

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. 11,964
)
APPLICATION OF MARATHON OIL COMPANY TO)
AMEND THE SPECIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS) ORIGINAL
FOR THE TRAVIS-UPPER PENNSYLVANIAN POOL,)
EDDY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO)
)

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

EXAMINER HEARING

BEFORE: MICHAEL E. STOGNER, Hearing Examiner

RECEIVED

April 16th, 1998

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Santa Fe, New Mexico Oil Conservation Division

This matter came on for hearing before the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division, MICHAEL E. STOGNER, Hearing Examiner, on Thursday, April 16th, 1998, at the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, Porter Hall, 2040 South Pacheco, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Steven T. Brenner, Certified Court Reporter No. 7 for the State of New Mexico.

* * *

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April 16th, 1998
Examiner Hearing
CASE NO. 11,964

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* * *

1 WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had at
2 9:40 a.m.:

3
4
5 EXAMINER STOGNER: At this time I'll call Case
6 Number 11,964.

7 MR. CARROLL: Application of Marathon Oil Company
8 to amend the special rules and regulations for the Travis-
9 Upper Pennsylvanian Pool, Eddy County, New Mexico.

10 EXAMINER STOGNER: Call for appearances.

11 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Examiner, I'm Tom Kellahin of
12 the Santa Fe law firm of Kellahin and Kellahin, appearing
13 in association with Tom Lowry, a Texas attorney and house
14 counsel for Marathon Oil Company in Midland.

15 We represent the Applicant in this case, and I
16 have two witnesses to be sworn.

17 EXAMINER STOGNER: Any other appearances?

18 MR. BRUCE: Mr. Examiner, Jim Bruce of Santa Fe,
19 representing Ocean Energy, Inc.

20 I'm just entering an appearance today in support
21 of Marathon's Application.

22 EXAMINER STOGNER: Do you have any witnesses, Mr.
23 Bruce?

24 MR. BRUCE: No, sir.

25 EXAMINER STOGNER: Any other appearances?

1 Will the witnesses for Marathon please stand to
2 be sworn at this time?

3 (Thereupon, the witnesses were sworn.)

4 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Examiner, you have before you
5 Marathon's exhibit package. Exhibit 1 is a locator map.

6 There's a color code on Exhibit 1 that describes
7 the area.

8 Outlined in pink is the current pool boundaries
9 for the Travis-Upper Penn Pool. It's an oil pool spaced on
10 80-acre spacing. It's operated under special pool rules
11 since 1978. There are still remaining about five producing
12 oil wells in that pool.

13 What we're seeking to do is to change for this
14 pool the gas-oil ratio. It currently is 2000 to 1. The
15 depth bracket oil allowable is 355 barrels a day. We're
16 asking permission to increase the gas-oil ratio to 7000 to
17 1.

18 In addition, we're asking that you approve the
19 flexibility so that future wells can be drilled 330 from
20 the side boundaries of those spacing units.

21 The Exhibit 1 shows the Crockett and Buchanan
22 wells, which are the two new wells that Marathon has
23 drilled, and they will be the subject of our presentation.

24 With that introduction, we would call Mr. John
25 Chapman.

1 geologist.

2 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Chapman is so qualified.

3 Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) Mr. Chapman, let's set aside
4 Exhibit 1, the locator map, for a moment, and we'll keep
5 that as a reference.

6 Let me draw your attention to two displays and
7 ask you to first look at what we've marked as Exhibit 2,
8 which is a cross-section. And as we do so, I'll also ask
9 you to look at Exhibit 3, which is your structure map.

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. When we look at Exhibit 2, can you identify for
12 the Division what is the top and the bottom of the interval
13 currently being produced by the two Marathon wells, plus
14 the interval historically produced in the existing Travis-
15 Upper Penn Pool?

16 A. Yes, I can. Exhibit A-A' is a cross-section from
17 the two new Marathon wells, moving in a northeasterly
18 fashion, including two of the producing wells from the
19 existing Travis-Upper Penn Pool, and two horizons that are
20 marked.

21 The first one, that is labeled as "datum", is the
22 top of the gross producing interval, and all wells involved
23 in the Travis-Upper Penn Pool -- we, on -- with further
24 work believe that this is the top of the Canyon interval.

25 The lower marked interval is the base of the

1 Canyon carbonate interval.

2 Q. It doesn't show a label on it; it's the
3 horizontal line farther down on the display?

4 A. Yes, approximately 150 feet downsection.

5 Q. And that represents what, sir?

6 A. The base of the Canyon carbonate interval.

7 Q. When we look at the particular zone within the
8 Canyon that is being produced in Marathon's Buchanan well
9 and Marathon's Crockett well, where would we find that
10 interval?

11 A. It is -- The perfs are marked on all wells on the
12 cross-section, and all perforations fall between the two
13 horizons I have previously noted.

14 Q. Is it generally agreed upon by you and other
15 Marathon technical personnel as to what portion of the
16 perforated intervals are actually contributing
17 hydrocarbons?

18 A. Yes, it is. And Mr. Williams, who will follow
19 me, will have very specific testimony along those lines. I
20 will point out at this point in time that the perforations
21 are as is marked.

22 On that same set of cross-section there are two
23 -- on the two Marathon wells, are intervals that are
24 highlighted in yellow. By production log testing, all
25 current production is coming from those marked set of

1 perforations, or essentially all.

2 Q. Let me move your attention to Exhibit 3. When
3 you define this as a structure map, tell us the point on
4 the cross-section that you're using to map the structure.

5 A. All right. This structure map is made on that
6 horizon that we have labeled as "datum" on the cross-
7 section A-A', the top of the Canyon interval.

8 If I may clarify at this point, the Travis-Upper
9 Penn Pool is simply designated as Upper Penn, a fairly
10 generic geologic designation which generally encompasses
11 both the Canyon and Cisco. All fields within the pool
12 actually produce from this same more discrete geologic
13 interval which we -- As I previously stated, on review we
14 believe that this point is Canyon.

15 Q. When we look at the area identified in Exhibit 3
16 with the pink outline, that defines the existing current
17 pool boundaries, does it not?

18 A. Yes, it does.

19 Q. Give us a geologic summary of the kind of
20 reservoir being produced historically by the wells in the
21 existing pool.

22 A. Okay. As noted by both the cross-section and the
23 structure map, it is a fairly consistent interval
24 geologically that is produced. The total structural range
25 on top of the interval is 100 feet.

1 All these wells -- All producing wells lie
2 essentially on strike.

3 As also is shown on the structure map, it is not
4 contained by structural closure. It is not a structurally
5 trapped field.

6 These are Pennsylvania carbonates, which are
7 amalgamated algal mounds, as are most Pennsylvanian
8 carbonates in southeast New Mexico, and it is a linear,
9 strike oriented, stratigraphic trend.

