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12/21/2004 11:51 AM
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cc: "Wyberg, Bryan (MN51)" <bryan.wyberg@honeywell.com>
Subject: Comments on EA for Dunn-Peach Wells in Padre Island National Seashore

December 20, 2004

Padre Island National Seashore
National Parks Service
PAIS_public_comments@nps.gov

RE: Comments on EA for Dunn-Peach Wells #2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in Padre Island National Seashore

Dear Decision-makers:

I am writing today to provide formal comments on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed drilling of Dunn-Peach Wells #2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. I do not agree with the continued growth of energy development located within the boundaries of the wonderfully important Padre Island National Seashore. I respectfully request that at this time the NPS withdraw its decision to allow the drilling of these Park lands for energy development.

I hope that the NPS and the Bush Administration will realize that it's just not worth it to America to drill in Padre Island National Seashore. This is a special place that was protected for its natural resources and valuable wildlife habitat. Drilling is completely incompatible with the role of the Seashore as habitat for wildlife including the endangered Sea Turtles that nest here and the shorebirds that also lay their eggs on the beach. The cluster of five wells of the Dunn-Peach proposal 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. It is simply ridiculous to allow on the same beaches used by rare animals. Surely special places like Padre Island, which has been recognized for its natural values and established as a National Park can, should and would, be off-limits to drilling and other energy development activities! There is only enough gas under the Park to provide a single day's worth of fuel. And the vast majority of BNP drilling profits will go to foreign investors in Asia and Australia. Should Texans -- and all Americans -- be expected to sacrifice our natural heritage for this? Tourism to the national seashore alone generates about \$40 million for the local economy every year. We can meet our nation's energy needs by investing in cleaner, quicker, safer technologies, supporting the local economy in sustainable ways, and protecting irreplaceable natural treasures like Padre Island. Furthermore, I do not believe that it can be justified that these National Seashore lands would be best utilized for the American public through energy development. These lands are much more valuable to the American public as protected examples of increasingly rare coastal natural resources. Furthermore, I believe that the decision to drill would be a violation of an ethical interpretation of our nation's National Park management laws. Leasing will directly and irreparably impact the users of the Padre Island National Seashore. At the minimum, it seems a decidedly shortsighted, unnecessary and a downright unfair decision to allow energy development that directly impacts and damages the very resources for which the Padre Island National Seashore was established!

I feel that this leasing proposal specifically demonstrates the way the Bush

Administration has broken the law - in spirit, if not to the letter - by ignoring the legal protections of our public parklands. Also, BALANCE and COMPROMISE must serve as the most critical guiding principles of the management of our critical public lands within the Padre Island National Seashore. Those principles are badly lacking in the current decision to allow more drilling on these lands for energy development. There has already been too many wells drilled in the Park. Let's stop the continued disruption and expanded damage that additional drill sites and drilling activity will bring.

I strongly believe that the land to be drilled holds rare natural values too precious to sacrifice for the temporary benefits of energy production. Much of the land is sought by both solitude-seeking people and nationally threatened or endangered species. For example, the EA should better consider the damage energy development will do to the Park's clean water qualities, wildlife habitat resources, and quiet recreation opportunities. Development's disproportionate impact to the experiences of hikers, bird-watchers, and other non-motorized (low-impact and quiet) recreational users must be considered fairly.

I believe that to resolve this issue with a balanced land management approach which recognizes the intrinsic protections National Park status brings will naturally lead to the rejection of this proposal to allow this additional drilling. I hope for myself and for our future generations of Americans that rejection of this project will ultimately be your final decision.

I am certain that the value of these above protections are recognized by the NPS as significant and will be addressed because these drill sites lie within a very significant National Seashore. Please make the correct decision for the benefit of future generations of Americans. They deserve to be able to experience these lands undiminished by energy production.

Sincerely,

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