1	NEW MEXICO OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION
2	STATE LAND OFFICE BUILDING
3	STATE OF NEW MEXICO
4	CASE NO. 10586
5	
6	IN THE MATTER OF:
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8	The Application of SG Interests I, Ltd., for Compulsory Pooling,
9	San Juan County, New Mexico.
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14	BEFORE:
15	MICHAEL E. STOGNER
16	Hearing Examiner
17	State Land Office Building
18	October 29, 1992
19	RECEIVED
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21	NOV ; 0 1992
22	REPORTED BY:  QIL CONSERVATION DIVISION
23	CARLA DIANE RODRIGUEZ  Certified Shorthand Reporter
24	for the State of New Mexico
25	

## **ORIGINAL**

1	APPEARANCES
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3	FOR THE NEW MEXICO OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION:
4	
5	ROBERT G. STOVALL, ESQ. General Counsel
6	State Land Office Building Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504
7	
8	FOR THE APPLICANT:
9	THE TANSEY LAW FIRM Post Office Box 1020
10	Farmington, New Mexico 87499 BY: B. TOMMY ROBERTS, ESQ.
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1 EXAMINER STOGNER: Call next case, No. 10586. 2 MR. STOVALL: Application of SG 3 Interests I, Ltd., for compulsory pooling, San 4 Juan County, New Mexico. 5 EXAMINER STOGNER: Call for 6 7 appearances. MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Examiner, my name is 8 9 Tommy Roberts with the Tansey Law Firm in Farmington, New Mexico, appearing on behalf of 10 the Applicant. I believe my witnesses have been 11 previously sworn and their credentials accepted. 12 13 EXAMINER STOGNER: Let the record so 14 show. JAMES FULLERTON 15 Having been previously duly sworn upon his oath, 16 was examined and testified as follows: 17 EXAMINATION 18 BY MR. ROBERTS: 19 Mr. Fullerton, briefly describe the 20 Q. 21 purpose of this application? 22 The purpose of the application is to force pool the nonjoining leasehold and/or 23 24 mineral interest parties in the proposed well to be drilled by SG Interests I, Ltd., in the east 25

half of Section 30, Township 30 North, Range 8
West, San Juan County, New Mexico.

- Q. Does this application apply to the Basin Fruitland Coal formation?
  - A. Yes, it does.

- Q. Would you identify the location of the well proposed to be drilled?
- A. Page 1, Exhibit No. 1, depicts where the location of the well will be drilled which is on Tract 1, shown by the circular diagram; the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 30, Township 30 North, Range 8 West.

The map also depicts the outline of the spacing unit in gray, and also breaks down the tracts by ownership, Tracts 1 through 4, the spacing being the east half of Section 30. The acres attributable to this location, 290.69 acres, which is a standard spacing unit.

- Q. Is the location proposed a standard location?
- A. Yes, it is.
  - Q. What is the status of the well?
- A. It is staked and proposed for drilling soon.
- 25 Q. Please refer to page 1 of Exhibit No. 1

and identify the information there.

- A. The information on Exhibit No. 1 depicts the unit working interest owners who actually own a portion of the leasehold interest in the spacing unit described on page 1.
- Q. Would you describe or identify which of those interest owners have not yet agreed to join in this operation?
- A. Yes. If you go down the list here, the parties who will be subject to this force pooling application will be Dirk Vanhorn Reemstma, Lance Brewster Reemstma, David A. Pierce, Susan Leigh Pierce Nelson, and that's the extent. The other parties have either agreed to join or lease very recently, and that's the reason they were not taken off actually this list.
- Q. This does comprise 100 percent of the ownership of the unit?
  - A. That's correct.
- Q. Now, turn to page 2 of Exhibit No. 1 and describe the information set out there?
- A. Beginning on page 2 of Exhibit No. 1 we've broken down the leasehold ownership within each of the tracts that is described on Exhibit No. 1, the first page. It basically describes

the owners of the actual leasehold interest or unleased mineral ownership within each of the tracts, 1 through 4.

Q. Refer to page 5 and describe the information reflected there?

- A. Page 5 is the actual description of the leases associated with each of the tracts within the drilling and spacing unit. All these leases are currently active and effective leases held by existing production, and they contain, I believe, both federal and fee leases.
- Q. Let me have you turn your attention to what's been marked as Exhibit No. 2. Would you identify that exhibit?
- A. Yes. That's a letter dated October 1, 1992, to Susan Leigh Pierce Nelson, indicating our proposed plans for the proposed well. In this letter, I again outlined her working interest, if she chose to join, what the costs would be to her working interest. I attached an AFE actually in an operating agreement. The letter also outlines the offer, the option that SG would give her to lease her unleased mineral interest.
  - Q. And also attached as part of Exhibit

No. 2 appear to be other letters, each of which is dated October 1, 1992, and addressed to other parties. Would you elaborate a little more specifically what those letters pertain to?

