



Cleaner Air in Texas: An Overview of the Texas Voluntary Marginal Conventional Well Plugging Program (TxMCW)

Katy Drake, Program Specialist, Air Grants Division, TCEQ
2025 Permian Basin Environmental Regulatory Seminar

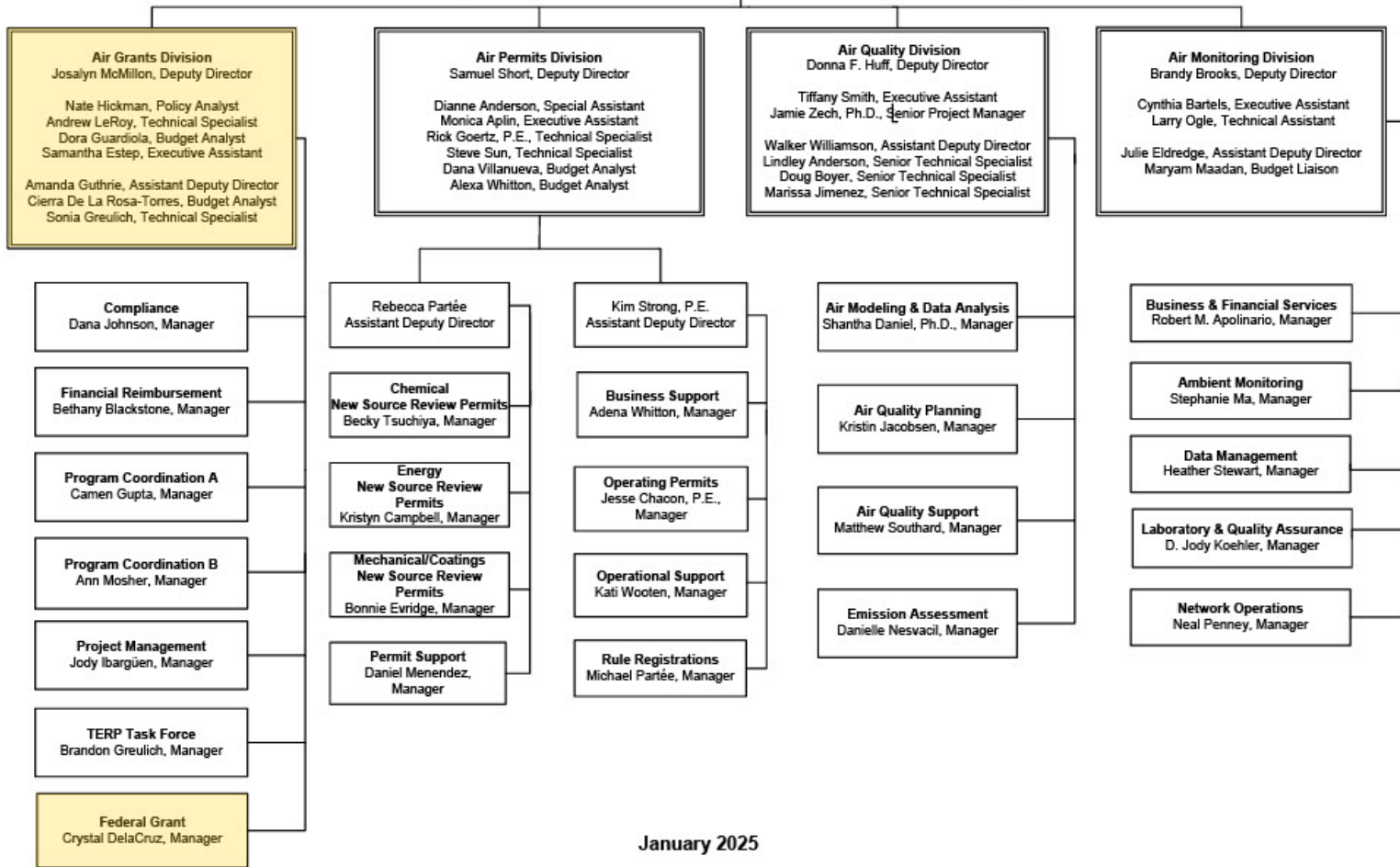
Agenda

- Background & Definitions
- TxMCW Overview
- Wells in Texas
- Plugging and Abandonment
- Well Prioritization Plan
- Methane Measurement Plan
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Current Status