10 Q. The Buchanan and Crockett wells were originally
11 targeted for another formation, were they not?

12 A. Yes, they were.

13 Q. What formation were they drilled and attempted to
14 produce from?

15 A. These wells were drilled to the Morrow, actually
16 topping the very top of the Chester or uppermost
17 Mississippian. They were drilled with the intention of
18 testing the Morrow.

19 Q. And were you able to successfully complete these
20 wells in the Morrow formation?

21 A. No, neither one of these wells encountered
22 productive quantities of Morrow sand.

23 The Crockett was initially completed in an Atokan
24 sand, which came on at a good rate but rapidly declined,
25 was a very limited reservoir.

1 The Buchanan was initially completed in a Strawn
2 carbonate, which likewise depleted rapidly.

3 Q. When those two wells were completed, is it your
4 understanding that they had an initial pressure that was
5 less than what would be expected to be virgin pressure for
6 wells at this depth in the Canyon?

7 A. In the Canyon, yes, that is correct.

8 Q. Were you asked to examine to see if you could
9 come to a geologic conclusion as to the reasonable
10 probability of where that pressure depletion had occurred
11 for those two wells?

12 A. Yes, we were. We examined that question, and the
13 obvious answer is the Travis-Upper Penn Pool lying to the
14 northeast of our wells, which have produced considerable
15 quantities of oil and gas.

16 Q. In looking at the cross-section and the structure
17 map, give us a summary, then, of why you have concluded
18 geologically that the Buchanan and Crockett are connected
19 to the Travis pool.

20 A. Referring first to the cross-section, Exhibit 2,
21 you can see by the correlations that this is a fairly
22 consistent gross interval.

23 All these logs are porosity logs, they all
24 contain a gamma-ray log, and on the leftmost track for the
25 individual wells you can see that whereas the total

1 quantity of carbonate may vary somewhat, the relative
2 position of carbonate is consistent between all four
3 producers, indeed by all wells in the Travis-Penn field.

4 So it is a uniform stratigraphic interval. The
5 perforated intervals that Marathon has completed in are
6 correlative stratigraphically to those same intervals that
7 have produced historically in the Travis-Upper Penn field
8 areas.

9 Q. When the engineers have looked at the engineering
10 data with regards to the old Travis Pool and the Buchanan
11 and Crockett pool to determine to what extent they're
12 connected, and if they have concluded that there is a weak
13 connection, is there geologic information available to you
14 to support the magnitude by which these wells may be
15 connected?

16 A. Yes, there is. If I may take us now to Exhibit
17 4, with your permission --

18 Q. All right, sir, identify and describe what this
19 display is.

20 A. Exhibit 4 is an isopach map of the net porosity
21 in this same stratigraphic interval, the Canyon carbonate.
22 It is a map of the net porosity exceeding two percent as a
23 cutoff.

24 And what this map displays is a trend very
25 similar to the structural trend previously noted. It is a

1 bound stratigraphic system. There are wells both updip and
2 downdip which had no porosity in the interval.

3 And the -- All wells carry a very consistent and
4 strong trend as far as presence of porosity. You may note
5 that the amount of porosity encountered in the Crockett and
6 Buchanan -- Marathon Crockett and Buchanan wells, is very
7 consistent with a typical porosity -- amount of net
8 porosity encountered in the historical field.

9 And all this maps as continuous or semi-
10 continuous with that control that is currently available.

11 Q. Are you able to reach an opinion with regards to
12 supporting the engineering conclusion that there is a weak
13 connection pressure and -- pressure connection between the
14 existing pool and the two new wells?

15 A. Yes, it's my contention that the combination of
16 the pressure data and the geological data make a very
17 strong argument that the two new wells are connected to the
18 historical Travis-Upper Penn field.

19 Q. Have the engineers advised you that based upon
20 their analysis of the performance of the wells, they do not
21 see a gas cap in the reservoir?

22 A. Yes, they have advised me of that.

23 Q. Do you find geologic support for that engineering
24 conclusion?

25 A. Yes, that's very reasonable.

1 Both the productive behavior of the existing
2 wells in the existing field and the producing behavior of
3 the two recent Marathon completions, and the relationship
4 to structure -- everything consistently says that all
5 perforations are producing both oil and gas and that there
6 is no segregated free gas cap in this pool.

7 Q. Is it your understanding that Marathon personnel
8 have met and visited on several occasions with the District
9 Supervisor of the Division in Artesia, Mr. Tim Gum?

10 A. Yes, that is correct.

11 Q. As a result of those conversations, is it your
12 understanding that there is an agreement with the District
13 Office and Marathon as to how to extend the pool boundaries
14 of the Travis Pool to include sufficient acreage to link
15 the Crockett and the Buchanan wells to the old pool?

16 A. Yes, that agreement has been reached with Mr.
17 Gum, and it is as posted on all maps included in our
18 exhibits, the blue outline, which ties contiguously the two
19 new wells with the existing pool.

20 Q. All right. My question for you, sir, is, if the
21 Division approves the blue acreage as an extension of the
22 Travis Pool, is that logical geologically?

23 A. It's very logical and reasonable.

24 Q. Currently, the Crockett well is dedicated to an
25 80-acre spacing unit consisting of the north half of the

1 southwest quarter of 27; is that true?

2 A. That is correct.

3 Q. And the Buchanan well is dedicated to the north
4 half of the southeast quarter of 33?

5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. Are you -- Is Marathon pursuing further
7 opportunities to drill additional Canyon wells that would
8 be subject to the special rules for this pool?

9 A. Yes, Marathon plans to aggressively pursue the
10 development of this field and has plans -- It's currently
11 drilling -- has two wells drilling currently in this trend,
12 general trend, and has plans for offsetting both the
13 Crockett and Buchanan wells for the canyon.

14 Q. In picking future well locations, can you
15 describe for me, Mr. Chapman, what would be your geologic
16 strategy in locating wells at the optimum position within
17 these spacing units to give you your best opportunity to
18 maximize oil production from the Canyon?

19 A. Marathon's plan for the development of the
20 Travis-Upper Penn Pool is to utilize 3-D seismic to define
21 optimal locations, geologic locations to locate Canyon
22 tests.

23 Marathon, as have a number of other operators in
24 the State of New Mexico, has had success at utilizing 3-D
25 seismic in optimizing locations, and indeed we are in the

1 process of acquiring a 3-D seismic program that covers the
2 southwestern extension of the Travis-Penn, Upper Penn,
3 Pool.

4 Q. What accounts for the accumulation of
5 hydrocarbons at points of greatest thickness within these
6 small features we see mapped on Exhibit 4? What kind of
7 creature is this?

8 A. What kind of creature is this? These are algal
9 mounds similar to that which is found throughout the
10 Strawn, Canyon and Cisco in southeast New Mexico.

11 In this case we refer to them as a shelf margin
12 complex, in that you had a fairly high population density
13 of these algal mounds, as opposed to some of the more
14 isolated mounds in the Strawn, for example, in the
15 Lovington-Strawn field areas.

16 Whereas the population density is high enough
17 that they are generally connected, there is still a high
18 degree of variation in the net thickness of the algal
19 mounds, which will have an impact on the initial rates at
20 which these wells will produce.

