HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO

Form 4 May 30, 2007

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL OMB

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if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or

Check this box

Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section

30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF

SECURITIES

1(b).

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

Ray Robert T

HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading

(Check all applicable)

[THX]

Symbol

(Last)

(First) (Middle) 3. Date of Earliest Transaction

Director X_ Officer (give title

10% Owner Other (specify

(Month/Day/Year) 1100 LOUISIANA ST., SUITE 2000

05/25/2007

Filed(Month/Day/Year)

Sr. VP & C.F.O.

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check

4. If Amendment, Date Original

Applicable Line)

X Form filed by One Reporting Person Form filed by More than One Reporting

Person

below)

HOUSTON, TX 77002

(City) (State) (Zip)

(Street)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of 2. Transaction Date 2A. Deemed Security (Month/Day/Year) Execution Date, if (Instr. 3) (Month/Day/Year)

3. 4. Securities Acquired Transaction(A) or Disposed of (D) Code (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) (Instr. 8)

5. Amount of 6. Ownership 7. Nature of Securities Form: Direct Indirect Beneficially (D) or Beneficial Indirect (I) Ownership Owned Following (Instr. 4) (Instr. 4) Reported

(A)

Transaction(s)

(Instr. 3 and 4)

common

value) (1)

stock 05/25/2007 (\$0.01 par

Code V Amount (D) Price

3,836 D

10,664

D

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

F

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Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of	2.	3. Transaction Date	3A. Deemed	4.	5.	6. Date Exerc	cisable and	7. Title	e and	8. Price of	9. Nu
Derivative	Conversion	(Month/Day/Year)	Execution Date, if	TransactionNumber		Expiration D	ate	Amou	nt of	Derivative	Deriv
Security	or Exercise		any	Code	of	(Month/Day/	Year)	Underl	lying	Security	Secui
(Instr. 3)	Price of		(Month/Day/Year)	(Instr. 8)	nstr. 8) Derivative			Securit	ties	(Instr. 5)	Bene
	Derivative				Securities			(Instr.	3 and 4)		Own
	Security				Acquired						Follo
	·				(A) or						Repo
					Disposed						Trans
					of (D)						(Instr
					(Instr. 3,						
					4, and 5)						
									A		
									Amount		
						Date	Expiration		or		
						Exercisable	Date		Number		
				C 1 W	(A) (D)				of		
				Code V	(A) (D)				Shares		

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships
Reporting Owner Maine / Address	

10% Owner Officer Other Director

Ray Robert T 1100 LOUISIANA ST. **SUITE 2000** HOUSTON, TX 77002

Sr. VP & C.F.O.

Signatures

/s/ Robert T. 05/30/2007 Ray

Date **Signature of Reporting Person

Explanation of Responses:

- If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Restricted shares were granted pursuant to the Company?s Amended and Restated 2004 Long-Term Incentive Plan, and are restricted from sale or transfer until fully vested. To facilitate the cash/stock election mechanics in connection with the proposed merger with Forest Oil Corporation, the board of directors of the Company authorized the accelerated vesting of all outstanding shares of restricted stock and restricted stock units effective May 25, 2007.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.

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