- A. Yes. These are letters identical to the one I just explained to the other parties who have not agreed to join or participate. And that would be, as I explained before, David A. Pierce, Dirk Vanhorn Reemstma, Lance Brewster Reemstma, and that's the extent of the parties that have not agreed to join or participate.
- Q. With the exception of the addressees, are the contents of each of these letters identical?
- A. Other than an explanation that the individual mineral interest varies between letters, but the offer and so forth is identical.
- Q. Now I would like for you to refer to Exhibit No. 3. Please identify that exhibit.
- A. Exhibit No. 3 are copies of the actual notices that were sent to the individual parties advising them of our application for compulsory pooling and indicating our plans for drilling the proposed well, in which they own the unleased mineral interest. These letters were sent

certified with return receipts obtained on each party.

- Q. Would you testify for inclusion in the record the date of delivery of each of these letters?
- A. Susan Leigh Pierce Nelson, the letter was delivered October 7th. David A. Pierce, the letter was delivered October 7th. Lance Brewster Reemstma, we have no date of delivery. I believe that recently came in, possibly as of yesterday that it was finally picked up by him. It was sent out, though, the same date as the other letters and notices, which was October 6th. Dirk Vanhorn Reemstma was delivered October 7th.
- Q. Mr. Fullerton, on the letter notification to Lance Brewster Reemstma, would you take a minute to consult your records regarding the date that was delivered?

MR. ROBERTS: May we go off the record just a minute?

EXAMINER STOGNER: Yes.

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. STOVALL: Back on the record. The record should reflect there was an off-the-record discussion with respect to the notice to Lance

Brewster Reemstma. The return receipt card from the post office does not show a signature or date of delivery and there's no certificate of date of mailing.

However, I believe, Mr. Roberts, that you stated you actually were responsible for mailing this notice and it's your information and belief that the return card for Mr. Lance Reemstma was received approximately the same time as the other cards, is that correct?

MR. ROBERTS: That's correct. That would have been around October 7th.

MR. STOVALL: Again I would ask, to confirm all the notices, that you provide us an affidavit that notice was mailed to all parties by certified mail on the date it was mailed, apparently October 6th, and that the return receipt card was received unsigned or undated from Mr. Reemstma, approximately the same date as the other cards, whatever date that is.

So, your affidavit should take care of the question on this one. I don't remember if those return receipt cards have postmarks on them when they come back. If they do, that might be helpful.

Q. Mr. Fullerton, in your opinion have the notice requirements of the Division with respect to this hearing and the application been satisfied?

A. Yes.

- Q. Turn your attention to what's been marked as Exhibit 4. Would you identify that exhibit?
- A. Exhibit No. 4 involves a number of individual letters and AFEs. This is an exhibit with a letter date October 12, 1992 to Susan Leigh Pierce Nelson at which time we again included an AFE for the drilling of the Florance Gas Comb G #1 well by SG Interests I, Ltd.

The gist of this letter was to advise Ms. Nelson again of our request for compulsory pooling, and also indicated to her that this AFE was identical to the previous AFE, and the purpose of this AFE was to again provide her notice of the proposed operations; and, under a compulsory pooling order, have this AFE serve as the AFE that would be presented to her, at such time as an order was issued.

Q. You were attempting, by this communication, to expedite the force pooling

procedure?

- A. That's correct.
- Q. And is it then your hope that you will have already satisfied the requirement that's ordinarily set out in a force pooling order that the party to be force pooled would receive an AFE and would have an option period of 30 days in which to elect to participate or not to participate?
  - A. That's correct, yes.
- Q. Then is it your proposal that the option period in this case would run from the date of their receipt of this communication?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Are there similar letters for each of the other parties who have yet to join in this operation?
- A. Yes. All the parties that I previously referenced have received these additional notices.
  - Q. What is the basis for your desire to have this process expedited?
- A. Again, as I've stated, the expiration
  of the Section 10-29 tax credit dealing with
  Fruitland Coal wells drilled before December

31st. 1 2 In addition to that, the farmout agreement with Amoco Production Company provides 3 that there's a continuous drilling program that needs to be satisfied in order to continue to 5 drill wells on the subject leases and other 6 leases, and the actual farmout with Amoco does 7 8 expire on December 31, 1992. Were Exhibits 1 through 4 prepared by 9 Q. you? 10 Α. Yes. 11 Mr. Examiner, I would MR. ROBERTS: 12 13 move the admission of Exhibit Nos. 1 through 4. 14 EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibits 1 through 4 will be admitted into evidence at this time. 15 MR. ROBERTS: I have no other 16 17 questions. 18 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Stovall? EXAMINATION 19 BY MR. STOVALL: 20 Looking at these interests, going back 21 to Exhibit 1, am I correct, or do you have 22 23 personal knowledge whether the Reemstmas and 24 David Pierce and Susan Pierce Nelson are related? 25 Yes, I do have knowledge of that. Α.