21 If I may draw Mr. Stogner's attention to the
22 isopach map, located in Section 14, location P, the
23 southeasterlymost location in Section 14, that particular
24 well encountered 34 feet of net porosity.

25 If you move down the heart of the strike in a

1 southwesterly direction, you can see that the next well
2 drilled encountered only 18 feet of net porosity.

3 The next well to the southwest encountered 38
4 feet and, continuing down the trend, 24 and 10 and 12. So
5 you can see there's a great deal of variation.

6 Within the heart of this productive trend there's
7 a great deal of variation within the thickness of the net
8 porosity, i.e., the net reservoir quality, and that
9 reflects itself in the rate at which these wells will
10 produce, and thereby impacts the economics of drilling and
11 developing such a pool in a manner that is not wasteful.

12 Q. Do you understand that the current rules for this
13 pool that were adopted in 1978 require that standard well
14 locations have wells located within 150 feet of the center
15 of either 40 acres that's dedicated to the spacing unit for
16 that well?

17 A. I do understand that.

18 Q. Do you have an opinion as to whether or not it
19 will be useful to you and other operators to have more
20 flexibility in well locations whereby this -- well
21 locations could be within a spacing unit, so long as
22 they're no closer to a side boundary than 330 feet?

23 A. It will be very useful. It will avoid the
24 wasteful drilling of unnecessary wells. It will allow
25 Marathon and any other operators in the pool as it develops

1 to optimize locations and thus receive the best return both
2 for themselves and for the State of New Mexico, utilizing
3 such tools as 3-D seismic.

4 And what we are asking for is the standard and
5 typical standoff rules for a normal quarter-quarter
6 location.

7 Q. Under the existing rules, you'll be required to
8 file, either for hearing or for administrative processing,
9 requests for unorthodox well locations to accommodate your
10 objective of locating wells at the greatest thickness of
11 these algal mounds, and you would still have that
12 opportunity if the rule was not changed?

13 A. That is correct.

14 Q. And your request is to make the change in the
15 special pool rules?

16 A. That is correct.

17 Q. Is it your understanding that that request has
18 been made to Mr. Tim Gum and we have been advised that he
19 has no objection to the additional flexibility in the pool?

20 A. That is my understanding.

21 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Examiner, that concludes my
22 examination of Mr. Chapman.

23 We move the introduction of Exhibits 1 through 4.

24 EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibits 1 through 4 will be
25 admitted into evidence.

EXAMINATION

1
2 BY EXAMINER STOGNER:

3 Q. You have given a very concise general description
4 of what this pool was in being an algal mound. Could you
5 repeat that for me?

6 A. Right, the original definition of the pool, in
7 the original field rules, they simply used the term "Upper
8 Penn", which has been frequently utilized. That term has
9 been used because the stratigraphy of the Pennsylvanian,
10 the upper Pennsylvanian, is somewhat complex.

11 However, all producing wells in the field, both
12 historical and the two new Marathon wells, are all
13 producing from this same interval, roughly 150 feet gross
14 interval, that is found, we believe, within -- Our
15 correlations say that we believe this is the Canyon portion
16 of the pool.

17 It is a strike parallel shelf margin complex,
18 very similar to those found in numerous other fields in New
19 Mexico. Example, Dagger Draw complex, Indian Basin and
20 others that are productive out of the Canyon or Cisco.

21 The geologic makeup of that portion of the
22 carbonate which is productive, these are algal mounds,
23 calcareous algae that grew on the -- at a certain water
24 depth and energy regime in the Pennsylvanian seas and
25 developed mounds.

1 In some portions of southeast New Mexico they
2 tend to be quite isolated -- for example, in the Strawn of
3 the Lovington area, as previously cited.

4 In the Canyon and Cisco they were somewhat more
5 robust and tended to be somewhat amalgamated. Therefore
6 you get pressure, permeability, drainage, connection
7 between these amalgamated algal buildups.

8 Q. Now, have you -- Are you the one that's been in
9 contact with Mr. Gum concerning the extension of this
10 particular pool?

11 A. No, I have not been personally in contact with
12 Mr. Gum.

13 Q. Okay. But somebody within your company has?

14 A. Right, there have been numerous contacts, usually
15 involving the engineering supervisor, Dave Barker, and two
16 or three of the engineers who report to him and some other
17 miscellaneous Marathon field people located in our Hobbs
18 office, et cetera.

19 Q. Okay, the area marked in blue on your maps, that
20 is the area in which Marathon understands that Mr. Gum is
21 to at least include within the extension of this pool?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. And that doesn't necessarily reflect your
24 understanding of what the actual pool extension is to be,
25 is it?

1 A. Right, not at all. You know, currently, the
2 mapping of the limits of the pool is simply done on the
3 basis of subsurface data, i.e., well logs.

4 And you can see in the southern end of the pool
5 where Marathon has been drilling these Morrow tests, the
6 data is quite scattered. Generally one or two data points
7 per 640-acre section.

8 And so the ability to well define the limits of
9 the pool in advance of drilling, at the present time, is
10 somewhat limited.

11 You can see from my isopach map, Exhibit 4, I
12 have theorized that the pool will be developed further to
13 the north and to the west and -- you know, crudely
14 outlining the area that is shown in blue. At that point
15 that's just a conjecture, a geologic -- It's hopefully a
16 reasonable geologic conjecture, but it's conjecture on our
17 parts.

18 The two wells currently only hold their 80-acre
19 proration units in the Canyon. What Mr. Gum has done is --
20 in conversation with Marathon, is attempted to link up
21 these two 80-acre units with the field in a contiguous
22 fashion.

23 Q. Okay. When I refer to Exhibit Number 4, you show
24 some -- and I'm looking in Sections 23 and 27. There
25 appear to be two other wells just --

1 A. Right.

2 Q. -- to the south and east of your A-A' line --

3 A. Right.

4 Q. -- and they both have 12 foot shown. Are these
5 deeper Morrow producers or something that have penetrated
6 the zone?

7 A. Those are both -- yes, both the -- The two wells
8 in Section 23 -- there's one well on location N that has 12
9 feet. There's another well up in location C which has NLA;
10 the log for that well has not been released as of yet.
11 Both of those wells are Morrow producers.

12 And then the other well you referenced in Section
13 27, in location H, is also a Morrow producer. Both of
14 those wells had 12 feet, relatively thin amounts of net
15 porosity, and the operators of those wells have not thus
16 far elected to attempt completion in the Canyon.

17 Q. And then you have a well way, way down there in
18 the very end of your structure, and that has a footage of
19 25.

20 A. That's correct.

21 Q. That's in Section 4. Is that a similar deeper-
22 horizon produced well?

23 A. Yes, that well has produced out of -- I'm pretty
24 confident in saying that well has produced out of the
25 Morrow and some other -- If I may refer to my notes.

