

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:

ORIGINAL

CASE 15376-77
(cont'd from
9/17/15)

APPLICATION OF COG OPERATING, LLC, FOR
A NON-STANDARD SPACING AND PRORATION UNIT
AND COMPULSORY POOLING, EDDY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO.

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

EXAMINER HEARING

October 1, 2015

Santa Fe, New Mexico

BEFORE: WILLIAM V. JONES, CHIEF EXAMINER
MICHAEL McMILLAN, EXAMINER
GABRIEL WADE, LEGAL EXAMINER

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This matter came on for hearing before the
New Mexico Oil Conservation Division, William V. Jones,
Chief Examiner, Michael McMillan, Examiner, and Gabriel
Wade, Legal Examiner, on October 1, 2015, at the New
Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources
Department, Wendell Chino Building, 1220 South St.
Francis Drive, Porter Hall, Room 102, Santa Fe, New
Mexico.

REPORTED BY: ELLEN H. ALLANIC
NEW MEXICO CCR 100
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PAUL BACA COURT REPORTERS
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A P P E A R A N C E S

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For the Applicant:

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I N D E X

CASE NUMBERS 15376 and 15377 CALLED

COG OPERATING, LLC, CASE-IN-CHIEF:

WITNESS STUART DIRKS

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WITNESS SAM GREG CLARK

	Direct	Redirect	Further
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Reporter's Certificate

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E X H I B I T I N D E X
Exhibits Offered and Admitted
Cases 15376 and 15377

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1 (Time noted 9:56 a.m.)

2 EXAMINER JONES: Okay. We are back on the
3 record. I understand we're going to take case No. 15375
4 and continue it until October the 15th.

5 EXAMINER WADE: For the record, that is for
6 purposes of proof of publication.

7 EXAMINER JONES: Let's call case No. 15376,
8 Application of COG Operating, LLC, For a Non-Standard
9 Spacing and Proration Unit and Compulsory Pooling, Eddy
10 County, New Mexico.

11 Do you want to call both cases together?

12 MS. KESSLER: Yes, please.

13 EXAMINER JONES: We are going to also call
14 Case 15377, Application of COG Operating, LLC, For a
15 Non-Standard Spacing and Proration Unit and Compulsory
16 Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico.

17 Call for appearances in both cases.

18 MS. KESSLER: May it please the Examiner,
19 Jordan Kessler from the Santa Fe Office of Holland and
20 Hart on behalf of the applicant.

21 Any other appearances?

22 (No response.)

23 MS. KESSLER: I have two witnesses today.

24 EXAMINER JONES: Will the witnesses please
25 stand. Please state your names and the court reporter

1 will swear in the witnesses.

2 (WHEREUPON, the presenting witnesses
3 were administered the oath.)

4 MS. KESSLER: I would like to call my first
5 witness.

6 STUART DIRKS
7 having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified
8 as follows:

9 DIRECT EXAMINATION

10 BY MS. KESSLER:

11 Q. Please state your name for the record and tell
12 the Examiners by whom you are employed and in what
13 capacity.

14 A. My name is Stuart Dirks, and I work for COG
15 Operating, LLC, as a landman.

16 Q. Have you previously testified before the
17 Division?

18 A. Yes, I have.

19 Q. And were your credentials as a petroleum landman
20 accepted and made a matter of record?

21 A. Yes, they were.

22 Q. Are you familiar with the applications filed in
23 these consolidated cases?

24 A. Yes, I am.

25 Q. And are you familiar with the status of the lands

1 in the subject area?

2 A. Yes, I am.

3 MS. KESSLER: Mr. Examiner, I tender
4 Mr. Dirks as an expert in petroleum land matters.

5 EXAMINER JONES: He is so qualified.

6 Q. Can you please turn to Exhibits 1 and 2 and
7 identify these exhibits and explain what COG seeks under
8 these consolidated applications.

9 A. Exhibits 1 and 2 are the C-102s for our proposed
10 wells in section 11 of Township 20 South, Range 25 East
11 in Eddy County.