Q. And they are related, is that correct?

A. Yes.

- Q. Is San Juan Royalty Partners related to them in any way?
- A. Actually, that interest is now owned by Meridian, and that interest is not subject to this force pooling application.
- Q. The Pierce family has nothing to do with that?
- A. The Pierce family actually owned this interest and sold it to San Juan Royalty Partners a few months ago. San Juan Royalty Partners apparently just recently sold it to Meridian.
- Q. I was trying to figure out what they were doing, having some knowledge of the families in the area. That really has no significant bearing on this.

With respect to your Exhibit 4, the October 12th letter, am I correct in understanding that this was sent out probably at the advice of Mr. Roberts, in order to shorten or to find some way to reduce the amount of time required to give notice to the parties of their interest being pooled and giving them their option to participate, is that correct?

A. That's correct.

MR. STOVALL: Let the reflect that I have, prior to the hearing of this case, have had a discussion with Mr. Roberts and have suggested that this might be a way to expedite that process and shorten somehow—come in and request a shortening of the standard 30-day time period.

Mr. Examiner, I don't think we can completely waive the giving of notice of this; however, I think if we can reinterpret Mr. Fullerton's request on behalf of SG to request that that be shortened to a two-week time period, and advise them of the entry of the order and that their time to respond--

- Q. I don't know if you gave them a time to respond in this letter, did you?
- A. I attempted to indicate that the time to respond would be October 29th, because that was the date of the application to be heard.
- Q. Upon entry of the order, can we assume your request is for a shortened time period in which to give them the opportunity to join?
  - A. Yes.
- Q. Based upon the fact that they have information as to the cost and the nature of

their interest, and they need to be informed of the risk penalty to be assessed and the overhead supervision. So perhaps a two-week date from the entry of the order? You're requesting an expedited order, and you've already stated off the record that you would be willing to accept the 156 percent?

- A. Yes. Two weeks from the day that we receive the order, in other words we need to notify them that very same day?
  - Q. Correct.

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- A. Or it's just two weeks from the date we notify them of the existence of the order?
- Q. Two weeks from the date they receive a copy of the order, which will pool their interests to pay their costs, based upon their having received an AFE and knowledge of this thing, and having had some time to evaluate the economic decision.
- A. Okay.
  - Q. Is that your request?
- 22 A. Yes.
  - MR. STOVALL: Always subject to the Examiner's discretion, of course. But he needs to know I've had this discussion with Mr. Roberts

1 prior to this hearing. EXAMINER STOGNER: Anything further of 2 this witness? 3 I think not. MR. STOVALL: EXAMINER STOGNER: You may be excused. Mr. Roberts? 6 MR. ROBERTS: Call Mr. O'Hare. 7 MICKEY O'HARE 8 Having been previously duly sworn upon his oath, 9 was examined and testified as follows: 10 EXAMINATION 11 BY MR. ROBERTS: 12 Mr. O'Hare, would you please refer to 13 Q. what's been marked as Applicant's Exhibit No. 5 14 and identify the exhibit? 15 16 Exhibit No. 5 is an authority for Α. expenditure for the Florance Gas Comb G #1 well. 17 18 Q. Would you state for the record the drilling costs and completion costs and total 19 costs depicted on that exhibit? 20 Yes. The total estimated drilling cost 21 Α. is \$76,930. The estimated completion cost for 22 23 this well is \$195,080, giving a total completed 24 well cost of \$272,010.

It's indicated on the AFE that it's

25

Q.