1 That well initially completed in the Morrow, back
2 in 1971, which I would note predates the discovery of the
3 Travis-Upper Penn Pool, so this pool was not recognized yet
4 at that point in time. It produced out of the Morrow for a
5 fairly brief history and then was recompleted uphole in the
6 Queen-San Andres, much shallower objectives. And to the
7 best of my knowledge, it's still actually producing out of
8 the Queen-San Andres.

9 Q. Okay, when I refer to your cross-section --
10 that's Marathon's Exhibit Number 2 -- the two wells to the
11 far left, what is the little yellow mark in which you have
12 designated on these cross-sections?

13 A. The yellow mark -- All perforations are marked by
14 the boxes with circles in the center track. After Marathon
15 had -- and this will be -- greater testimony to this will
16 be given later by Mr. Williams. After these wells were
17 perforated and put on production, Marathon ran production
18 logs in both of these wells, and the vast majority of the
19 current production is coming from those discrete sets of
20 perforations out of the complete composite appropriations
21 that Marathon put in those wells.

22 Q. Now, my records indicate that this is -- well,
23 somewhat of an old pool. It was discovered back in 1978;
24 is that correct?

25 A. That's correct. Well, 1977, it was discovered

1 and I think the initial pool rules applied for, and then --
2 temporary pool rules applied for, and then I think the
3 first permanent rules came out in 1978, if I remember
4 correctly.

5 Q. Actually, the hearing was in 1977, and the pool
6 rules came out in February of 1978, and that's by Order
7 Number R-5643 in Case 6072, which I'm taking administrative
8 notice of, by the way.

9 Those original wells in that original pool
10 boundary, in your pink area shown -- Now, you said the
11 production is from the Canyon portion in this structure.
12 Were there other perforations in that Cisco and the more
13 vertical extent of that Canyon formation, or has this
14 always been just the -- produced from the Canyon?

15 A. All records available that Marathon has examined
16 says all perforations have been in the Canyon. Again, as I
17 previously referred to, the stratigraphic correlations, how
18 discrete is the Canyon/Cisco at times, is arguable, and
19 therefore when this pool was originally discovered, while
20 Heyco was drilling a deeper test for the -- I believe also
21 the Morrow, they simply refer to it as Cisco -- excuse me,
22 as upper Penn, and that was accepted and has been carried
23 forth at this point in time.

24 But according to all records that we've been able
25 to review, all perforations have been in this Canyon, this

1 150-, 180-foot gross interval of the upper Penn.

2 Q. It looks like development of this pool has been
3 kind of slow over the last 20 years. Do you have any
4 reason why or any estimation why?

5 A. Well --

6 Q. I mean, even looking -- The reason I say that, I
7 look back at the records of the pool extensions, which
8 originally start in 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982 and then again
9 in 1984 and 1994, which is somewhat -- over a 20-year
10 period.

11 A. Yes. Of course, let me preface my comments with,
12 Marathon has not been an interest owner or operator in the
13 existing pool, so we've had no part with the current
14 historical development. However, I think it's a
15 combination of a couple of things.

16 These carbonate algal mound complexes are often
17 very subtle to detect on logs, because most of the porosity
18 is secondary, i.e., vuggy in nature. So it doesn't always
19 show up real well on logs, you don't always get good shows
20 drilling through it. So it's a subtle and difficult play
21 to detect and pursue.

22 I believe all these wells have also had a
23 fairly -- I'm probably getting out of my depth here. I
24 think these wells have also experienced a fairly
25 significant decline, sufficient such that when 1985-86

1 rolled around and prices began to decline, the operators
2 cooled their heels and either have forgotten about or
3 simply elected not to pursue it.

4 And I would again note that Marathon's extension
5 to this pool were found while drilling for the Morrow.

6 Q. So it seems there may be some correlation of oil
7 prices and the development of this pool, just to --

8 A. Just on the basis of conjecture, it --

9 Q. It would appear that way.

10 A. It would appear that way.

11 Q. Now, you said that the pressure -- Or am I to
12 assume that your next witness may go a little bit more into
13 the pressure?

14 A. He would be --

15 MR. KELLAHIN: We'll have a full presentation on
16 pressure.

17 THE WITNESS: Yeah, he'd be better qualified to
18 testify to that.

19 EXAMINER STOGNER: Okay.

20 THE WITNESS: Geologists are always under
21 pressure, but never give pressure.

22 EXAMINER STOGNER: All right. I have no other
23 questions of this witness. You may be excused. Thank you,
24 sir.

25 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

1 MR. KELLAHIN: Our next witness is Mr. Paul
2 Williams. Mr. Williams is a reservoir engineer.

3 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Kellahin?

4 MR. KELLAHIN: Thank you, Mr. Examiner.

5 PAUL R. WILLIAMS,

6 the witness herein, after having been first duly sworn upon
7 his oath, was examined and testified as follows:

8 DIRECT EXAMINATION

9 BY MR. KELLAHIN:

10 Q. Mr. Williams, for the record, sir, would you
11 please state your name?

12 A. My name is Paul R. Williams.

13 Q. And where do you reside?

14 A. In Midland, Texas.

15 Q. And have you on past occasions testified before
16 the Division?

17 A. I have not.

18 Q. Summarize for us your education.

19 A. I have a BS in petroleum engineering from
20 Colorado School of Mines, achieved in 1989.

21 Q. What is your current employment with Marathon?

22 A. I am a petroleum engineer.

23 Q. As part of your duties as a petroleum engineer,
24 have you made an investigation of the performance of the
25 Crockett well and the Buchanan well?

1 A. I have.

2 Q. In addition, have you studied the performance of
3 the wells in the old portion of the Travis-Upper Penn Pool?

4 A. I have.

5 Q. Have you, to the best of your knowledge, studied
6 the available engineering data and come to some engineering
7 conclusions?

8 A. I have.

9 Q. Do those conclusions and opinions include an
10 opinion concerning an appropriate gas-oil ratio for the
11 pool?

12 A. Yes, they do.

13 MR. KELLAHIN: We tender Mr. Williams as an
14 expert witness.

15 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Williams is so qualified.

16 Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) Let me have you direct your
17 attention to what we've marked as Marathon Exhibit Number
18 5. This is a display that shows initial reservoir
19 pressures.

20 On this display you have located all the existing
21 or former wells in the Travis Pool, have you not?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And have you located and provided information on
24 pressure for the Buchanan and the Crockett well?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. What kind of pressure data are we looking at
2 here?

3 A. We're looking at pressures, as far as the Travis-
4 Upper Penn field, that were obtained from State records.
5 Usually these were DSTs performed, and they were pressures
6 obtained from these DSTs.

7 Q. Let's take this Exhibit 4, and while we -- I'm
8 sorry, Exhibit 5. And while we look at Exhibit 5, let's
9 also look at your plot of these initial pressures over
10 time, which is displayed on Exhibit Number 6.

11 First of all, going back to Exhibit 5, show us
12 what in your opinion would be the original reservoir
13 pressure, virgin pressure, for the first well in the Travis
14 Pool.