12 We seek the formation of a 160-acre non-standard
13 spacing and proration unit comprising the west half of
14 the west half of section 11 for the drilling of our
15 proposed Bone Yard Fee 11, No. 11H, and we seek the
16 formation of 160-acre non-standard spacing and proration
17 unit comprising the east half of the west half for the
18 drilling of our proposed Bone Yard 11 Fee No. 12H.

19 And we seek the pooling of uncommitted interests
20 in the Yeso Formation in our proposed units. And we ask
21 that COG Operating, LLC, be named operator.

22 Q. With respect to the 11H well, has an APD been
23 submitted?

24 A. No, it has not.

25 Q. And why is that?

1 A. We have not completed the directional drilling
2 plan yet.

3 Q. And what about for the 12H well?

4 A. Yes, it has.

5 Q. Is there an API number for that well?

6 A. Yes, there is. And it is on the C-102,
7 Exhibit 2. It is 30-015-43305.

8 Q. Has the Division identified a pool and pool code
9 for these wells?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What is that pool?

12 A. That is also on Exhibit 2. It is the North Seven
13 Rivers Glorieta Yeso. The pool code is 97565.

14 Q. And is that pool governed by Division statewide
15 rules?

16 A. Yes, it is.

17 Q. Will the completed intervals for each well comply
18 with the setback requirements?

19 A. Yes, they will.

20 Q. And are the spacing units comprised of fee land?

21 A. Yes, they are.

22 Q. Was the measured depth for 12H well recently
23 changed by approximately 40 feet?

24 A. Yes, it was.

25 Q. And is COG in the process of preparing a sundry

1 form with the updated measured depth of the proposed
2 well?

3 A. Yes, we are.

4 Q. And this will be filed with the Division,
5 correct?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. If you could turn to COG Exhibits 3 and 4, do
8 these exhibits identify COG's interest in the parties
9 whom you seek to pool for the 11H well?

10 A. Yes, they do.

11 Q. What type of interest does COG seek to pool for
12 the 11H well?

13 A. Exhibit 3 shows the interest of the mineral
14 owners in the 11H well. We seek to pool those mineral
15 interests with unmarketable title. They are indicated
16 in bold lettering on the exhibit. The other minerals
17 are all under lease to COG.

18 Q. And you seek to pool unmarketable title for the
19 mineral interest owners; is that correct?

20 A. Yes, the ones in bold.

21 Q. And all of the working interest owners are
22 committed?

23 A. Yes. Everybody is under lease to COG. The
24 unmarketable title we believe we have identified all the
25 errors and we have them under lease also.

1 Q. And you also seek to pool for the
2 nonparticipating royalty interests; is that correct?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And is that because not all of the owners have
5 signed a ratification to allow for pooling?

6 A. Yes, that is correct.

7 Q. Will those interests be cost bearing?

8 A. No, they are not.

9 Q. Turning to COG Exhibits 5 and 6, do these
10 exhibits identify COG's interests and the parties whom
11 you seek to pool for the 12H well?

12 A. Yes, they do.

13 And just like the previous two exhibits,
14 Exhibit 5 shows mineral interests and Exhibit 6 shows
15 the nonparticipating royalty interest.

16 Q. So, once again, for the 12H well, all of the
17 mineral interest owners are committed and you are
18 seeking to pool for unmarketable title; is that correct?

19 A. That is correct.

20 Q. And, once again, with respect to the
21 nonparticipating royalty interests shown in Exhibit 6,
22 will these interests be cost-bearing?

23 A. They will not.

24 Q. Did each mineral interest or working interest
25 owner receive a well proposal letter for each well?

1 A. The ones we could identify and locate, yes.

2 Q. And did that well proposal letter include an AFE?

3 A. To the mineral interest owners, yes.

4 Q. Turning to Exhibits 7 and 8, do these exhibits
5 contain an example well proposal letter that was sent to
6 mineral interest owners for the 11H well and the 12H
7 well respectively?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Did you also send a well proposal or ratification
10 letter to each of the nonparticipating royalty interest
11 owners?