Cory Chism, Director
 Beryl Thatcher, Special Assistant
 Debbie Maldonado, Executive Assistant
 James Nolan, Technical Specialist
 Kasey Savanich, Project Manager
 Chinenye Chinwego, Data Analyst
 Loren Sammon, Budget Liaison

**OFFICE OF AIR
 Fiscal Year 2025
 Positions 595**



January 2025

Cory Chism, Director

Beryl Thatcher, Special Assistant
Debbie Maldonado, Executive Assistant
James Nolan, Technical Specialist
Kasey Savanich, Project Manager
Chinenye Chinwago, Data Analyst
Loren Sammon, Budget Liaison

Air Grants Division

Josalyn McMillon, Deputy Director

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Amanda Guthrie, Assistant Deputy Director
Cierra De La Rosa-Torres, Budget Analyst
Sonia Greulich, Technical Specialist

Federal Grant

Crystal DelaCruz, Manager

Air Grants Division

Also administers:

- Texas Emissions Reduction Plan Program (TERP)
- Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program (TxVEMP)



Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Methane Emission Reduction Program (MERP): Mitigating Emissions from Marginal Conventional Wells (MCWs)



WHO: EPA, DOE

WHAT: \$134.1M in grant funding

WHEN: December 2023 + 5 years

WHERE: Texas

WHY: Reduce methane emissions

HOW: Voluntary MCW closures

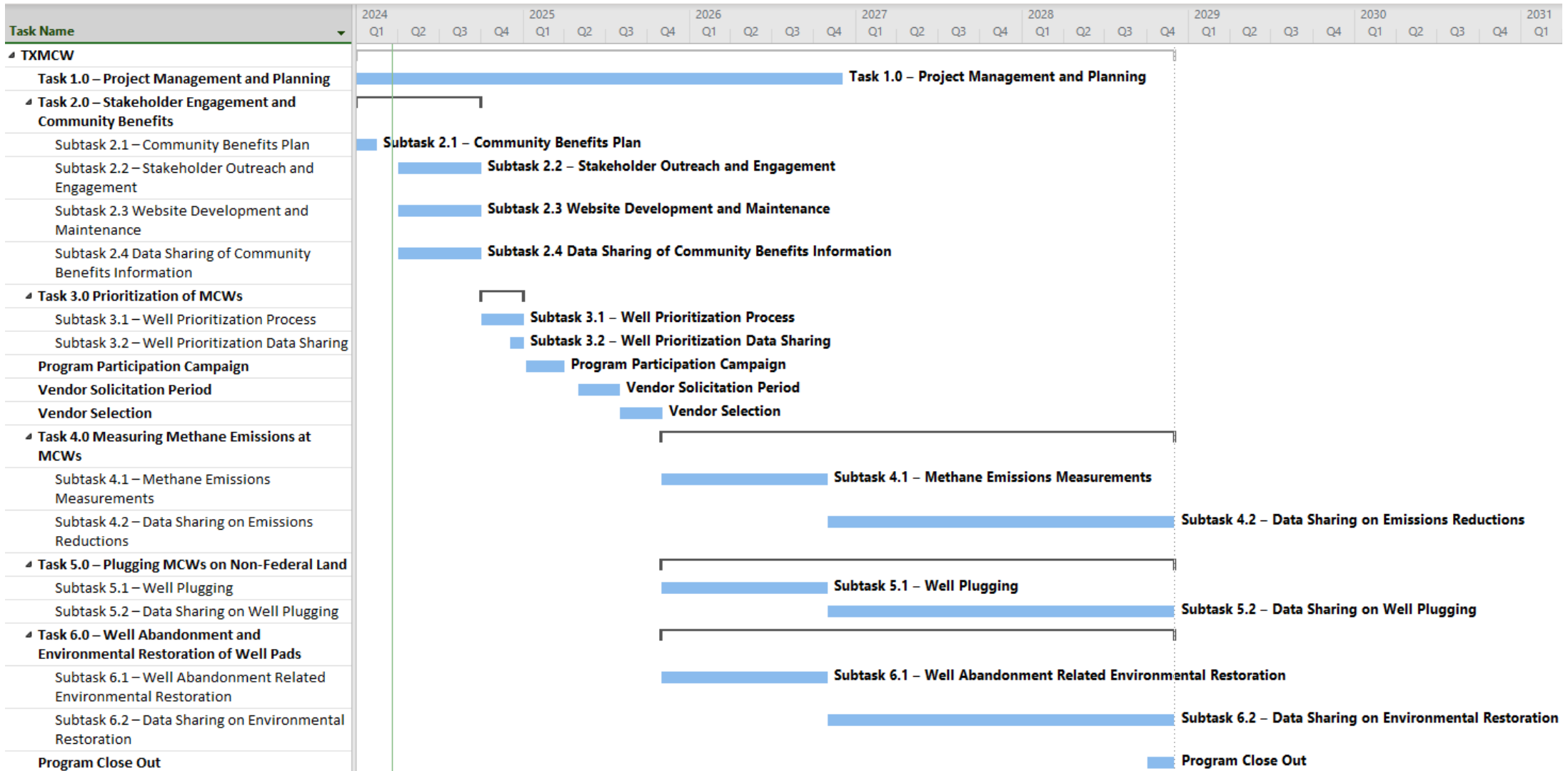
Definitions

- Conventional Well
 - Vertical oil and gas well
- Marginal Conventional Well (MCW)
 - ≤ 15 barrels of oil equivalent per day (BOED), or
 - ≤ 90 thousand cubic feet (Mcf) of gas per day
(*1 BOE = 6 Mcf*)
 - Known owner or operator
 - Can be producing or idle

TxMCW Overview

- Voluntary plugging and abandonment of MCWs
- Goals
 - Plug MCWs to mitigate environmental pollutants
 - Measure methane emissions
 - Support environmental restoration
- Public website: www.txmcw.org