15 A. I would like to point to the well in Section 13,
16 Unit Letter G. We have a well that encountered pressures
17 of 3812 pounds, and I believe this is the first well in the
18 pool, and this pressure was encountered in 1977.

19 Q. When we go to Exhibit 6, then, and look at the
20 chronology of the initial reservoir pressure points, find
21 the interval from January, 1977, to January, 1978, and look
22 above the column where it says 3500 pounds, that red square
23 represents the data point for the well you've just
24 described?

25 A. That is correct.

1 Q. And have you gone through Exhibit 6 and plotted
2 the other initial reservoir pressures for these other wells
3 in the same fashion?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. What's your conclusion?

6 A. We find that these wells encountered virgin
7 pressures of approximately 3800 pounds initially. And as
8 other wells were brought on and produced, this pressure
9 declined over time. It declined rapidly over the first
10 five years and then seems to have stabilized over the next
11 period of approximately 15 years.

12 Q. With knowledge of Mr. Chapman's geologic
13 conclusions, and with the information you have about
14 initial reservoir pressures, do you have an engineering
15 explanation for the scattered nature of these initial
16 reservoir pressures for the wells that preceded the
17 Buchanan and Crockett well?

18 A. We believe that these wells -- this reservoir
19 pressure, there is some connection across the field, and
20 this pressure declined fairly rapidly initially, through
21 the connection that Mr. Chapman has pointed out from our
22 wells to the Travis-Upper Penn.

23 Q. Did you find evidence of some interference or
24 pressure connection, if you will, between or among wells in
25 the old part of the pool?

1 A. Yes, we have identified two wells that appear to
2 be in communication in the Travis-Upper Penn field.

3 Q. Show us the wells on Exhibit Number 5.

4 A. Those wells would be Section 14, Unit Letter P,
5 and then the well due south of that, Unit Letter B in
6 Section 23.

7 Q. When you look at the reservoir pressures, you can
8 also find wells that are positioned where they seem to have
9 minimal effect one to another? When we look at Exhibit
10 Number 6, there's a well that comes in at a low pressure,
11 between 1980 and 1981? Do you see it? Just over 2000
12 pounds?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And then yet you come back in 1982 and there's
15 another well up above 2500. The scattered nature of the
16 pressure is what I'm talking about.

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. Is there an explanation as to the scattered
19 nature of the pressures?

20 A. It would be -- Well, two answers here.
21 Partially, the reservoir connectivity is not very solid.
22 There is some connection, although there is some
23 heterogeneity to these carbonate reservoirs.

24 The other explanation here is that these are
25 pressures garnered from a drill stem test, and not having

1 access to the specific information, we can't verify that
2 these are very accurate tests. They're the best we have at
3 this time.

4 Q. Let's now compare the pressure data you have for
5 Buchanan and Crockett, and compare that back to the
6 pressures you had for the pool. What do you see?

7 A. We see that our initial reservoir pressures at
8 Crockett and Buchanan are approximately the same as the
9 latter wells that were developed in the Travis-Penn field.
10 We're seeing pressures approximately between 2300 and 2400
11 pounds, which is about the same as the well drilled in
12 1991, and this was a DST taken of this well in Section --
13 I'm sorry, Unit Letter F of Section 23.

14 Q. Is it your opinion that the Buchanan and Crockett
15 wells have suffered some pressure depletion --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- prior to the time they were drilled?

18 A. Yes, I believe so.

19 Q. Do you have an engineering conclusion as to the
20 place or point at which those spacing units were pressure
21 depleted? What's the source of the depletion?

22 A. I believe it's just the production over time,
23 over a period of approximately 15 years here.

24 Q. And the production attributed to the Travis Pool?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Do you see any other probable source for that
2 depletion, other than the Travis Pool? That's the logical
3 source, is it not?

4 A. Yes, in this case, yes.

5 Q. Do you see any evidence that there was an
6 original gas cap in the reservoir?

7 A. No, we do not.

8 Q. Do you see any problem with increasing the gas-
9 oil ratio in the pool?

10 A. No, we do not.

11 Q. All right. In fact, you see just the opposite?

12 A. Yes. We have a well here, again, in Section --

13 Q. Go ahead. In fact, I think that's the next
14 display. Let's look at Exhibit Number 7 and talk about
15 what is the producing GOR for the wells in the pool that
16 are still producing. Describe that display for us.

17 A. You can see that the wells in Section 13 at this
18 point have shut in. They've been depleted, and the more
19 recent wells are in Section 23, and you can see lower
20 producing rates.

21 But I would like to point to the producing GOR
22 for the well in Unit Letter F of Section 23 and point out
23 that the producing GOR there is over 7500.

24 Q. And how does that compare to the producing GOR
25 for your two wells?

1 A. That is higher than what we're seeing at our
2 Crockett and Buchanan wells. Our Crockett has a producing
3 GOR of slightly over 7000, and Buchanan is at approximately
4 5000.

5 Q. You've also given us Exhibit 8. Let's have you
6 identify that so that it's in the record. What have you
7 tabulated on Exhibit 8?

8 A. Exhibit 8 is just a tabulation of the cumulative
9 production from the Travis-Penn field. These wells are
10 identified by location. We also have current monthly
11 production, upper and lower perms, completion date,
12 reservoir pressures and dates that these wells were shut
13 in.

14 Q. Let's turn now to the Buchanan well, and let's
15 talk about whether or not you have an opinion as to an
16 appropriate gas-oil ratio for the pool based upon data
17 you've derived from the Buchanan well. Do you have that
18 data?

19 A. Yes, I do.

20 Q. What are we looking at? What kind of data is
21 this?

22 A. This is actual measured data, daily gauges
23 obtained from the field.

24 Q. All right, what are you trying to do?

25 A. We are looking on Exhibit 9 at a plot of oil rate

1 versus gas rate. We're just trying to indicate -- doing
2 step-rate tests to see what happens to the effect of gas
3 rate as we affect the oil rate.

4 Q. You as an engineer are having the field people
5 conduct a series of step-rate tests to give you data so
6 that you can see what is the most efficient rate at which
7 this well wants to perform?

8 A. That is correct.

9 Q. The current rule is 2000-to-1 GOR at 355 barrels
10 a day, right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And that gives you a maximum daily gas allowable
13 of what, sir?

14 A. 710 MCF per day.

15 Q. All right. Are you satisfied that you had
16 adequate step-rate tests?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. When you look at a step-rate test that you want
19 to use as an engineer, what do you look to see about that
20 test to make it reliable for you?

21 A. I want to ensure that we achieved stabilized
22 production during that test period.

23 Q. For this particular well, that stabilized
24 production was achieved within what time period?

25 A. A minimum of 24 hours.

1 Q. So the data points we're looking at here are
2 stabilized data points?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And for each of the data points, how was that
5 represented on Exhibit 9?

6 A. They are indicated with this blue triangle.

7 Q. All right. Let's go down and look at the curve
8 you've drawn, the black curve.

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. What does that represent?

