

The Railroad Commission has a vital role to play in that process, not only for environmental reasons, but to improve accountability, safety and cost efficiency for ratepayers.

That's why I'm asking the Commission to include methane metrics in the monitoring and enforcement strategic plan required under HB 1818 without measurable data, there's no way to track progress or hold operators accountable.

I will also urge the Commission to require utility companies to locate and eliminate methane leaks and to prioritize repairing or retiring aging pipelines instead of defaulting to full replacement projects.

Complete replacement is often the most expensive path, and those costs end up on the backs of ratepayers. Targeted leak detection and repair can be faster, cheaper and more effective at reducing emissions and improving safety.

This approach protects consumers from higher bills, ensures energy is delivered more efficiently and improves public health by cutting harmful admissions.

It's a practical step that benefits both Texas families and the environment we depend on.

Texas has always been an energy leader. By modernizing our oversight and taking methane seriously.

We can uphold that legacy protecting our economy, our air and our future.

Thank you again for your time and for continuing to give Texans the opportunity to be heard both in person and online.



Bryce Dubee 24:13

Thank you for that. And I know we've got another one here and actually is another submitted comments. OK, send it right back to you.



Katherine Kopec 24:24

Perfect.

This question is from Michelle.

How can the Railroad Commission address ongoing delays?

Communication gaps, unnecessary field fees and inefficient processing to ensure fair treatment and timely support for operators.



Bryce Dubee 24:41

All right, so we're talking with those pieces.

I will hand that over to our colleagues here on the oil and gas side.

There was a couple different pieces to that. If we need that repeated, we can.

But Jenna, I'll hand it to you.

Oop and Katie I oop.



J Ware 25:08

Hey.

I mean I can.

I mean, I can speak to the geothermal permitting.

Is it specific to any type of permitting or just like the different classes it was?



Bryce Dubee 25:19

I believe it sounds like they're talking specific. When you see the what was the statement one last time here?



Katherine Kopec 25:30

It was about the railroad Commission addressing ongoing delays.

Communication gaps, unnecessary fees and inefficient processing to ensure fair treatment and timely support for operators.



CG Christian Goff 25:44

I think that that would be for David or Keith. David or Keith, are you still on?



KM Keith May 25:49

Yeah, I'm here.

So I would say that a lot of it is.

Some some part due to like technical issues.

So like our mainframe is you know from the 80s and that's a big thing that we're pushing and spending a lot of money trying to upgrade to more modern systems.

So I think as we start moving to new systems and getting things, you know, more up-to-date, more what's what's the word I'm looking for, just real time information.

I think that'll fix that a lot.

And I think always with the communications, it's finding the right person.

You're supposed to talk to because I know it could be difficult.

There's so many different pieces and parts of the Commission that, you know, if you talk to the wrong person, you kind of bounce around a few times.

So I think using the.

What's the? There's a sheet we have for if it's AP 5, this is a number you call. If it's for a Gau question, this is a number.

You call it.

Also say using that is very helpful to you to to speak to who you need to.



Bryce Dubee 26:48

Go ahead, David.



David Lindley 26:52

Yes, just to add to that, as most people know, Commissioner Christian did some doge town halls earlier.

This fiscal year and one of the things that I took away from that is the consistency between districts and one of the one of the main things that came out is some districts were accepting e-mail forms and applications and some were needing the hard copy wet signatures and.

So we're we're trying to get rid of.

Inconsistencies like that and nobody should not be taking.

Any application, any form, just through mail.

E-mail is just as good for the districts. We're getting more consistent with that.

I know that was a slowdown that upset.

Operators, because they they would be in several districts and and be, you know, treated a little bit differently.

So we're really trying to stress Commissioner Christian's urgency on consistency.

So that we've had directors meetings monthly and we'll continue to do so and will certainly be addressing any any difference between the districts.

So from that perspective.

We're definitely moving forward.



Bryce Dubee 28:21

Great. Thank you so much for that.

We're moving on to our next question and I hate to sort of ambush them 'cause. I know they just joined the call or for next comment we have Adele and Molina.

We should be able to unmute you and you can provide your question or comment to the panel here.

Go right ahead as there will be a slight delay when we meet you, but go right ahead.



Molina, Adela 28:51

I'm so sorry.

I was trying to.

I just joined so I didn't have a question at this time.



Bryce Dubee 29:00

OK.

Not a problem.

We we can always circle back.

Next we have.

Melanie Oldham.



Katherine Kopec 29:19

I'm sorry, I saw her join the chat or join the meeting, but I do not see her in attendance anymore.



Bryce Dubee 29:27

OK.

Not a problem.

We can go next to oh, wait.

You are here, OK.

I'm verified OK, not a problem.