1 dated September 10, 1992. Can we assume that these estimated costs are relevant today? 2 Yes, they are. They're based on actual 3 Α. costs incurred in drilling wells in the area. 4 In your opinion, are these reasonable 5 Q. costs? 6 Yes, they are. 7 Α. Let's refer to what I show has been 8 marked Exhibit 6, and I see you have the same 9 exhibit I do. Would you identify that exhibit? 10 Exhibit No. 6 is a gas in place contour 11 Α. map taken from the report prepared by Kelso & 12 Wicks, presented in the 1988 San Juan Basin 13 coal-bed methane symposium booklet. 14 15 ο. What is the relevance of this exhibit 16 to the application? This exhibit shows the relative gas in 17 Α. place for the proposed well, and shows that it is 18 better than the proposals for the two previous 19 20 cases. 21 0. When you say the two previous cases, you're referring to SG's applications in Cases 22 10567 and 10585? 23 That is correct. 24 Α.

Can you quantify the gas in place as a

25

Q.

result of the information that's depicted by this exhibit?

- A. We're estimating off of this map a gas in place of about 12 Bcf per section. That would result in an ultimate recovery from the proposed well of approximately one and a quarter to one and a half Bcf.
- Q. Would you consider this a typical gas in place volume figure for Basin Fruitland Coal gas wells?
  - A. Yes, we would.

- Q. Refer to what has been marked as Exhibit No. 7 and identify that exhibit.
- A. Exhibit No. 7 is a map of the net coal thickness in the San Juan Basin, again taken from the report prepared by Kelso & Wicks published in the 1988 San Juan Basin coal-bed methane symposium booklet.
- Q. What is the relevance of this information to this application?
- A. This shows that the proposed well is expected to have on the order of 40 feet of—actually, a little less than 40 feet of net coal thickness. That, taken with the previous exhibit, Exhibit No. 6, would indicate that we

would have a fairly decent chance of making an economical well.

- Q. Would the net coal thickness information shown here represent a typical Fruitland Coal gas well?
  - A. For the most part, yes.

- Q. Refer to what has been marked as Exhibit No. 8 and identify it?
- A. Exhibit No. 8 is a contour map showing current production in the area of the proposed well as of June of 1992.
- Q. What is the relevance of this information to this application?
- A. This map shows that the proposed well is in an area that actually has a reduced current rate of production from the coal interval.

  Several of the wells to the northwest are fairly decent wells. In fact, one about two miles away from the proposed well is currently making in excess of 600 Mcf per day. However, wells to the south of the proposed well show rates as low as one Mcf per day. In fact, there's a couple of wells that have been shut in in that area because of poor rates.
  - Q. When you refer to well to the north and

to the south, can you more specifically point those locations on this exhibit?

- A. Yes. The one I referred to that is making in excess of 600 Mcf a day is in, I believe, Section 14. It will be one section up and two sections to the left, in the northeast corner.
- Q. When you refer to wells to the south, can you more specifically pinpoint those wells on this map?
- A. Yes. The section directly south of the proposed well in the northeast quarter of that section, we have a well that's only producing one Mcf per day, and the southwest quarter of that same section we have a shut in well showing zero production for the month of June.

Immediately adjacent to that same section to the east, is another well that has been shut in due to lack of production from the Fruitland Coal.

- Q. Let's have you refer to Exhibit 9 and identify that exhibit.
- A. Exhibit 9 is a little more detailed net coal isopach map. This shows the total coal thickness in the area of the proposed well, taken

from actual well logs drilled through the coals.

Q. And explain the relevance of the information here to this exhibit.

- A. This exhibit shows that the coals are actually thinning in the area of the proposed well. We're looking at a coal thickness in the order of 31 or 32 feet as opposed to the coal thicknesses in the better producing area to the northeast—I'm sorry, to the northwest, where on the previous exhibit we saw gas rates over 600 Mcf a day. That occurred on a well that had a coal thickness of about 40 feet.
- Q. Let's have you refer to what has been marked as Exhibit No. 10, and identify that exhibit.
- A. Exhibit No. 10 is a summary of the economics prepared for the proposed well. The assumptions used to prepare those economics included an initial rate of 125 Mcf per day with a five percent per year decline rate; an initial gas price of \$1.50 per Mcf escalated at four percent per year. Operating costs for this well are estimated to be about \$1,000 per month, and those costs were escalated at five percent per year, again assuming that there would be very

little water production from the proposed well.

The results of those assumptions include 122-1/2 months worth of payout, a return on investment of .32 percent, a rate of return of 6.6 percent, and that is without the tax credits.

With the tax credits, payout is reduced to about 70 months and the return on investment is improved to .82 and the rate of return improves to about 13.86 percent.

- Q. In your opinion, is this proposed operation commercial without the tax credits?
  - A. No, it is not.
- Q. Do you rely, in part, on this information in support of your request for an expedited order in this case?
  - A. Yes, we do.