11 A. That represents a best-fit curve through the data
12 points we have indicated on here.

13 Q. And what does that mean?

14 A. Just the minimum variance from the overall
15 scatter of the points. It's a --

16 Q. That's a typical engineering way to analyze the
17 step-rate data, is it not?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. All right. Once you have that curve on the
20 map -- or on the display -- you have posted in the lower
21 left corner two red lines, a vertical red line and a
22 horizontal red line. What does that mean?

23 A. The horizontal red line represents our current
24 pool rules for 2000 GOR. It comes in at 710 MCF per day.
25 As that well intercepts our best-fit line, we then drop

1 down to get a corresponding oil rate of approximately 105
2 barrels of oil per day.

3 Q. All right. So if you're required to constrain
4 the well to the existing pool rules, the 2000 to 1 --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- it means that this well will only perform at
7 a level where you can achieve 105 barrels a day?

8 A. That's correct.

9 Q. Okay. As you go through the step-rate test and
10 find the most efficient manner in which to maximize oil
11 recovery, what rate would that be?

12 A. I'd like to point out in this red section, this
13 calculation here is approximately 7000 GOR. As we step up
14 the curve further to this 355 barrels per day, the green
15 vertical line, we intercept this best-fit curve and we come
16 over to a corresponding gas rate of approximately 1700 MCF
17 per day. This calculation shows that there's a GOR of
18 about -- under 5000 at this point.

19 Q. Now, that's a producing GOR?

20 A. That's correct.

21 Q. And so the other one is also a producing GOR?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. All right. So when we find the rate at which
24 this well likes to perform most efficiently, what rate
25 would that be?

1 A. That rate would be greater than 300 barrels per
2 day, of oil.

3 Q. Okay. In order to allow this well to produce its
4 current top maximum depth bracket oil allowable of 355 a
5 day -- we're not changing that rule --

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. If that's your ceiling for oil --

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. -- what is an equivalent gas volume that lets you
10 maximize this oil production?

11 A. It would be at a rate of approximately 1700 MCF
12 per day.

13 Q. Okay. Translating this into the pool rules,
14 would this well benefit if the pool rule is changed to
15 7000-to-1 GOR?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And you could allow, then, this well to perform
18 at its optimum?

19 A. That's correct.

20 Q. Let's look behind that and see how you have
21 displayed this data in a different format. On Exhibit 10,
22 identify and describe what we're looking at here.

23 A. Exhibit 10 is the same data we saw on Exhibit 9,
24 however we've plotted oil rate versus this gas-oil ratio.
25 And you can see that at the higher rates we have a lower

1 producing GOR. And as we attempt to step the well back and
2 lower the oil rate, you can see that the GOR starts to
3 climb.

4 At this 355 barrels of oil per day, we get a
5 corresponding producing gas-oil ratio of approximately
6 5000. If we were to restrict that in the range of 100 MCF
7 per day, you would see that our GOR would climb to
8 something up over 7000 GOR.

9 Q. Again, just another way to display the
10 information. The conclusion is what?

11 A. The conclusion is that the producing GOR is lower
12 at the higher oil rates.

13 Q. You have also provided a plot of the various
14 substances being produced by the well, and you've shown it
15 on Exhibit 11?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. All right, let's look at Exhibit 11. Describe
18 for us what we're seeing.

19 A. Exhibit 11 is just a production graph of the data
20 obtained from the Buchanan well over time, and we've just
21 plotted our oil rate, gas rate and water rate, and then our
22 calculated gas-oil ratio.

23 Q. The production is interrupted from about March
24 19th to about March 25th, there's an interruption or break
25 in the production. What occurred?

1 A. We achieved our maximum allowable for the month
2 at that time --

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. -- and the well was shut in.

5 At the time we shut the well in, we also
6 performed a pressure buildup.

7 Q. All right. This well was shut in because you
8 were at the point where you were exceeding the current
9 maximum gas allowable, and then it was turned back on when
10 the Division gave you temporary approval to continue
11 production?

12 A. That is correct.

13 Q. During this break in production, you said you ran
14 a buildup on the test?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. What was done?

17 A. We ran pressure bombs across the perforations and
18 performed a pressure transient analysis.

19 Q. You can use that pressure transient analysis
20 information to give you data by which you as an engineer
21 can calculate at least the minimum distance at which you're
22 producing hydrocarbons out of the reservoir?

23 A. That's correct.

24 Q. A minimum barrier, if you will?

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. All right. Have you calculated that for the
2 Buchanan well?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And when we look at that as a radius in footage,
5 how far out have you reached with that pressure buildup in
6 the Buchanan well?

7 A. We see a minimum radius around Buchanan of 1600
8 feet.

9 Q. Would that radius of contribution of hydrocarbons
10 in the Buchanan well be large enough to encompass an 80-
11 acre spacing unit?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. What does that tell you about 80-acre spacing, at
14 least insofar as the Buchanan well is concerned?

15 A. That 80 acres is sufficient, is sufficiently
16 drained by these wells.

17 Q. All right. And there's certainly no point in
18 putting this well on 40-acre spacing?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. All right. Let's turn now to the subject of the
21 Crockett well. For the Crockett well, do you have similar
22 data using step-rate tests?

23 A. We do.

24 Q. Let's look at Exhibit Number 12 and have you
25 identify and describe what you are showing in Exhibit 12.

1 A. Exhibit 12 for the Crockett well is the oil rate
2 versus gas rate and the step-rate tests we performed for
3 this well over time. Again, we have this best-fit curve
4 generated through the data.

5 Q. If this well is restricted to the current GOR,
6 what is the forecasted oil production on a daily basis?

7 A. If we restrict this well to the current allowable
8 710 MCF per day, that would result in an oil production of
9 about 61 barrels of oil per day.

10 Q. And it gives you a producing GOR of what?

11 A. Over 11,000.

12 Q. In fact, you have few data points, step-rate data
13 points, curtailing the well at those kind of levels?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And why not more data points?

16 A. As we pinched this well back, it became very
17 unstable and was attempting to log off. We lost our oil
18 rate.

19 Q. The gas, then, is preferentially produced?

20 A. That's correct.

21 Q. And why does that occur?

22 A. We have a pressure differential downhole at the
23 wellbore, and as that differential decreases by shutting
24 the well in, the relative permeability to the gas is higher
25 than the relative permeability to the oil, which allows it

1 to be preferentially produced.

2 Q. Is it a fair characterization to say that this
3 well is simply not going to produce oil if we keep it at a
4 2000-to-1 GOR?

5 A. Minimal rates of oil.

6 Q. Yes, you're going to get some; you've forecasted
7 maybe 61 barrels. But this well doesn't like to produce in
8 that fashion, does it?

9 A. That's correct.

10 Q. What is the most efficient, optimum way this well
11 likes to perform?

12 A. Again, it would be to increase the oil rate.
13 I've shown here on these green lines that at the current
14 allowable of 355 barrels of oil per day, we've got a
15 corresponding gas rate of over 2400 MCF per day. This
16 calculates to a producing GOR of approximately 7000 to 1.

