

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
ENERGY, MINERALS, AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION

**IN THE MATTER OF THE HEARING
CALLED BY THE OIL CONSERVATION
DIVISION FOR THE PURPOSE OF
CONSIDERING:**

CASE NO. 11641
Order No. R-10728

**APPLICATION OF ARCO PERMIAN, A
DIVISION OF ATLANTIC RICHFIELD
COMPANY FOR COMPULSORY POOLING
AND UNORTHODOX WELL LOCATION,
EDDY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO.**

ORDER OF THE DIVISION

BY THE DIVISION:

This cause came on for hearing at 8:15 a.m. on November 21 and December 19, 1996, at Santa Fe, New Mexico, before Examiner David R. Catanach.

NOW, on this 13th day of January, 1997, the Division Director, having considered the testimony, the record, and the recommendations of the Examiner, and being fully advised in the premises.

FINDS THAT:

(1) Due public notice having been given as required by law, the Division has jurisdiction of this cause and the subject matter thereof.

(2) The applicant, ARCO Permian, seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation underlying the W/2 of Section 34, Township 17 South, Range 28 East, NMPM, Eddy County, New Mexico, in the following manner:

the W/2 forming a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools spaced on 320 acres within said vertical extent, which presently includes but is not necessarily limited to the Empire-Pennsylvanian Gas Pool, Undesignated Empire-Atoka Gas Pool and the Undesignated South Empire-Morrow Gas Pool;

the SW/4 forming a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools spaced on 160 acres within said vertical extent;

the S/2 SW/4 forming a standard 80-acre spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools spaced on 80 acres within said vertical extent; and,

the SE/4 SW/4 forming a standard 40-acre spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools spaced on 40 acres within said vertical extent.

Said units are to be dedicated to the applicant's proposed Galileo "34" State Com Well No. 1 to be drilled at an unorthodox location for all horizons 1017 feet from the South line and 1379 feet from the West line (Unit N) of Section 34.

(3) The applicant has the right to drill and proposes to drill its Galileo "34" State Com Well No. 1 at the unorthodox location described above.

(4) There are interest owners in the proposed proration unit(s) who have not agreed to pool their interests.

(5) Subsequent to the hearing it was determined that neither the proposed Galileo "34" State Com Well No. 1 nor the 80-acre proration unit comprising the S/2 SW/4 are located one mile or closer to a Division designated pool spaced on 80 acres.

(6) The portion of the case requesting the pooling of the S/2 SW/4 of Section 34 thereby forming a standard 80-acre spacing and proration unit should be denied.

(7) Applicant's geologic evidence and testimony indicates that:

a) the primary objective within the Galileo "34" State Com Well No. 1 is the Atoka formation;

b) utilizing 3-D seismic data, the applicant has identified a small Atoka sand pod within the SW/4 of Section 34;

- c) a well drilled at the proposed unorthodox location should penetrate the Atoka sand pod in an area of greater sand thickness than a well drilled at a standard gas well location thereon, thereby increasing the likelihood of obtaining commercial gas production; and,
- d) the up-hole prospects within the subject well are speculative.

(8) ARCO Permian is the owner and operator of the entire SW/4 of Section 34, being the affected offset acreage with respect to a 160-acre or 40-acre unorthodox location well completion.

(9) No other offset operator and/or interest owner appeared at the hearing in opposition to the proposed unorthodox location.

(10) Approval of the proposed unorthodox location will afford the applicant the opportunity to produce its just and equitable share of the gas in the affected pool(s), will prevent the economic loss caused by the drilling of unnecessary wells, avoid the augmentation of risk arising from the drilling of an excessive number of wells and will otherwise prevent waste and protect correlative rights.

(11) To avoid the drilling of unnecessary wells, to protect correlative rights, to avoid waste, and to afford to the owner of each interest in said unit(s) the opportunity to recover or receive without unnecessary expense his just and fair share of the production in any pool completion resulting from this order, the subject application should be approved by pooling all mineral interests, whatever they may be, within the W/2, SW/4 and SE/4 SW/4 of Section 34.

(12) The applicant should be designated the operator of the subject well and unit(s).

(13) Any non-consenting working interest owner should be afforded the opportunity to pay his share of estimated well costs to the operator in lieu of paying his share of reasonable well costs out of production.

(14) Any non-consenting working interest owner who does not pay his share of estimated well costs should have withheld from production his share of the reasonable well costs plus an additional 200 percent thereof as a reasonable charge for the risk involved in the drilling of the well.

(15) Any non-consenting working interest owner should be afforded the opportunity to object to the actual well costs but actual well costs should be adopted as the reasonable well costs in the absence of such objection.

(16) Following determination of reasonable well costs, any non-consenting working interest owner who has paid his share of estimated costs should pay to the operator any amount that reasonable well costs exceed estimated well costs and should receive from the operator any amount that paid estimated well costs exceed reasonable well costs.

(17) \$6000.00 per month while drilling and \$600.00 per month while producing should be fixed as reasonable charges for supervision (combined fixed rates); the operator should be authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of such supervision charges attributable to each non-consenting working interest, and in addition thereto, the operator should be authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of actual expenditures required for operating the subject well, not in excess of what are reasonable, attributable to each non-consenting working interest.

(18) All proceeds from production from the subject well which are not disbursed for any reason should be placed in escrow to be paid to the true owner thereof upon demand and proof of ownership.

