

HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO  
Form 4  
May 30, 2007

**FORM 4**

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

OMB APPROVAL

OMB Number: 3235-0287  
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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

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

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
Campbell Carolyn M

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
HOUSTON EXPLORATION CO  
[THX]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction  
(Month/Day/Year)

\_\_\_\_ Director \_\_\_\_\_ 10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below) \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify below)

1100 LOUISIANA ST., SUITE 2000

05/25/2007

Sr. V.P. and General Counsel

(Street)

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

HOUSTON, TX 77002

(City) (State) (Zip)

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

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)                | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
|  |                                      |  |                                | (A) or (D)  | Price   |  |                                   |
| common stock (\$0.01 par value) <sup>(1)</sup> | 05/25/2007                           |  | F                              | 2,355   | D \$ 59.62  | 6,545  | D                                 |

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

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(9-02)

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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 Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) | 8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5) | 9. Number of Derivative Securities Owned Following Reporting Transaction (Instr. 6) |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
|  |  |                                      |  | Code                           | V (A) (D)   | Date Exercisable   | Expiration Date   | Title                                      | Amount or Number of Shares  |

## Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address  | Relationships |           |                              |       |
|---|---------------|-----------|------------------------------|-------|
|   | Director      | 10% Owner | Officer                      | Other |
| Campbell Carolyn M<br>1100 LOUISIANA ST.<br>SUITE 2000<br>HOUSTON, TX 77002 |               |           | Sr. V.P. and General Counsel |       |

## Signatures

/s/ Carolyn M. Campbell 05/30/2007

\_\_Signature of Reporting Person Date

## 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).
- (1) 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.