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## **Oil and Natural Gas Industry Cleans Up 8,000<sup>th</sup> Well Site**

*Oklahoma Energy Resources Board reaches \$40 million spent on cleanup efforts*

**OKLAHOMA CITY** -- Oklahoma's oil and natural gas producers and royalty owners continue to prove their dedication to restoring orphaned and abandoned well sites across the state as they celebrate two milestone events in their cleanup efforts.

Through a voluntary assessment on the sale of oil and natural gas, the Oklahoma Energy Resources Board is commemorating the clean up of 8,000 sites and \$40 million spent on restoration projects since the program's inception 14 years ago.

"In 1993, Oklahoma's oil and natural gas producers and royalty owners made a commitment to our state and its environment," said OERB Chairman Steve Agee. "The idea was simple and innovative as oil and natural gas producers and royalty owners imposed a voluntary assessment on themselves to clean up abandoned oil well sites."

The 8,000<sup>th</sup> site, located along the Centennial Expressway in the Bricktown area of Oklahoma City, is owned by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. The site serves as the kickoff to a continuing partnership with ODOT to restore abandoned well sites on its property statewide.

"What we want to do is make a very visible and upfront commitment that we are doing the right thing by taking responsibility and cleaning up past mistakes made before modern regulations were in place," said OERB Executive Director Mindy Stitt. "The 8,000<sup>th</sup> site serves as a great example of what we can do when given the opportunity."

Through the partnership, OERB and ODOT have signed an agreement that will streamline the restoration process. The OERB will restore surface issues at abandoned well sites, while the Oklahoma Corporation Commission will plug wells.

"We are very pleased to begin a partnership with a group as proactive as the OERB," said ODOT Deputy Director John Fuller. "We look forward to working with them to benefit Oklahoma."

OCC Vice Chairman Bob Anthony said the OCC is proud to be partnered with the OERB. "As part of the restoration process, the OCC locates, researches and plugs abandoned wells that are then recommended to the

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OERB for surface cleanup. It has been an incredibly successful program that has turned wasteland into productive land."

The 8,000<sup>th</sup> site dates back to the early 1930s and was developed within the Oklahoma City Oil Field. The OERB will spend approximately \$5,000 removing and hauling off concrete rig corners that were left from these historical activities.

"These milestones – cleaning up 8,000 sites and spending \$40 million restoring Oklahoma land – mark the wonderful collaborative relationship of producers, royalty owners and the Oklahoma Corporation Commission," Agee said. "This is a tribute to their stewardship to Oklahoma and making it a great place to live. Thank you to Governor Henry and the Oklahoma Legislature for having the foresight to help the industry create this program and for extending our legislation for another six years."

The OERB is encouraging the public to submit abandoned well sites by calling 1-800-664-1301 or logging on to OERB.com.

Created by the Oklahoma Legislature at the request of energy industry leaders in 1993, the OERB is funded voluntarily by oil and natural gas producers and royalty owners through a one-tenth of 1 percent assessment on the sale of oil and natural gas. The OERB's purpose is to conduct environmental restoration of orphaned and abandoned well sites and to educate the public about the vitality, contributions and environmental responsibility of Oklahoma's oil and natural gas industry.

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**CAPTION: OERB's 8,000<sup>th</sup> abandoned well site cleanup project located along the Centennial Expressway in the Bricktown area of Oklahoma City. The OERB will spend approximately \$5,000 removing and hauling off concrete rig corners that were left from historical activities in the 1930s.**