We will get you on.
Right now.
Where was that?
Did you see that one, Katie?



Katherine Kopec 29:59

Yes, she should be unmuted if she has a question.



Bryce Dubee 30:02

OK.
Go right ahead.
Oh, and you may have to unmute on your end as well.
Oh, OK, not a problem.
OK, going right ahead then. So we've got that. All right, let's move on.
I know, Katie, you've got.
I think it's our final submitted comment.
We do have a couple other folks to speak as well, but let's go.
We have a comment that was submitted in advance from Donna.



Katherine Kopec 30:37

Yes. So this comment is from Donna.
The Railroad Commission has repeatedly failed to protect Fort Bend County communities.
We had underground pipe explosions in 2017 and these pipes still gave off smells.
So who's responsible for sealing these caps?
The capture project will create opportunities for the Commission to fail us again.
Carbon capture technology is being described as progress, but it will make our communities more vulnerable and risk deepening existing health issues.
Petro Nova is our local example that this technology is not effective and is not here to save us.



Bryce Dubee 31:15

OK. And we would thank Donna for that comment.
Our next question is for Ian Sandlin.
That you unmuted and go right ahead.

 **Christian Goff** 31:47
Ilan, are you unmuted?

 **Bryce Dubee** 31:50
Just clicked it.

He just.

I think he just needs to unmute on his end and we should be good to go.

 **Ilan** 31:56

Sorry about that guys.

I thought I was unmuted and I'm not. I wasn't.

My question is about how we're holding operators accountable for orphaned wells.

From what I understand, the number of orphaned wells are keeps growing.

And we, as taxpayers are paying for those wells to be plugged.

What are we doing to make sure that operators have the capacity to be able to plug those wells?

Themselves, rather than us as taxpayers.

 **Bryce Dubee** 32:33

Great. Thank you for that question. I know we've got a couple folks from oil and gas who can certainly take care of that one. Whoever wants to jump in first on that one, if it's David or Keith?

Oh, we got both hands up so.

 **David Lindley** 32:48

I'll go.

I'll go ahead and start out.

First of all, yes, if there's an operator, we certainly follow that through to the end. If it's an orphan, well, that means that there is no operator.

There's no active P5 and they've been inactive for over a year.

So really, there's there's there's nobody there to pursue.

In an orphan.

Well situation and I would like to also point out that orphan wells with Ogrc state funds, those are not from taxpayers.

That ogrc funds come from the the industry itself, operators that's through application fees and fines. So.

Orphan wells are not plugged in. The state of Texas with taxpayer funds.

Now that is not necessarily true of the federal funds that are made available.

Obviously, those federal funds are taxes paid by the US.

So, but we will pursue non responsive operators for wells that need to be plugged.

As as far as we can go in hearing, but an orphan, well, there usually isn't anybody to follow.

KM **Keith May** 34:16

So to add to to what David said, Ian.

So I think part of it is like, well, how do we get them to plug the wells before, you know, they go bankrupt or or go orphan?

So actually I think we just passed a law, the legislator that you know after a certain amount of time, an operator has to plug after 15 years of an activity.

I think I have to check the the law exactly, but they have to plug or before you know they can kind of hold on indefinitely, you know, with the idea that, well, that is.

Resources for for the state of Texas and we don't wanna plug it if overall it's it's not causing an imminent threat to you know, the environment.

So we changed that and there's a new law that came in, I think just this last year from the legislature that's gonna kind of clamp down on that and make sure these get plugged in in a quicker fashion.

So there is movement to to kind of help fix that problem.

But but yeah, that that's kind of the main gist of trying to get the current operators to plug it.

I **Ian** 35:17

OK.

Yeah, I just hope to see that these nut, the number of of wells don't keep growing.

I'm hoping that that that that legislation will will stop that.

KM **Keith May** 35:28

Yeah. And that's what we're hoping too.

I mean the the kind of general thing is there's like a a balance where if we put too many barriers up to where, you know, you have to full bond, you have to do all these

things before you can be an operator. Then you push out the little.

Guys who can, you know, be industry be part of industry and then you only have the big companies that you know are international.

But then if you make it too easy, then you have too many orphan wells.

So we're trying to find that right balance of having.

You know more diverse industry.

While also trying to minimize you know, those orphan wells at the same time.

 **Ian** 36:05

OK.

Thank you.

 **Bryce Dubee** 36:08

Thank you for your question.

Moving on, we have a question here.

I know Don joined us, Don McCown and you've got a question or a comment for us.

We'll get you unmuted and you can go right ahead.

 **Katherine Kopec** 36:31

He should be unmuted now.

You'll have to unmute on your end.

 **Bryce Dubee** 36:47

And we can't hear you.