12 A. Yes. Again, the ones we could identify and
13 locate.

14 Q. And is a copy of that letter included as
15 Exhibit 9?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. In addition to the well proposal letters, what
18 other efforts did you undertake to reach agreement with
19 the parties whom you seek to pool?

20 A. Phone calls, a lot of phone calls.

21 Q. And you mentioned that each of the well proposal
22 letters contained an AFE; is that correct?

23 A. To the mineral interest owner, yes.

24 Q. Are the costs reflected on these AFEs consistent
25 with what COG has incurred for drilling similar

1 horizontal wells in the area?

2 A. Yes, they are.

3 Q. And do the well proposal letters identify the
4 overhead and administrative costs while drilling this
5 well and also while producing it if you are successful?

6 A. Yes, they do.

7 Q. What are those costs?

8 A. \$6,000 a month, drilling; \$600 a month producing.

9 Q. Are these overhead rates consistent with what
10 other operators charge for similar wells?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And do you ask that the administrative and
13 overhead costs be incorporated into any order resulting
14 from the hearing?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Do you ask that it be adjusted in accordance with
17 appropriate accounting procedures?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. With respect to the uncommitted interest owners
20 being pooled for unmarketable title, do you request the
21 Division impose a 200 percent risk penalty?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And did COG identify the offset operators or
24 lessees of record in the 40-acre tracts surrounding the
25 proposed non-standard units?

1 A. Yes, we did.

2 Q. And were those offset operators or lessees
3 included in the notice of this hearing?

4 A. Yes, they were.

5 Q. Is Exhibit 10 an affidavit prepared by my office
6 with attached letters providing notice of this hearing
7 to the affected parties?

8 A. Yes, it is.

9 Q. And was it necessary to publish notice or were
10 all the parties locatable?

11 A. Not all parties were locatable. We did publish
12 notice.

13 Q. Drawing your attention to Exhibit 11, does this
14 include notice of publication both for the 11H and 12H
15 wells?

16 A. Yes, it does.

17 Q. And did you subsequently become aware of
18 additional unlocatable parties?

19 A. Yes, we did.

20 Q. So did COG publish notice once again on
21 September 17th, to those additional unlocatable parties?

22 A. Yes, we did.

23 Q. And are affidavits of publication for the 11H and
24 12H wells included as Exhibit 12?

25 A. Yes, they are.

1 Q. Were Exhibits 1 through 9 prepared by you or
2 compiled under direction or supervision?

3 A. Yes, they were.

4 MS. KESSLER: Mr. Examiner, I seek to move
5 the admission of Exhibits 1 through 12, which include my
6 notice affidavits.

7 EXAMINER JONES: Exhibits 1 through 12 in
8 cases 15376 and 15377 are admitted.

9 (COG OPERATING LLC EXHIBITS 1 through 12
10 were offered and admitted.)

11 MS. KESSLER: That concludes my examination.

12 EXAMINER McMILLAN: Go ahead.

13 EXAMINER WADE: I don't have any questions.

14 EXAMINATION BY EXAMINER JONES

15 EXAMINER JONES: Do you like this better
16 than being a geophysicist?

17 THE WITNESS: I don't know how to answer
18 that.

19 EXAMINER JONES: You are afraid to answer,
20 somebody might be listening.

21 The "marketable" title, what do you mean by
22 that?

23 THE WITNESS: The unmarketable title.

24 EXAMINER JONES: "Unmarkable"?

25 THE WITNESS: "Unmarketable."

1 EXAMINER JONES: "Unmarketable."

2 THE WITNESS: For example, Exhibit 3, the
3 first one listed, Heirs or devisees of Mary C. Aho.
4 Mary C. Aho is deceased, but she is the last owner of
5 record in Eddy County.

6 So we tracked down who we believe are her
7 heirs and released them, but still record title is in
8 her name until it's caught up with proper probate, et
9 cetera.

