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Oil & Gas EIS Project

Mr. Robert Potts

Natural Resources and Planning Team Leader

National Forests and Grasslands in Texas

2221 North Raguette

Lufkin, Texas 75904

Dear Rob,

The Houston Regional Group and Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club (Sierra Club) provide this fifteenth set of comments for scoping for the U.S. Forest Service (FS) oil/gas leasing environmental impact statement (OGLE IS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas (NFGT).

Although the official scoping period is over, the Sierra Club will continue to send the FS documents and articles that relate to the OGLEIS. The Sierra Club has been told in the past that although there is an official scoping comment period, that scoping extends from the beginning of the scoping comment period until the draft EIS is released. There are additional articles that the Sierra Club provides to the FS with this letter.

1. "Growth of Texas jobs solid last year", Erin Douglas, Houston Chronicle, January 25, 2020 .

. This article says, "Local and state employment growth was held back in 2019 by the energy sector, which struggled particularly in the second half of the year. Mining and logging employment, which in Texas is dominated by the oil and gas industry, shed a net 9,800 jobs in 2019, according to employment data, down 4 percent. In 2018, the sector had added 24,400 jobs."

2. "Parsley is latest to raise dividends; cut costs", Jordan Blum, Houston Chronicle, January 25, 2020.

This article says, "Parsley Energy on Friday joined a growing number of companies in the industry paying higher dividends to boost Wall Street confidence and loyalty but often cutting spending to overcome stagnant crude prices."

3. "Few changes in safety rules since Okla. Blast", Jordan Blum, Houston Chronicle, January 24, 2020.

This article says, "Two years ago, an oil well near a small Oklahoma town exploded into a fireball that swept through a drilling rig killing five in an accident deemed a needless catastrophe by federal investigators and casting a short lived spotlight on a lack of regulation and oversight across the oil and gas industry."

4. "Changes predicted in face of climate risks, Investment chair, Houston firms should lead the way on low-carbon economy", Erin Douglas, Houston Chronicle, January 23, 2020.

The article says, "Houston business leaders need to cut their companies' greenhouse gas emissions and lead the transition to a low-carbon economy".

5. "Changes predicted in face of climate risks, Search for cleaner energy could cut budgets for oil, gas exploration", Jordan Blum, Houston Chronicle, January 23, 2020.

This article says, "Some investors are questioning the need to explore at all given the vast discovered resource base yet to be developed."

6. "Climate change also poses a threat to oil's exploration budgets, report finds", Jordan Blum, Houston Chronicle, January 22, 2020.

This article says, "The largest energy companies are reducing exploration budgets and facing pressure from shareholders to conduct more exploratory drilling around the world, even amid growing reserves of oil and gas".

7. "Halliburton CEO Foresees shale challenge", Sergio Chapa, Houston Chronicle, January 22, 2020.

This article says, "The capital-intensive U.S. shale industry is facing its biggest challenge since a 2015 downturn that resulted in dozens of companies filing for bankruptcies, billions of dollars in losses and tens of thousands of layoffs as oil prices sputter, producers cut back and Wall Street investors become unwilling to float the bill, the CEO of the Houston oil field services company Halliburton said. A decade of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing made the United States an energy powerhouse again, but crude oil prices stuck in the \$50-to-\$60 per barrel range over the past year have made shale unprofitable for most companies, resulting in substantial cuts to drilling and fracking activity in shale plays from Texas to Pennsylvania and North Dakota. That situation has placed tremendous pressure on oilfield service companies to slash prices for their products and services."

8. "Ride-hailing is driving change in American car culture", Chris Tomlinson, Houston Chronicle, January 22, 2020.

This article says, "Americans are thinking about giving up their cars, a once unfathomable proposition that will change how we get around and diminish the oil industry's future."

9. "Schlumberger's \$10.1 B loss may signal trouble for Houston", Sergio Chapa, Houston Chronicle, January 18, 2020.

This article says, "The troubled U.S. shale industry is not out of the woods -signaling potential trouble ahead for Houston's economy. Schlumberger, the largest oilfield service company, said Friday it lost \$10.1 billion in 2019, laid off 1,400 workers in the fourth quarter, closed facilities, pulled hydraulic fracturing fleets from the field and plans to sell assets. Experts say Schlumberger showing sets low expectation for other energy companies preparing to report year-end results and signals that they haven't adapted to oil prices in the range of \$50 to \$60 a barrel-too low for many to break even."

10. "Thumbs up, down", editorial, Houston Chronicle, January 18, 2020.

This article says, "Todd Staples, former Republican agriculture commissioner and senator, told reported in a conference call that "I think Texas is at risk if we don't have a very real, factual-based conversation about our climate, about our environment and about the progress that needs to be made". Staples is the president of the Texas Oil and Gas Association.

The Sierra Club appreciates this opportunity to provide these additional initial scoping comments about the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the OGLEIS. Thank

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