



"Amy Harlib"
<aharlib@earthlink.net
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12/21/2004 01:45 PM
EST

To: <PAIS_public_comments@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Padre Island National Seashore - to - Jerry Patterson

aharlib@earthlink.net

The Honorable Jerry Patterson<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns =
"urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

<?xml:namespace prefix = st1 ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:smarttags" />Texas
Land Commissioner

P.O. Box 78711-2873

Austin, TX 78711-2873

Dear Commissioner Patterson:

As an American who loves wild places and is concerned that they be protected for the good of the country and the planet and to benefit future generations, and particularly considering Padre Island National Seashore, I am writing to ask you to help protect this great national park.

The seashore is a national treasure, and crown jewel in the natural heritage of the Lone Star State.

I am outraged to hear that the park has been opened to "an aggressive drilling campaign" that could last 30 years and litter the park with well sites, roads, fences and pipelines. I have recently heard that the Bush administration has approved a third drilling well on the seashore. I am astonished to learn that park visitors and endangered sea turtles will have to share the beach with 18-wheeler trucks. The seashore is too special to turn it into petroleum superhighway.

I am writing to ask you to support a federal buyout of the mineral rights below Padre Island, specifically by estimating the cost of a buyout. With your long and distinguished career in Texas government you could also act as a liaison to President George W. Bush, who supported a buyout of mineral rights below a national park in Florida last year.

Recently, in an Associated Press article, you mentioned that a buyout was a "pipe dream" that had not the money nor the support. Hmm. I recall that the Bush administration offered \$235 million for buyouts in Florida. Why not in Texas. And, I know there is support. Hundreds of citizens each week are signing on to this idea.

A federal buyout is a win-win solution to the national seashore, its visitors, the local economy, and the Texas school fund. This buyout would give the money to the school fund upfront rather than holding it hostage to incremental payments dependent on gas drilling. The Bush administration would serve our country well by buying out those mineral rights and emphasizing renewable energy instead of petroleum production.

Please, Commissioner Patterson, do the right thing, for our families and our future. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Amy Harlib
N.Y., NY 10011

212 West 22nd St. #2N