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
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News

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Homeowners want trucks rerouted

By **GALE M. BRADFORD**

For Weatherford Telegram

Members of an eastern Parker County subdivision homeowners association appealed to county commissioners Monday to stop truck traffic on their cul-de-sac road.

Chuck Deegear, president of the Chisholm Heights Homeowners Association was one of eight residents to ask commissioners court to require EnCana Oil and Gas Inc. and the Beggs Ranch family to find another route for their "big trucks and gas drilling equipment," to and from the area. Deegear said the area's peace and safety came to a halt about 18 months ago when EnCana began drilling the seven wells present, of 21 planned.

"The big trucks and the gas drilling industry have totally changed our way of life," Deegear said. "The roads are getting so bad it is tearing up our vehicles, making it treacherous to drive. The noise is 24/7. No more peaceful evenings on the front porch watching the sunset."

Trash is horrendous and blowing dust a serious problem, Deegear said, and safety and security are impossible.

"No more bike riding, walking or letting the kids go to the neighbor's house," he said.

Twelve-year-old Abbey Watson said she can no longer ride her horses safely because of the trucks. Her father, David Watson, said he and Abbey are novice riders and moved to the area to enjoy the peace and quiet that vacated the area near Farm Road 3325, north of Interstate 20, when drilling began.

O.L. Cooper said commissioners promised to look into the matter but he was not satisfied the problems can be resolved.

Commissioners took no action on the homeowners' request, but County Judge Mark Riley, County Attorney John Forrest and Pct. 4 County Commissioner Jim Webster said they would arrange a meeting to discuss options with the Beggs family and EnCana.

"We're mad as hell and we're not going to take it any more," said Karen Birdy, D.O., who has lived near the development on six acres where she has horses for pleasure riding for one year and 10 months.

"I have quite an investment out there," she said. "The noise scares me and my horses. I think it's a matter of money, and the money matters to the Beggs family who own about 3,000 acres nearby."

Residents Chris Willingham and David Bloyd agreed with Birdy.

"They (commissioners) are looking for excuses to do nothing," said Bloyd, who has had his property for sale for a year due to conditions and has not been offered a single contract. "Let the ranch owners or the gas company build another road. They're making plenty of money off the deal and there are other ways they can enter and exit their property."

But resident Bobby Pickard, who rallied John Chisholm Road neighbors to try oppose the truck traffic earlier this month, said he thought commissioners acted responsibly at Monday's meeting.

"They listened carefully to what we had to say and I'm pleased that the judge, county attorney and Commissioner Webster are looking for a solution," Pickard said. "I think they were sincere and several homeowners out here agree with me that they will work with us."

"John Chisholm Road is a no-through-traffic, one-way-out, one-way-into our development. What they're doing is turning into that entrance at the rate of about six 18-wheelers per hour, plus all the workers' vehicles. Also they've completed seven of 21 wells, so the truck traffic will get greater as they drill and frac more wells. We'll probably have over a hundred trucks a day go through."

Pickard said he talked to ranch-owner Ed Beggs about the problems and that Beggs said he had no problem with moving the road. But Beggs apparently changed his mind, according to EnCana representatives, and did not want to relocate the road.

EnCana representative Nancy Farrar, said her company is trying to work with the residents.

"We are trying to minimize the impact of our operation on the residents," she said. "It's very complicated but we've picked up trash, posted a guard to keep traffic to 10 mph and we are trying to be good neighbors," Farrar said.

Deegear said the group might consider litigation if a solution isn't forthcoming.

"We don't just want the roads fixed," he said. "We want to have EnCana Oil and Gas access the wells from Farm Road 3325 or the I-20 service road."

Pickard said they might even consider making the development a gated community.

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