

Padre Island National Seashore
Attn: Superintendent/O&G EA
P.O. Box 181300
Corpus Christi, Texas 78480

12/13/04

Dear Superintendent,

I am extremely concerned by the certain damage that drilling will do to the endangered sea turtles which nest on Padre Island. Recently the National Park Service has released an Environmental Assessment for BNP Petroleum's plan to drill Dunn-Peach Wells #2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. This cluster of five wells will take at least eight months to complete. That means that up to 20 heavy trucks will be hauling equipment up and down the beach every day for most of the next year. These trucks will crush buried nests, killing unhatched turtles and thereby eliminating generations which are vital to maintain already depleted populations.

In proceeding with considerations of drilling on Padre Island a federal buyout of the mineral rights should be included as one of the alternatives. Such an alternative would eliminate the need to allow access to privately owned mineral leases and would be consistent with the NPS environmentally preferred alternative and would meet all 6 of the national environmental policy goals and would be consistent with the original intent of the park.

Eco-tourism is fast becoming an economic engine here in South Texas. Considering that most of the Texas coast is currently being used to produce oil and gas, and considering that only 3 percent of Texas is public recreation land, the balance between population and resource use currently favors resource extraction over recreation. Padre Island National Seashore should be the one area of the coast that offers the experience of coastal wilderness free of industrial development.

Since there are only two alternatives listed in this Environmental Assessment, the National Park Service should choose Alternative A, as it is the environmentally preferred alternative.

The plan will take at least eight months to complete. That means eight months of up to 20 trucks per day traveling up and down the beach. Much of the year the beach will be dominated by trucks. This beach is for Americans to enjoy as a national park. If the oil is removed, in a few years it will be worthless from both an energy and an environmental perspective. If it is preserved, it can generate long-term yields both in terms of tourism and the preservation of endangered wildlife.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Scott Nicol



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