

**RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS  
HEARINGS DIVISION**

**OIL AND GAS DOCKET NO. 7B-0286177**

---

**ENFORCEMENT ACTION FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS COMMITTED BY FRONTIER RESOURCES, INC. (287200) FOR VIOLATIONS OF STATEWIDE RULES ON THE MOSELEY-TOLLIVER LEASE, WELL NO. 1 (137645), STEPHENS COUNTY REGULAR (GAS) FIELD, STEPHENS COUNTY, TEXAS**

---

**FINAL ORDER**

The Commission finds that after statutory notice the captioned enforcement proceeding was heard by the Administrative Law Judge on November 5, 2015 and that the respondent, Frontier Resources, Inc. (287200), failed to appear or respond to the Second Notice of Hearing. Pursuant to § 1.49 of the Commission's General Rules of Practice and Procedure [Tex. R. R. Comm'n, 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 1.49] and after being duly submitted to the Railroad Commission of Texas at conference held in its offices in Austin, Texas, the Commission makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. Frontier Resources, Inc. (287200), ("Respondent"), was given Second Notice of Hearing by certified mail, addressed to the most recent Form P-5 (Organization Report) address.
2. The certified receipt containing the Original Complaint and the Second Notice of Hearing, was marked "unclaimed" on October 24, 2015. The certified electronic receipt is included in the file and has been on file with the Commission for 15 days, exclusive of the day of receipt and day of issuance.
3. On March 10, 2014, Respondent, a Corporation, filed an Organization Report (Form P-5) with the Commission reporting that its officers consisted of the following individual(s): Ellsworth M. Jones, President.
4. Ellsworth M. Jones, was a person in a position of ownership or control of respondent, as defined by Texas Natural Resource Code Section 91.114, during the time period of the violations of Commission rules committed by respondent.

## OIL AND GAS DOCKET NO. 7B-0286177

5. The violations of Commission rules committed by respondent are related to safety and the control of pollution.
6. Respondent designated itself to the Commission as the operator of Well No. 1 (137645) on the Moseley-Tolliver Lease ("subject well"/"subject lease") by filing a Form P-4 (Producers Transportation Authority and Certificate of Compliance) effective and approved on April 11, 1991.
7. Respondent's P-5 (Organization Report) became delinquent on April 1, 2015. Respondent had \$25,000 cash as its financial assurance at the time of its last P-5 renewal.
8. Commission District inspections were conducted on September 27, 2013, October 25, 2013 and May 19, 2014 for the Moseley-Tolliver Lease. The signs or identification required to be posted at the lease entrance and Well No. 1 (137645) were missing. A follow up inspection conducted on October 9, 2015 indicate that a sign was posted at the well; however, there was no sign or identification posted at the lease entrance.
9. Failure to properly identify a well by the posting of the sign required by Statewide Rule 3 has the potential for causing confusion and delay in remedying a violation or emergency and poses a threat to the public health and safety.
10. The subject well has not been properly plugged in accordance with, and is not otherwise in compliance with, Statewide Rule 14.
11. Based on Respondent's failure to establish a good faith claim to operate the well, the Statewide Rule 14(b)(2) plugging extension was denied on October 29, 2013 as allowed by Statewide Rule 14.
12. Well No. 1 (137645) on the Moseley-Tolliver Lease ceased production in June 2011.
13. The total estimated cost to the state for plugging Well No. 1 (137645) on the Moseley-Tolliver Lease is \$35,200.00.
14. Usable quality groundwater in the area is likely to be contaminated by migrations or discharges of saltwater and other oil and gas wastes from the subject well. Unplugged wellbores constitute a cognizable threat to the public health and safety because of the probability of pollution.
15. According to Commission records, drilling operations on the Moseley-Tolliver Lease, Well No. 1 (137645), were completed on April 24, 1979. Commission District inspection reports were conducted on September 27, 2013, October 25, 2013 and May 19, 2014 for the Moseley-Tolliver Lease indicating the presence of an open reserve pit located approximately 30' west of Well No. 1 (137645) and measuring approximately 30' x 30' x 2' deep.
16. Unfilled pits constitute a hazard to public health and safety because of the potential for illegal dumping in the pits and the potential for surface run-off to collect in the pit and seep into subsurface waters.