You may have to unmute on your own as well.

There's AI should have clarified that there's a 2 fact kind of A2 factor muting and unmuting on our end and your end so.

You should have a a button on the top part of the call where it says like for your cameras and slash microphone.

You should just be able to click that or it's either in the top right or bottom left.

Shoot. Sorry about that. If you want to submit, if you want type in your question, we can or comment.

We can also do that as well.

And hold on to that one on our end here.

If not, then we we can move on, but we're more than happy if you if you do want to

type something in, we can take that submission as well. But we want to do want to thank everyone so far for all of your comments. Again looking at the Clock. We do have some time for some additional feedback or questions with our subject matter.

Who are here today? If you have a question or comment, the two ways you can do that, you can either click the raise hand button on teams and we can you speak or there's also a button over in the top section that says Q&A and you.

Can actually type a question in there as well.

We'll be keeping an eye on both of those options, and we're gonna try our best to answer as many of them as we can in the order that we've received and the time that we have left for any folks who dialed in on the phone.

Once we get you to raise your hand, you hit *5.

And that will notify us that a caller wants to speak.

And then you would do *6 to unmute so *5 to raise your hand *6 to unmute at that at this time.

Then do we have anyone else who would like to speak?

Who's here on the call?

OK.

I see oop. I see your comment here.

Don and I will just read it out so that everyone can see I'm a Permian Basin mineral owner.

I'm here to voice my deep dissatisfaction with the current permitting scheme in a moment where the number of orphan wells recently topped 10,000 for the first time in nearly 20 years. It makes no sense that the RC would have a performance measure of three days to per.

New wells, as you are well aware, we have a produced water problem.

Please get a handle on that and get caught up on plugging orphan wells.

Before you allow some of these operators to fast track permits for new wells, I will be certainly inquiring about their portfolio of orphan wells and what they plan to do about it.

Excuse me.

And what they plan to do about it the next time.

Any operator comes to me for a lease.

Thank you for that comment.

And we get that added as well.

Trying to see we're just doing a little thing on the back end here, seeing if there's any more questions or comments. If anyone would like to speak.

Oh, and Keith, you you've got something I'd like to add as well.

Well, go right ahead.

 **Keith May** 40:17

I don't know if Don wanted that kind of addressed. I think to kind of add to your that the three day performance measure.

It's not necessarily like an express lane to get them out, it's more of to make sure they're reviewed and they could be denied within those three days too.

It's more of just three days to review it and get it out the door.

It's not necessarily a we wanna make sure all of them are approved in three days.

Just wanna clarify that and then for.

You know the orphan wells, that is something we're putting a lot of effort into it. Our our performance measure this year is to plug 1700.

Working wells and a lot of those will be in the paren basin area, and that's something we're definitely focused on.

 **Bryce Dubee** 41:00

Great. Thank you for that. Keith, is there anyone else who is participate or who is here on?

Nope, got that comment in.

OK.

Thank you for that.

Oh, here's a good. OK, we've got one here, thanks to the RRC, we would like to know how to get needed info included in newspaper postings for items like SWDS.

Right now, companies do not need to include any location info other than the rough directional info.

We need lat, long, latitude, longitude or other legal description.

Otherwise, the notification doesn't actually fulfill its purpose.

Thanks. We appreciate your comment.

Thank you for that.

We do have folks on here who can. We can pass that information on to. Again, the purpose on this entire thing is for us to listen to you all so that we can get that feedback and bring it back to the folks here who work on staff at.

The Commission.

So thank you for that feedback.

Do we have any more comments here on the Q&A side?



Scott Sroufe 41:57

So I believe that Paul Dubois would be able to answer that comment.



Bryce Dubee 42:03

Oh, go right ahead, Paul.



Paul Dubois 42:06

Yeah. So the question on injection well permitting and notices.

We would be interested in that.

Our our our practice right now is to follow what's required in Rules 9 and 46.

And.

We I I do think there are more modern ways to identify disposable locations or injection well locations.

That's probably something we'll have an opportunity to look at it and to look into the spring.



Bryce Dubee 42:44

Great. Thanks for that context, Paul.

Again, just keeping the lines open here for folks.

We we do have some time, so if anyone who didn't pre register to provide either a comment or a question would like to do so at this time, raise your hand or click the Q&A button, you can ask a question or provide your comment. So we.

Just keep the line open here for a little bit.

And go from there.

Alright, not seeing anything else at this time.

So with that, first I wanna thank everyone for participating and I will hand this off to Scott for any closing comments.

Oh wait, we've got one more.

Add it in here.

Uh-huh. I'm not sure if the one written question was answered asking if methane

leads are being searched for and measured, slash monitored is and PS is flaring now limited.