17 Q. Would this well benefit if the pool rules are
18 changed to have a gas-oil ratio of 7000 to 1?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Let's look at Exhibit 12 and have you show us how
21 you've plotted the data on this exhibit.

22 A. Exhibit 12 -- Is this Exhibit 13?

23 Q. I'm sorry, Exhibit 13.

24 A. Exhibit 13, again, is a plot of the oil rate
25 versus the gas-oil ratio for the same data we saw on

1 Exhibit 12. Again, you can see that at the higher rates
2 the producing GOR is approximately 7000. And as we attempt
3 to pinch this well back, the GOR climbs.

4 Q. Are you satisfied that your step-rate data points
5 are reliable?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. You selected and used the ones using the same 24-
8 hour criteria for getting stabilized rates?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. Let's look at the Exhibit 14, which is the
11 tabulation of production information for the Crockett well.
12 Let's look at that.

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. What does this show?

15 A. Again, this is just the production of this well
16 over time from first production period to the current time.

17 Q. The interruption in production is to comply with
18 the pool rules so that you weren't overproduced?

19 A. That is correct.

20 Q. And then it was turned back on when the Division
21 gave you temporary approval?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. During that period of time, did you run a
24 pressure buildup on this well?

25 A. Yes, we did.

1 Q. And with what results?

2 A. Again, as with the Buchanan, we calculated our
3 radius of investigation, and with the Crockett well we saw
4 a radius of investigation of approximately 2000 feet.

5 Q. Is that sufficient to give you contribution of
6 hydrocarbons for an 80-acre spacing unit?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Let's look at after the well is turned back on in
9 Late March of 1998. Is there any conclusions you can come
10 to the relationship of the way these gases and fluids are
11 produced?

12 A. Yes, after the well was turned back on it
13 achieves very stable production.

14 Q. Is that also true of the Buchanan well?

15 A. Yes, it had a similar --

16 Q. Is that an indication that at these higher gas
17 rates you're more efficiently producing both these wells?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. One of the things the Division worries about in
20 gas-oil ratio cases is if there is a gas cap in the
21 reservoir, and that if the higher-structured wells are
22 allowed to take reservoir energy from the pool, oil
23 production will ultimately suffer.

24 In this reservoir do you see any indication of a
25 gas cap?

1 A. I do not.

2 Q. Can you isolate for us where within the upper
3 Penn reservoirs this production is coming from?

4 A. I can.

5 Q. And how did you do that?

6 A. We ran a production log on these wells during its
7 producing period.

8 Q. Let's look at Exhibit 15 and have you identify
9 the production log for the Buchanan well.

10 A. Exhibit 15 is a graphical presentation of the
11 percentage of production we achieved from the Buchanan well
12 when we performed our production log.

13 Q. Okay, and the perforations here from 9750 to
14 9760, a very short vertical distance, that's where you're
15 getting substantially all of your hydrocarbon production?

16 A. Yes, greater than 90 percent of our production.

17 Q. Do you have any concerns as an engineer that
18 increasing the gas-oil ratio will be harmful in any way?

19 A. No, I do not.

20 Q. Let's look at your production plot for the
21 Crockett well. Identify and describe that display.

22 A. Exhibit 16 is, again, a graphical presentation of
23 the production log results that we performed a -- when we
24 performed a production log on this well. Again, it
25 indicates that we have greater than 95 percent of the

1 production coming from a very small interval.

2 Q. Summarize for us, Mr. Williams, your conclusions
3 about the necessity for increasing the gas-oil ratio in the
4 pool.

5 A. By having the increased GOR rules for the pool,
6 we are able to more efficiently produce the reservoir. Our
7 producing GORs are lower at the higher oil rates. And we
8 would maximize our recovery from this reservoir.

9 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Examiner, that concludes my
10 examination of Mr. Williams.

11 We move the introduction of his Exhibits 5
12 through 16.

13 EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibits 5 through 16 will be
14 admitted into evidence at this time.

15 EXAMINATION

16 BY EXAMINER STOGNER:

17 Q. Were you able to substantiate your findings with
18 your Crockett and Buchanan well, with past production from
19 the Seventies and Eighties on the wells in the -- the
20 original wells in the pool?

21 A. We do not have production log or production data
22 from those wells. All we have is top and bottom
23 perforations.

24 Q. You mean you didn't bother looking up the
25 production data; is that right?

1 A. I'm sorry, I misunderstood. Yes, we have
2 cumulative production figures from that field.

3 Q. Was there any indication that they had the same
4 problems that you're faced with today on these two wells,
5 from their production histories or from -- Did anything pop
6 out at you that they were having the same problem?

7 A. No, their initial producing GOR started around
8 1000. And as time went along, their -- this is a producing
9 GOR for the field, tend to decline. And now we have one
10 well there at 7500 GOR.

11 Q. Okay. Now, their present production in those
12 wells, I take it, is substantially less than what yours
13 are --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- at this point? Okay.

16 So the initial phase of the reservoir acted
17 somewhat differently --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- than what you're saying?

20 A. Their initial rates were similar, as far as oil.
21 However, their GOR was significantly lower. It was below
22 the 2000-to-1 allowable.

23 Q. I was reviewing the subsequent order issued in
24 this matter back in 1979, Case Number 6072 Reopened, Order
25 Number R-5643, and it provided that the operators in that

1 pool to provide within 12 months some sort of a study. Did
2 you know anything of that plan or study that was performed
3 in that pool, in that area?

4 A. I believe they unitized the north part of the
5 field in an attempt for a waterflood.

6 Q. Okay. Did it -- Did they ever waterflood it?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. They did?

9 A. They put water into Unit Letter G, Section 13,
10 and -- in 1982, and saw immediate breakthrough in the
11 surrounding wells.

12 Q. Was that any surprise?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay. I'm looking at Exhibit Number 17. Could
15 you kind of go in -- or what is 17, again, showing me?

16 A. I'm sorry, I don't have a 17.

17 MR. KELLAHIN: Seventeen?

18 EXAMINER STOGNER: Yeah.

19 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Williams didn't sponsor this
20 one --

21 EXAMINER STOGNER: Oh.

22 MR. KELLAHIN: -- Mr. Stogner. It represents a
23 summary of Marathon's various contacts with all the
24 operators of current pool wells, none of whom objected to
25 increasing the GOR. In fact, some of them had supported

1 it. It was simply a summary from our records to show you
2 we had contacted all those operators, and we have no
3 objection for increasing or changing the pool rules.

4 EXAMINER STOGNER: Okay, I was thinking that
5 referred to some other matter.

6 What should be the date of the -- of this
7 proposed rule change for the GOR? Do you have a proposed
8 date?

9 MR. KELLAHIN: No, sir. I think the convention
10 is to make it the first day of the month following the
11 entry of an order.

12 EXAMINER STOGNER: I didn't know if there was any
13 special conditions or any special request to perhaps go
14 back, retroactive, to one of the Buchanan or Crockett
15 wells.