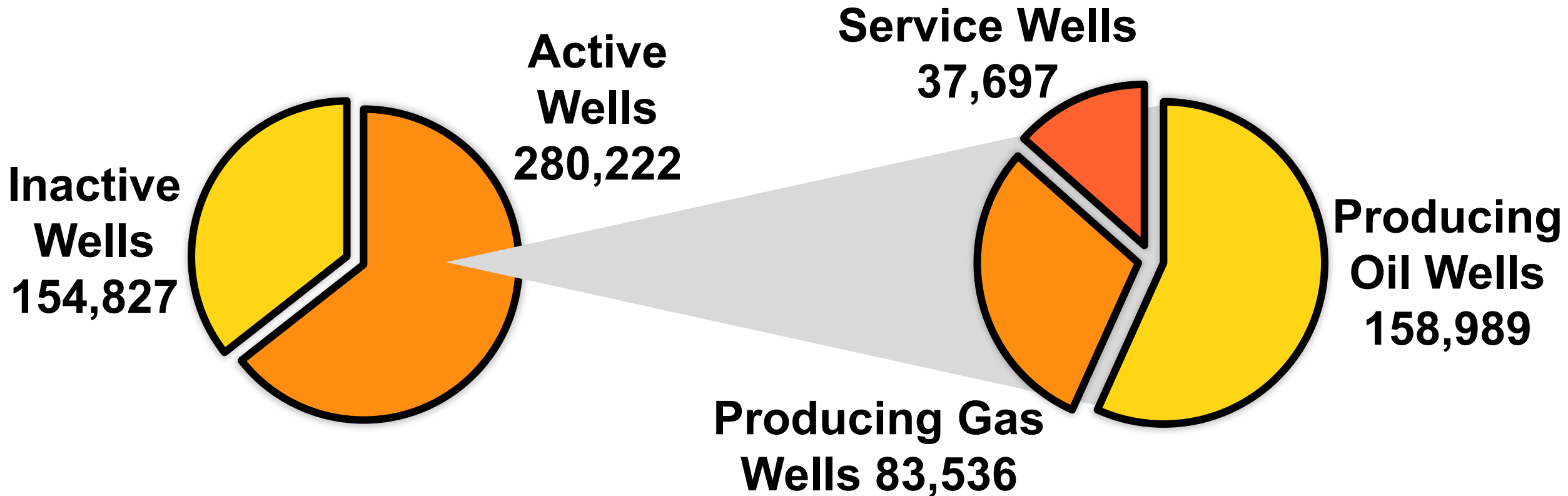
TxMCW Program Timeline



Oil and Gas Wells in Texas

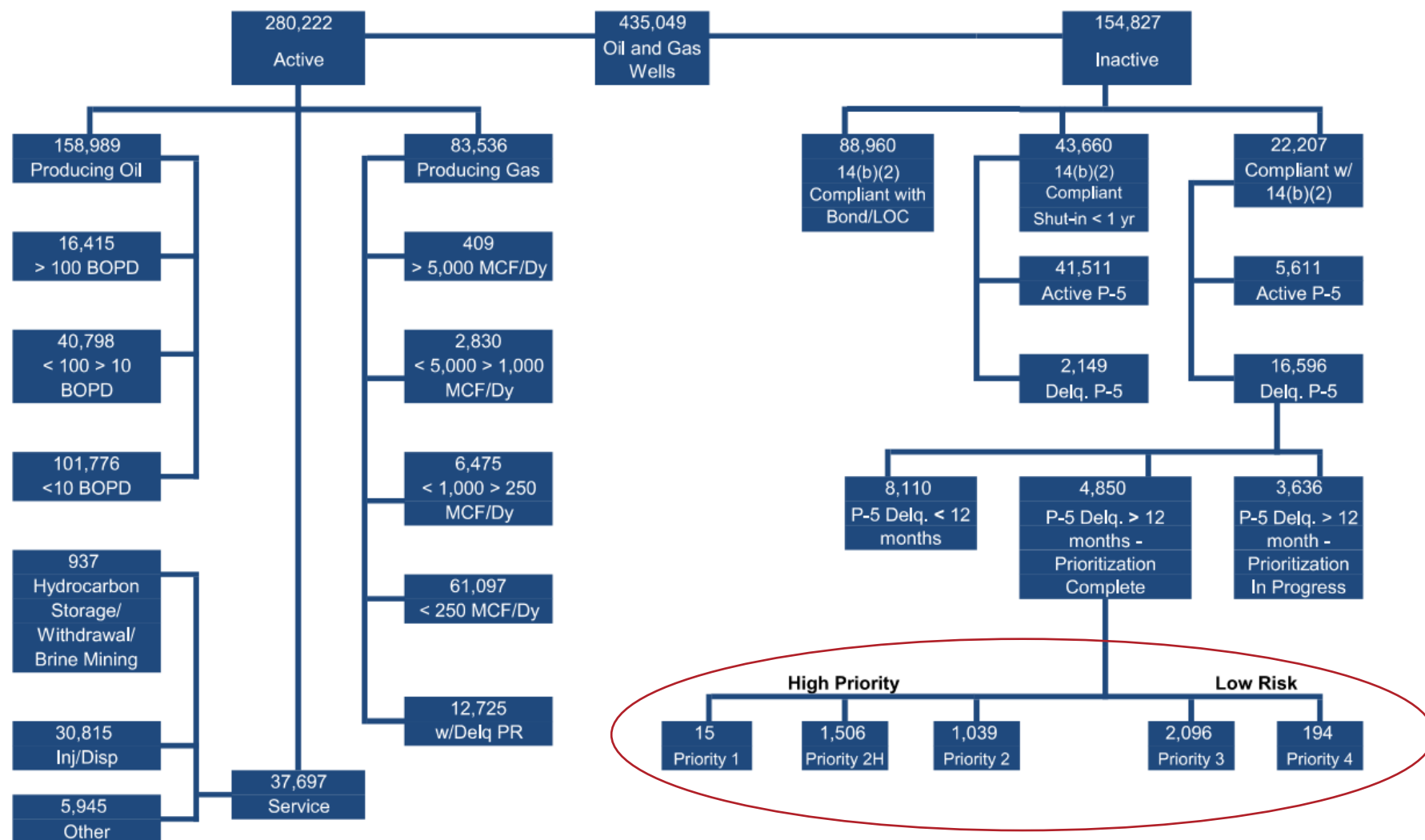
As of December 31, 2024

435,049 Oil and Gas Wells

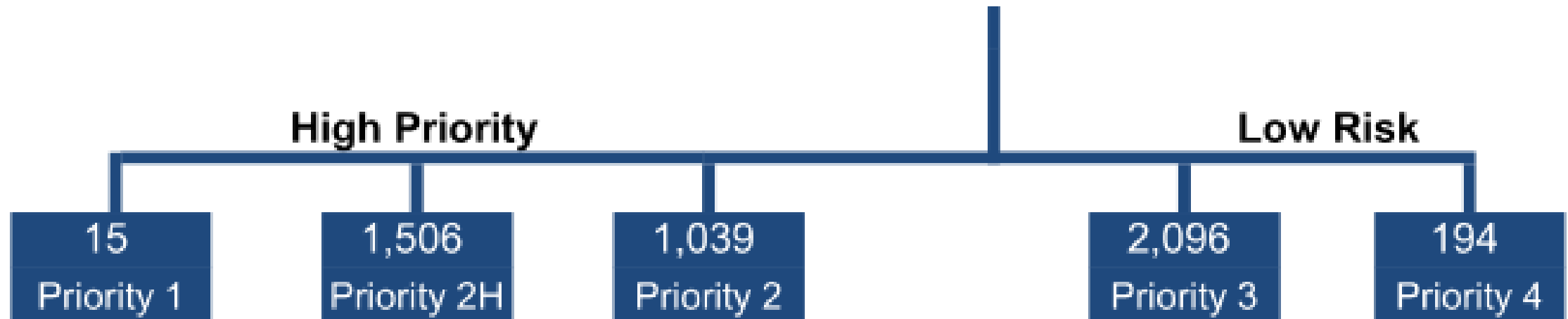


Wells Monitored by the Railroad Commission

As of December 31, 2024



High Priority & Low Risk Wells



Well Plugging and Abandonment

Railroad Commission (RRC) requirements:

- Notice and Supervision
- Review and Approval
- Cementing
- Methods
- Additional Requirements
- Post-Plugging

TxMCW Plugging & Abandonment Activities

- Preparation of well pad
- Removal of well bore casing
- Placement of cement plugs
- Excavation around well head and well capping before surface restoration
- Support of activities necessary for plugging

Well Prioritization Plan

- Goal
 - Minimize methane and other greenhouse gas emissions
- Criteria
 - Prioritize wells with higher methane emissions
 - Production rates
 - Number of wells by owner
 - Human health impacts
 - Water quality and flood resilience
- Weighted criteria imported into PRIMO tool

Methane Measurement Plan

- Measurement of methane emissions prior to plugging
- Approaches
 - Qualitative
 - *Must use established survey*
 - Quantitative
 - *Minimum detection limit (MDL) of less than 100 grams/hour (g/h)*
- Verify plugged wells are no longer emitting methane

Stakeholder Engagement



Texas has a multitude of marginal conventional wells



TCEQ participates with stakeholders



Air Grants Division hosts in-person and online events



TxMCW staff engages with MCW stakeholders



The program is conducting outreach efforts

Current Status



- Outreach efforts
- What's next
 - Solicitation periods and related documents
 - Working internally with:
 - Procurements & Contracts Section
 - Contracts, Employment Law & Ethics Section

Stay in Touch



Katy Drake

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Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

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