Paul Dubois 43:49

And so I can answer that one too.

So flaring is limited and it actually always has been limited, although I know there's there's been a lot of controversy about.

Is it limited enough?

But we do operators are required to.

Seek an exception.

The rules allow them to flare a certain amount and they have the opportunity to seek an exception when necessary, and we review those and.

Work with them to identify an appropriate volume to flare.

Secondly, with regard to methane leaks, this is a little bit more difficult question. If we're talking about air quality and air pollution, that's actually the jurisdiction of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, not the Railroad Commission.

But if you're talking about natural gas that's produced.

Which I know much of. It is methane.

We do actually.

Keep track and and ensure that as much methane can be captured and sent into the appropriate pipelines as possible.

That's not to say that.

There couldn't ever be more that can be done, but operators on the one hand have the incentive to capture the methane so they can sell it and but actually the the stronger enforcement mechanism was with the PCEQ.

Because leaked methane does contribute to.

Or applied towards permit limits that operators also have to meet.

So it's natural gas inventing and flaring. It is a little bit complicated.

We do regulate it and we have done our best to keep a lid on it.



Bryce Dubee 45:51

Great. Thanks so much for that. And I think it will at this point, if I'll do one more call here, if there is anyone on the line who does have any more questions or comments they would like to provide now would be the opportunity.



Scott Sroufe 46:05

It's one of our SME.



Bryce Dubee 46:05

I will just.



Scott Sroufe 46:06

He's Stephanie. Weidman does have something else to say to that. Go ahead, Stephanie.



Bryce Dubee 46:11

Oh, thank you for that.



Stephanie Weidman 46:12

Yeah. Thanks, Scott.

So I think that question also had some comments about pipeline safety and pipeline questions. And so just a few information about the regulations for pipeline safety, transmission pipelines and distribution pipelines require annual leak surveys or at least on the transmission side, their annual leak surveys on the DISTRIB.

Side it's a risk based leak survey. Depending on the pipe type.

So those range anywhere from every year to every three to five years.

And we do have leak grading and repair procedures.

So our regulations are more stringent than the federal regulations because something about pipeline safety. We are certified with the feds to enforce the federal regulations in Texas. But on top of that, we are permitted to have more stringent regulations as well.

And with those regulations, we have leak grading and repair procedures.

That's also where our risk based leak surveys come. So once a leak is found, especially on the distribution side.

Operators are required required to monitor that leak and then repair it within certain timeframes depending on the severity of the leak.

So some are immediate repairs if they're grade one and cause immediate danger, and some if they're small leaks, they have six months to repair. And then even like the smaller leaks out in the middle of nowhere, they're required to repair those as

well, usually monitored, at least Ann.

And then repaired within three years.

I'd say we have that leak grading and repair roll in for quite some time now, so most operators are on top of their leaks and repair them faster than than is required in the regulations.

But we do push towards repairs, not replacements.

I mean, if the pipe is needing for a replacement, obviously it's a costly, costly item to replace, but at the same point we we also.

You know, require operators to repair their lines and enforce those regulations.

Just want to make sure to share that information.



Bryce Dubee 48:15

Great. Thank you so much for that.

I don't think we have any other questions, but I do know we do have. I mean obviously I don't want to date our folks here, but decades of experience on the line with our subject matter experts who are here and then if we don't any more questions though.

I think I will hand this over to Scott and if you do think of one after all of this, he's gonna have some more information about our plans for the future with these listening sessions.

So, Scott, over to you.



Scott Sroufe 48:42

Thanks Bryce.

Again, thank you so much to our subject matter experts.

As Bryce said, we've got years and years of experience here and we appreciate you sharing that with us today.

We also want to thank you for joining us today. If you make comments or concerns or just came on to listen, we appreciate you.

We thank you for being a part of this.

We truly are here to serve the state of Texas in any way we can.

Within our regulatory authority and we want to thank you for taking this opportunity.

To be with us, to learn more about us, what we're doing and how we're doing it. If you do have any consistent concerns, complaints, inquiries, comments, whatever it is, please feel free to contact us at any time.

Again, that QR code is still there on the screen. If you want to use that, you can use the contact us form on our website or e-mail publicassist at RRC.

Dot Texas Gov.

Again, public assist all one word.

At RRC Texas, Gov.

Use the complaint form.

Use the contact US form anyway.

We will get back in touch with you as soon as possible to address your concerns.

Thank you again for joining us.

We will have another listening session.

Hopefully we've got one under our belt now and we'll be even better for the next time.

We will have that next one in January of 2026. In fact, on January 14th of 2026, if you want to mark your calendars now and join us again.

Thank you.

For joining us today.

Have a great day. Thank you.

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