16 MR. KELLAHIN: Well, you remind me of something I
17 have overlooked, Mr. Stogner. I think it would be --

18 EXAMINER STOGNER: Oh.

19 MR. KELLAHIN: -- appropriate not to have the
20 wells overproduced. We have a temporary approval to
21 produce them, and I've overlooked the fact that you're
22 correct, we need to take this retroactive back to the date
23 of first production of the earliest well in order not to
24 have them shut in.

25 EXAMINER STOGNER: Okay. Do you have -- Does

1 anybody know when that date was or around?

2 MR. KELLAHIN: Yes, sir, I think I can look it
3 up.

4 THE WITNESS: I believe our first production date
5 was for the Buchanan well, and it is February 16th.

6 EXAMINER STOGNER: February 16th. So the first
7 part of February, then, of February -- I mean the first
8 part of February, then?

9 THE WITNESS: Yes.

10 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Stogner, the Buchanan's first
11 date of production was February 17th, 1998. The Crockett's
12 first date of production was February 25th of 1998.

13 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Kellahin, I'm going to ask
14 for a proposed order in this matter, and that way you can
15 cover that --

16 MR. KELLAHIN: Yes, sir.

17 EXAMINER STOGNER: -- more accurately in that
18 portion of it, so you can get your geologist to help,
19 maybe, and you writing up a good geological description.

20 MR. KELLAHIN: We'd be happy to do that.

21 EXAMINER STOGNER: I'll just take administrative
22 notice that the unorthodox location request to bring it
23 into 330 is nothing new. It is new in Eddy County for this
24 matter, but not for the Strawn around the Lovington area.

25 MR. KELLAHIN: Right.

1 EXAMINER STOGNER: But I'll just take
2 administrative notice. I don't remember Marathon having
3 any production over in that area, but I just wanted to take
4 administrative notice of that.

5 Also take administrative notice of the two
6 previous cases, of the two previous orders in that.

7 And if there's nothing further of this witness
8 you may be excused.

9 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

10 EXAMINER STOGNER: Does anybody else have
11 anything further in Case Number 11,964? Mr. Bruce? I'm
12 sorry, Mr. Bruce, did you have anything?

13 MR. BRUCE: I have nothing, Mr. Examiner.

14 EXAMINER STOGNER: Okay.

15 MR. KELLAHIN: I need to introduce and explain
16 the notice affidavit.

17 EXAMINER STOGNER: Okay, please do.

18 MR. KELLAHIN: To make that explanation I'm
19 handing you an unmarked exhibit. We can mark it whatever
20 the last exhibit is going to be. I've lost track of the
21 numbers. That's 18, this one -- Let's make it 19. I need
22 to describe for you the notice.

23 The affidavit is attested to by Tim Robertson.
24 Mr. Robertson is a petroleum landman. He's testified
25 before the Division in past cases.

1 If you'll turn to Exhibit A, it's a color
2 exhibit, and I can describe for you what Mr. Robertson did.

3 Marathon --

4 EXAMINER STOGNER: You're referring to Exhibit A
5 as the Application in this matter?

6 MR. KELLAHIN: Of Exhibit 18, which is the notice
7 affidavit.

8 EXAMINER STOGNER: Oh, I'm sorry. Okay.

9 MR. KELLAHIN: If we turn to Exhibit A of 18, Mr.
10 Robertson sent notice to 179 individuals and companies. He
11 has identified the area of the existing pool, and that's
12 shaded in pink. Within that area he notified all
13 operators, and if there was a spacing unit without a
14 producing well, he found the working interest owners and/or
15 the unleased mineral owners and notified all those people.

16 In addition, you'll find a one-mile area around
17 the pool. Under the one-mile rule, we're required under
18 1207 to notify any operators. There aren't any.

19 When you look down to the Crockett and the
20 Buchanan well, Mr. Robertson provided more notice than the
21 rule requires.

22 Within a mile of each of those wells, then, he
23 notified all the working interest owners and the unleased
24 mineral owners within a mile.

25 In doing so, Marathon has double-checked, and

1 they have overlooked some interest owners which were not
2 given notice, and they are shown on my Exhibit 19. Within
3 a portion of Section 3 to the south of the Buchanan well
4 and in a portion of Section 4, the diagonal hatched area was
5 overlooked for notice purposes.

6 Under the Rules, we're not required to send those
7 people notice anyway. We're required to send notice to any
8 party that is a working interest owner or an unleased
9 mineral owner within the acreage to be extended into the
10 pool, and all those parties were notified. Those are the
11 areas within the blue rectangles and triangles.

12 In addition, he's notified all interest owners
13 within a mile of the two wells, with the exception of the
14 acreage I've just described. I think that is more than is
15 required by the rule, and with your permission, then, we
16 will not send notice to the remaining 24 people in Sections
17 3 and 4 that were overlooked. If you desire us to do so,
18 then we will.

19 EXAMINER STOGNER: I concur, Mr. Kellahin. I
20 don't think it will be necessary.

21 MR. KELLAHIN: As a result of that notification
22 of some 179 individuals, we are not aware of any objection,
23 nor has any objection been filed with me.

24 That concludes our presentation.

25 And with your permission, we would ask that you

1 introduce into the record Exhibits 17, 18 and 19.

2 EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibits 17, 18 and 19 will be
3 admitted into evidence at this time.

4 I apologize for getting a little ahead in asking
5 your previous witness about Exhibit Number 17.

6 Again, Mr. Kellahin, if you'll provide me a
7 rough-draft --

8 MR. KELLAHIN: Yes, sir.

9 EXAMINER STOGNER: -- order in this matter. I'm
10 assuming that will be Order Number R-5643.

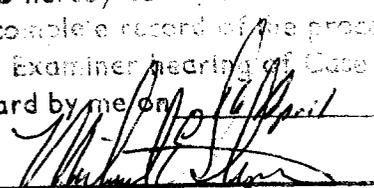
11 MR. KELLAHIN: -- B, yes, sir.

12 EXAMINER STOGNER: With that, this matter will be
13 taken under advisement.

14 (Thereupon, these proceedings were concluded at
15 10:48 a.m.)

16 * * *

17
18
19 I do hereby certify that the foregoing is
20 a complete record of the proceedings in
the Examiner hearing of Case No. 11964,
heard by me on April 19 98.

21 
22 _____, Examiner
Oil Conservation Division

23
24
25
STEVEN T. BRENNER, CCR
(505) 989-9317

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF NEW MEXICO)
) ss.
 COUNTY OF SANTA FE)

I, Steven T. Brenner, Certified Court Reporter and Notary Public, HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing transcript of proceedings before the Oil Conservation Division was reported by me; that I transcribed my notes; and that the foregoing is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative or employee of any of the parties or attorneys involved in this matter and that I have no personal interest in the final disposition of this matter.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL April 25th, 1998.



STEVEN T. BRENNER
 CCR No. 7

My commission expires: October 14, 1998