## **OIL AND GAS DOCKET NO. 7B-0286177**

17. The Respondent has not demonstrated good faith since it failed to properly plug or otherwise place the subject lease and subject well in compliance after being notified of the violations by the District Office and failed to appear at the hearing to explain its inaction.
18. Respondent has a prior history of Commission rule violations including the following docket(s):

Docket No. 09-0259766; Final Order Served: October 22, 2009.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. Proper notice was issued by the Railroad Commission to respondent and to all other appropriate persons legally entitled to notice.
2. All things necessary to the Commission attaining jurisdiction over the subject matter and the parties in this hearing have been performed or have occurred.
3. Respondent is in violation of Commission Statewide Rules 3, 8(d)(4)(H)(i)(I) and 14(b)(2).
4. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 3, which requires that each property that produces oil, gas or geothermal resources and each oil, gas or geothermal resource well and tank, or other approved crude oil measuring facility shall post signs or identification.
5. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 8(d)(4)(H)(i)(I), which requires reserve pits and mud circulation pits to be dewatered, backfilled and compacted within one year of cessation drilling operations.
6. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 14(b)(2), which requires that plugging operations on each dry or inactive well shall be commenced within a period of one year after drilling or operations cease and shall proceed with due diligence until completed.
7. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease and subject well in compliance with all applicable Commission rules according to Statewide Rules 14, 58, and 79 and Chapters 89 and 91 of the Texas Natural Resources Code.
8. The documented violations committed by the respondent constitute acts deemed serious, a hazard to the public health, and demonstrate a lack of good faith pursuant to TEX. NAT. RES. CODE ANN. §81.0531.

**OIL AND GAS DOCKET NO. 7B-0286177**

9. As a person in a position of ownership or control of respondent at the time respondent violated Commission rules related to safety and the control of pollution, Ellsworth M. Jones, and any other organization in which he may hold a position of ownership or control, shall be subject to the restrictions of Texas Natural Resource Code Section 91.114(a)(2) for a period of no more than seven years from the date the order entered in this matter becomes final, or until the conditions that constituted the violations herein are corrected or are being corrected in accordance with a schedule to which the Commission and the organization have agreed; and all administrative, civil, and criminal penalties and all cleanup and plugging costs incurred by the State relating to those conditions are paid or are being paid in accordance with a schedule to which the Commission and the organization have agreed, whichever is earlier.
10. Respondent is assessed an administrative penalty consisting of the following violations: one Statewide Rule 3(1) violation at \$1,000.00; one Statewide Rule 3(2) violation at \$500.00; one Statewide Rule 8(d)(4)(H)(i)(I) violation at \$3,175.00; one Statewide Rule 14(b)(2) violation at \$6,022.00, which is \$2,000.00 plus \$1.00 per foot per well depth; and plus an Enhancement of \$1,000.00 for one prior order.

**IT IS ORDERED THAT** within 30 days from the day immediately following the date this order becomes final:

1. Frontier Resources, Inc. (287200), shall plug the Moseley-Tolliver Lease, Well No. 1 (137645), Stephens County Regular (Gas) Field, Stephens County, Texas in compliance with applicable Commission rules and regulations; and
2. Frontier Resources, Inc. (287200), shall pay to the Railroad Commission of Texas, for disposition as provided by law, an administrative penalty in the amount of **ELEVEN THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED NINETY SEVEN DOLLARS (\$11,697.00)**.

It is further **ORDERED** by the Commission that this order shall not be final and effective until 25 days after the Commission's order is signed, unless the time for filing a motion for rehearing has been extended under Tex. Gov't Code §2001.142, by agreement under Tex. Gov't Code §2001.147, or by written Commission Order issued pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §2001.146(e). If a timely motion for rehearing of an application is filed by any party at interest, this order shall not become final and effective until such motion is overruled, or if such motion is granted, this order shall be subject to further action by the Commission. Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §2001.146(e), the time allotted for Commission action on a motion for rehearing in this case prior to its being overruled by operation of law is hereby extended until 90 days from the date the Commission order is signed.

All requested findings of fact and conclusions of law which are not expressly adopted herein are denied. All pending motions and requests for relief not previously granted or granted herein are denied.

**OIL AND GAS DOCKET NO. 7B-0286177**

Noncompliance with the provisions of this order is subject to enforcement by the Attorney General and subject to civil penalties of up to \$10,000.00 per day per violation.

Done this 8th of December 2015.

**RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS**

(Signatures affixed by Default Master Order dated December 8, 2015)

MFE/sja