(19) Upon the failure of the operator of said pooled unit(s) to commence the drilling of the well to which said unit(s) are dedicated on or before April 15, 1997, the order pooling said unit(s) should become null and void and of no effect whatsoever.

(20) Should all the parties to this forced pooling order reach voluntary agreement subsequent to entry of this order, this order shall thereafter be of no further effect.

(21) The operator of the well and unit(s) shall notify the Director of the Division in writing of the subsequent voluntary agreement of all parties subject to the forced pooling provisions of this order.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

(1) All mineral interests, whatever they may be, from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation underlying the W/2 of Section 34, Township 17 South, Range 28 East, NMPM, Eddy County, New Mexico, are hereby pooled in the following manner:

the W/2 forming a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools spaced on 320 acres within said vertical extent, which presently includes but is not necessarily limited to the Empire-Pennsylvanian Gas Pool, Undesignated Empire-Atoka Gas Pool and the Undesignated South Empire-Morrow Gas Pool;

the SW/4 forming a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools spaced on 160 acres within said vertical extent; and,

the SE/4 SW/4 forming a standard 40-acre spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools spaced on 40 acres within said vertical extent.

Said unit(s) shall be dedicated to the applicant's Galileo "34" State Com Well No. 1 to be drilled at an unorthodox location for all horizons, hereby approved, 1017 feet from the South line and 1379 feet from the West line (Unit N) of Section 34.

PROVIDED HOWEVER THAT, the operator of said unit(s) shall commence the drilling of said well on or before the 15th day of April, 1997, and shall thereafter continue the drilling of said well with due diligence to a depth sufficient to test the Morrow formation.

PROVIDED FURTHER THAT, in the event said operator does not commence the drilling of said well on or before the 15th day of April, 1997, Ordering Paragraph No. (1) of this order shall be null and void and of no effect whatsoever, unless said operator obtains a time extension from the Division Director for good cause shown.

PROVIDED FURTHER THAT, should said well not be drilled to completion, or abandonment, within 120 days after commencement thereof, said operator shall appear before the Division Director and show cause why Ordering Paragraph No. (1) of this order should not be rescinded.

(2) ARCO Permian is hereby designated the operator of the subject well and unit(s).

(3) After the effective date of this order and within 90 days prior to commencing said well, the operator shall furnish the Division and each known working interest owner in the subject unit(s) an itemized schedule of estimated well costs.

(4) Within 30 days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished to him, any non-consenting working interest owner shall have the right to pay his share of estimated well costs to the operator in lieu of paying his share of reasonable well costs out of production, and any such owner who pays his share of estimated well costs as provided above shall remain liable for operating costs but shall not be liable for risk charges.

(5) The operator shall furnish the Division and each known working interest owner an itemized schedule of actual well costs within 90 days following completion of the well; if no objection to the actual well costs is received by the Division and the Division has not objected within 45 days following receipt of said schedule, the actual well costs shall be the reasonable well costs; provided however, if there is objection to actual well costs within said 45-day period the Division will determine reasonable well costs after public notice and hearing.

(6) Within 60 days following determination of reasonable well costs, any non-consenting working interest owner who has paid his share of estimated well costs in advance as provided above shall pay to the operator his pro rata share of the amount that reasonable well costs exceed estimated well costs and shall receive from the operator his pro rata share of the amount that estimated well costs exceed reasonable well costs.

(7) The operator is hereby authorized to withhold the following costs and charges from production:

- (a) The pro rata share of reasonable well costs attributable to each non-consenting working interest owner who has not paid his share of estimated well costs within 30 days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished to him.
- (b) As a charge for the risk involved in the drilling of the well, 200 percent of the pro rata share of reasonable well costs attributable to each non-consenting working interest owner who has not paid his share of estimated well costs within 30 days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished to him.

(8) The operator shall distribute said costs and charges withheld from production to the parties who advanced the well costs.

(9) \$6000.00 per month while drilling and \$600.00 per month while producing are hereby fixed as reasonable charges for supervision (combined fixed rates); the operator is hereby authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of such supervision charges attributable to each non-consenting working interest, and in addition thereto, the operator is hereby authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of actual expenditures required for operating such well, not in excess of what are reasonable, attributable to each non-consenting working interest.

(10) Any unleased mineral interest shall be considered a seven-eighths (7/8) working interest and a one-eighth (1/8) royalty interest for the purpose of allocating costs and charges under the terms of this order.

(11) Any well costs or charges which are to be paid out of production shall be withheld only from the working interest's share of production, and no costs or charges shall be withheld from production attributable to royalty interests.

(12) All proceeds from production from the subject well which are not disbursed for any reason shall immediately be placed in escrow in Eddy County, New Mexico, to be paid to the true owner thereof upon demand and proof of ownership; the operator shall notify the Division of the name and address of said escrow agent within 30 days from the date of first deposit with said escrow agent.

(13) Should all the parties to this forced pooling order reach voluntary agreement subsequent to entry of this order, this order shall thereafter be of no further effect.

(14) The operator of the well and unit(s) shall notify the Director of the Division in writing of the subsequent voluntary agreement of all parties subject to the forced pooling provisions of this order.

(15) The portion of the case requesting the pooling of the S/2 SW/4 of Section 34 thereby forming a standard 80-acre spacing and proration unit is hereby denied.

(16) Jurisdiction is hereby retained for the entry of such further orders as the Division may deem necessary.

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DONE at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on the day and year hereinabove designated.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION



WILLIAM J. LEMAY
Director

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