10 EXAMINER JONES: So it is kind of like
11 record title owners?

12 THE WITNESS: Yes.

13 EXAMINER JONES: So that's not the only
14 people you are pooling, though, is it?

15 THE WITNESS: No. We are also pooling the
16 nonparticipating royalty interest owners. For the 11H
17 that's Exhibit 4.

18 EXAMINER JONES: So those folks haven't
19 signed a lease?

20 THE WITNESS: They have no minerals. It is
21 a severed royalty, so they have no mineral rights, they
22 have no executive rights. They get no bonus. They just
23 get a royalty if production is established. So that's
24 why they are not cost-bearing interest.

25 EXAMINER JONES: So nobody cost-bearing is

1 being pooled in these two cases?

2 THE WITNESS: Unless, with the unmarketable
3 title, if some long lost heir pops out of the woodwork,
4 then that's possible.

5 EXAMINER JONES: So you want it to be a
6 full-blown compulsory pooling order, not just for record
7 title owners?

8 MS. KESSLER: Right.

9 EXAMINER JONES: So with 6,000 and 600 --
10 what happens if -- I know this wouldn't happen in these
11 wells. But this is for drilling, this is Copas for
12 producing. What about if it's shut-in waiting on a
13 pipeline?

14 THE WITNESS: I'm sorry?

15 EXAMINER JONES: What if the well is shut-in
16 waiting on a pipeline for many years, how much would you
17 charge your other owners for that?

18 THE WITNESS: We would expect it to be an
19 oil well.

20 EXAMINER JONES: I was just wondering -- I
21 don't think I have any more questions.

22 (Pause.)

23 EXAMINER JONES: The 12H, are you going
24 to -- sundry to change the measured depth, is that going
25 to change the bottom hole location? The surface hole

1 location is going to stay the same and the penetration
2 point, the initial penetration point, is going to stay
3 the same?

4 THE WITNESS: The surface hole, bottom hole
5 initial penetration point all stays the same; they just
6 revise the directional plan which changed the measured
7 depth 40 feet.

8 EXAMINER JONES: But no other changes as far
9 as the locations go?

10 THE WITNESS: Correct.

11 EXAMINER JONES: So I could use those
12 locations as they are right now?

13 THE WITNESS: Yes.

14 EXAMINER McMILLAN: Okay. So has the AFE
15 changed?

16 THE WITNESS: No, it has not. And all the
17 minerals we have tied up, there is nobody to send an AFE
18 to anymore anyway.

19 EXAMINER JONES: It sounds like a
20 complicated land situation here.

21 THE WITNESS: Yes.

22 EXAMINER JONES: I don't have any more
23 questions.

24 EXAMINER WADE: No questions for me.

25 EXAMINER McMILLAN: Thank you.

1 EXAMINER JONES: Thank you.

2 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

3 MS. KESSLER: I would like to call my next
4 witness.

5 SAM GREG CLARK
6 having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified
7 as follows:

8 DIRECT EXAMINATION

9 BY MS. KESSLER:

10 Q. Please state your name and tell the Examiners by
11 whom you are employed and in what capacity.

12 A. Yes. My name is Sam Greg Clark. I work for COG
13 Operating, LLC, and I am a geologist.

14 Q. Have you previously testified before the
15 Division?

16 A. I have.

17 Q. And were your credentials as a petroleum
18 geologist accepted and made a matter of public record?

19 A. Yes, they were.

20 Q. Are you familiar with the applications filed in
21 these consolidated cases?

22 A. Yes, I am.

23 Q. And have you conducted a geologic study of the
24 lands that are the subject of this hearing?

25 A. I have.

1 Q. What is the targeted interval for these two
2 wells?

3 A. It will be the Paddock member of the Yeso
4 Formation.

5 Q. And have you prepared a structure map and cross
6 section of the target interval?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Turning to Exhibit 13, will you please identify
9 this exhibit.

