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Sierra Club Applauds Plan to Curb Carbon Pollution

AUSTIN, TX -- Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued a proposal for the first-ever national protections from dangerous carbon pollution from existing power plants. Carbon pollution causes climate disruption and is already costing Texas communities billions of dollars from drought, flooding, wildfires and extreme heat.

This new standard, which is part of the President's Climate Action Plan, will clean up the industries that create the lion's share of carbon pollution in our country. The new protections will also help reduce other life-threatening air pollution including mercury, soot, and smog.

"Today, we applaud President Obama and the EPA for their move to clean up our air, improve the health of our children, and curb the worst effects of climate disruption. These life-saving protections could not come at a more critical time. Climate disruption and extreme weather in Texas have already cost more than five billion dollars in federal disaster relief for 2011 and 2012 alone," **said Scheleen Walker, director of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club.** "Texas families are at risk and this historic safeguard will protect us."

Texas has already suffered from record, severe drought, high temperatures, wildfires and floods, impacting agriculture and other industries as well as threatening the health and safety of millions of residents. Drought conditions have prompted regulators to curtail water access to farmers and was cited as the primary reason a beef processing facility in Plainview, Texas, was closed, eliminating 2,000 jobs overnight. High heat on top of drought led to the 2011 Bastrop wildfires, resulting in \$3.4 billion economic impact to East Texas, according to a state comptroller report.

"There's no state in a better position to cut carbon emissions and benefit from clean energy than Texas. We are national leaders in producing clean, low-cost wind power, and every month we see clean energy powering more and more of our economy," **said Cyrus Reed, conservation director of the Lone Star Chapter.** "Texas needs to take advantage of the new safeguards to reduce carbon pollution and invest in 21st century energy industries – solar and wind power, energy efficiency and energy storage."

Reports from the Governor's office found that the clean energy industry already supports more than one hundred thousand jobs in Texas and is poised to create thousands more positions as wind, solar, geothermal and energy efficiency projects are developed across the state.

According to April 2014 polling data from Yale University, two-thirds of American adults support the "strict carbon emissions limits on existing coal-fired power plants to reduce climate change and improve public health" and a recent Stanford poll found that 76 per cent of Texans support limits on carbon pollution.

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