

Haynes Boone Jointly Represents Marathon Oil Company in \$123.7 Million Jury Trial Victory

May 6, 2025 Mark Trachtenberg, Ryan Pitts, Garrett Martin

PRACTICES Appellate, Oil and Gas Litigation, Litigation

A federal jury in the Southern District of Texas has ruled in favor of Haynes Boone and AZA's client, Marathon Oil Company, in a high-stakes natural gas trading dispute stemming from Winter Storm Uri. The jury rejected a \$123.7 million breach-of-contract counterclaim filed by Koch Energy Services, siding instead with Marathon's force majeure defense related to deliveries during the historic February 2021 storm.

Haynes Boone attorneys [Mark Trachtenberg](#), [Ryan Pitts](#) and [Garrett Martin](#) worked in close coordination with AZA's trial team, which included Tim Shelby, Sammy Ford IV, Paul Galante, Emily Adler, Michael Gorrell and Ab Henry. Trachtenberg ran point on the jury charge and argued the charge issues before the court. The Haynes Boone team also drafted key legal briefs leading up to the trial and provided appellate support.

The dispute centered on whether Marathon fulfilled its contractual obligations in Oklahoma as the storm crippled production and sent gas prices soaring. Koch argued that Marathon was required to purchase replacement gas to meet delivery obligations. The jury, however, agreed that the contract only required Marathon to use reasonable efforts to keep its own production online.

After a six-day trial and under three hours of deliberation, the jury returned a decisive verdict in favor of Marathon, now a subsidiary of ConocoPhillips.

"This was a landmark result not just for our client but for the broader energy sector," said Trachtenberg. "The verdict provides guidance to the industry regarding producers' obligations during catastrophic weather events and affirms a common-sense understanding of what it means to exercise 'reasonable efforts' under a force majeure clause."

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