10 A. Yes. This is a region subSea structure map on
11 top of the Paddock Formation. You will see that there
12 is a general dip that goes from the east, northeast to
13 the west, northwest to the south, southeast.

14 We are on the Delaware Basin Shelf Margin
15 Complex. And as the dip goes to the south and the east,
16 you are going into the Delaware Basin proper.

17 The contour interval here is on 25 feet. And you
18 will see that in red there are identified Paddock
19 producers. In blue are identified Blinebry producers.

20 The yellow represents COG acreage. And the red
21 lines depict the Bone Yard 11 Fee No. 11H and No. 12H,
22 which we intend to drill.

23 Q. Based on this map, have you identified the
24 structure as being consistent throughout this section?

25 A. It is. There are no major geologic faults or

1 structures that would impede any horizontal drilling.

2 Q. Turning to Exhibit 14, can you please identify
3 this exhibit for the Examiners?

4 A. Yes. This is a zoomed-in base map that
5 identifies the next exhibit, which is a cross section
6 that will go from A to A Prime, from A south to north
7 direction, covering and representative of the geology
8 and stratigraphy of the area in which we intend to drill
9 the Bone Yard 11 Fee 11H and No. 12H.

10 Q. And Exhibit 15, does this contain the type logs
11 depicted on the line of section from the previous
12 exhibit?

13 A. Yes, it is.

14 Q. Can you identify the top and bottom of the target
15 interval?

16 A. Yes. So this cross section, it is hung up on top
17 of the Paddock, so it's been flattened. The structural
18 component has been taken out in order to show the
19 stratigraphic relationship of the wells within the area.

20 On the tract to the left on the logs is the gamma
21 ray. The second tract on the right is the porosity
22 logs.

23 And you will see that our landing interval is
24 depicted on the left well with an arrow. And you will
25 also see that the red rectangles within the depth tract

1 on the first and second well from the left represent
2 perforated intervals within those wells.

3 The well to the right is a pilot hole in which we
4 drilled, which is the Gravedigger State Com No. 5H, and,
5 therefore, there has not been any completion within the
6 Paddock interval.

7 MS. KESSLER: Mr. Examiners, I would also
8 note there is a larger version of this cross section for
9 your review.

10 Q. Let's continue.

11 A. So you will see there is no major thickening or
12 thinning within the Paddock Formation throughout the
13 area. You will see that the porosities and log
14 characteristics are very similar.

15 And, therefore, we feel that it will be very
16 continuous and similar to where we want to drill the
17 Bone Yard 11 Fee in No. 11H and 12H wells.

18 Q. What conclusions have you drawn based on your
19 study of these lands?

20 A. There are no geologic impediments from developing
21 this area using a full section horizontal. The area can
22 be efficiently and economically developed using
23 horizontal wells. And the non-standard unit, on
24 average, will contribute more or less equally to the
25 total production of the well.

1 Q. Will the completed intervals for each well comply
2 with the Division's setback requirements?

3 A. Yes, they will.

4 Q. And do Exhibits 1 and 2, which are the C-102s,
5 demonstrate compliance with these setbacks?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And, in your opinion, Mr. Clark, is the granting
8 of COG's application in the best interests of
9 conservation, the prevention of waste, and the
10 protection of correlative rights?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And were Exhibits 13 through 15 prepared by you
13 or compiled under your direction and supervision?

14 A. Yes, they were.

15 MS. KESSLER: Mr. Examiners, I would move
16 admission of Exhibits 13 through 15.

17 EXAMINER JONES: Exhibits 13 through 15 in
18 both cases, 15376 and 15377, are admitted.

19 (COG OPERATING LLC EXHIBITS 13 through 15
20 were offered and admitted.)

21 MS. KESSLER: That concludes my examination.

22 EXAMINER McMILLAN: Go ahead.

23 EXAMINATION BY EXAMINER JONES

24 EXAMINER JONES: You have been out here for
25 a while drilling. I know you two come up here sometimes

1 and concentrate on this area. What have you learned
2 over the last couple of years, two or three years?

3 THE WITNESS: How much time do we have? I
4 have learned quite a bit, actually. I have learned that
5 this has turned into a very good area for COG in which
6 we are still, even at the current commodity price, able
7 to meet our economic thresholds for drilling wells. And
8 we've gotten very efficient at it, too.

9 EXAMINER JONES: You just made a case for
10 competing against the (inaudible) board and other,
11 places, then for your project.

12 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

13 EXAMINER JONES: So you're shallower and you
14 still got plenty of reserves?

15 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

16 EXAMINER JONES: In the Paddock mainly?

17 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

18 EXAMINER JONES: The Blinebry's is pretty
19 much --

20 THE WITNESS: It's under evaluation.

21 EXAMINER JONES: And that gamma ray, one of
22 those logs was -- it was cleaned up on one of them and
23 the other one was pretty dirty through your Quick Draw
24 14L Fed 1.

25 THE WITNESS: Yes.

1 EXAMINER JONES: That one, just one little
2 spot to look for. And the other one you got, the Quick
3 Draw 10L Fed 1, you got a lot more pay interval; is that
4 correct?

5 THE WITNESS: You will see the porosities,
6 though, are very similar in those wells. And the gamma
7 ray can sometimes can be variable. It depends on where
8 you are at.

9 But we do see some changes within the
10 lithology. You know, the carbonates out here are very
11 heterogenous, in terms of porosity, permeability. And
12 you do get some silts. As you get closer to the
13 Glorieta, you are getting some silts coming in as you
14 are starting to get more of a low stand type of
15 deposition.

16 So it can be episodic in places, but if you
17 look at where we are landing, that rock is very, very
18 similar.

19 EXAMINER JONES: So are you watching the
20 wells as they drill and you keep in touch with the mud
21 loggers while things are happening?

22 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. They're
23 my favorite people.

24 EXAMINER JONES: Do you always only run a
25 gamma ray mud log if that's all you are getting on your

1 horizontal?

2 THE WITNESS: On the directional, yes, sir.

3 For instance, you will see the well on the
4 right, if we feel it necessary to get better control,
5 then we will drill a pilot hole and we'll run a quad
6 combo.

7 EXAMINER JONES: Okay. So you make a call
8 on that?

9 THE WITNESS: Yes.

10 EXAMINER JONES: Thank you very much.

11 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

12 EXAMINER JONES: At this point, we call back
13 for questioning Stuart Dirks.

14 FURTHER EXAMINATION OF STUART DIRKS

15 BY EXAMINER McMILLAN

16 EXAMINER McMILLAN: Are there severed
17 rights? Are you asking for the entire Yeso interval?

18 THE WITNESS: There are no severed rights.
19 We are asking for the entire Yeso, yes.

20 EXAMINER McMILLAN: Okay. That was my
21 question. Thank you very much.

22 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

23 MS. KESSLER: I would ask that these two
24 cases be taken under advisement.

25 EXAMINER McMILLAN: Okay.

1 EXAMINER JONES: We will take cases 15376
2 and 15377 under advisement.

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(Time noted 10:23 a.m.)

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is
a complete record of the proceedings in
the Examiner hearing of Case No. _____
heard by me on _____
_____, Examiner
Oil Conservation Division

1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO)
2) ss.
3 COUNTY OF BERNALILLO)
4
5
6

7 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

8
9 I, ELLEN H. ALLANIC, New Mexico Reporter CCR
10 No. 100, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that on Thursday, October 1,
11 2015, the proceedings in the above-captioned matter were
12 taken before me, that I did report in stenographic
13 shorthand the proceedings set forth herein, and the
14 foregoing pages are a true and correct transcription to
15 the best of my ability and control.

16
17 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither employed by
18 nor related to nor contracted with (unless excepted by
19 the rules) any of the parties or attorneys in this case,
20 and that I have no interest whatsoever in the final
21 disposition of this case in any court.

22
23
24
25


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