- Q. Now, from the data and information that's shown on Exhibit Nos. 6 through 9 in particular, have you been able to draw a conclusion as to the risk involved in this proposed operation?
- A. Yes, we think the risk is quite a bit higher to drill this well than it would be if we were even one section to the north and west than

1 our proposed location is. Do you ask that a charge for risk 2 involved in drilling this well be set by the 3 Examiner? 4 Α. Yes. We're asking for 156 risk penalty 5 be assessed on this well. 6 Mr. O'Hare, in your opinion, will the 7 ο. granting of this application result in the 8 9 prevention of waste and the protection of 10 correlative rights? Α. Yes, it will. 11 MR. STOVALL: Administrative overhead, 12 13 did we do that? MR. ROBERTS: Thank you. 14 15 Q. Who do you propose operate this well, Mr. O'Hare? 16 We're proposing that SG Interests I, 17 Α. Ltd., be the named operator of the well. 18 Do you have a proposal for 19 Q. administrative overhead for the drilling 20 21 protection stages? 22 Yes. We are requesting that an 23 administrative overhead charge of \$4,000 per month be assessed during the drilling and 24

completion phase of the well, and \$450 per month

be assessed for the production phase of the well. 1 What is the basis for those proposals? 2 Q. 3 Α. Those proposals are based on the history of SG's operations in the San Juan Basin, 4 5 along with their payment of those same charges to the other operators. 6 Mr. Examiner, I would 7 MR. ROBERTS: move the admission of Exhibits Nos. 5 through 10. 8 EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibits 5 through 9 10 will be admitted into evidence. 10 MR. ROBERTS: I have no other questions 11 for this witness. 12 13 EXAMINATION 14 BY EXAMINER STOGNER: The \$4,000 and \$450, was Ernst & Young 15 Q. used as a basis for these charges? 16 I believe the Ernst & Young numbers are 17 18 \$4,000 for the average for 1991 on the drilling and completion side, and \$400 per month on the 19 20 production side for 1991. 21 0. This is \$50 more on the production Why the increase? 22 side. 23 Again, that is due to SG's history of operations in the Basin and their payment of 24 25 those same charges to other operators in the

Basin. 1 Did you submit anything as far as 2 payments to the other operators to back up that 3 particular statement on the \$50 increase? Α. No, I did not. 5 MR. STOVALL: Let me ask the question 6 Do you have personal knowledge of 7 this way. payment by SG or other parties of those kinds of 8 administrative overhead rates under operating 9 10 agreements in this area? THE WITNESS: My knowledge is limited 11 to the actual operating agreements. 12 I've not seen any checks go out to those other operators. 13 MR. STOVALL: I'm referring to the 14 15 operating agreements, not actual payments. 16 THE WITNESS: Yes, they do have. MR. STOVALL: What are the range of 17 18 rates in those operating agreements for the Fruitland Coal wells in this area? 19 20 THE WITNESS: For Amoco, I believe the 21 lowest I've seen is \$441 up to the \$450, and those are escalated on a yearly basis. 22 23 MR. ROBERTS: May I ask a question on 24 that issue? 25 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Roberts?

## FURTHER EXAMINATION

## BY MR. ROBERTS:

- Q. Mr. O'Hare, I believe the Ernst & Young survey contains a range of rates by depth and by area. Is the \$450 producing well rate within the range published by the survey?
- A. To the best of my knowledge, yes. The information from that survey was given to me over the phone, so I have not actually seen the survey myself.

MR. STOVALL: Mr. O'Hare, with respect to risk, I believe you originally were asking for 200 percent, and based upon discussion in the previous cases today you've revised that downward in the interest of getting an expedited order, is that correct?

THE WITNESS: That is correct.

MR. STOVALL: I assume your testimony and analysis of the risk factors involved in this well are the same as they are for the other wells?

THE WITNESS: There is a little more information available on surrounding wellbores in the area of this well than there were on the other two; but, yes, that is an accurate

1	statement.
2	MR. STOVALL: And we're referring
3	referring to Cases 10567 and 10585 which we also
4	heard today, is that correct?
5	THE WITNESS: That is correct.
6	EXAMINER STOGNER: Anything further of
7	Mr. O'Hare?
8	You may be excused.
9	If nobody else has anything further in
10	Case 10586, this case will be taken under
11	advisement.
12	(And the proceedings concluded.)
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18	in the state of th
19	I do heraby continuidad francias is a complete report of the processings in
20	the Examiner hearing of the 10586. heard by mo on 1992.
21	Mal Prema Examiner
22	Oil Conservation Division
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## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER 1 2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO 3 SS. COUNTY OF SANTA FE 5 I, Carla Diane Rodriguez, Certified 6 7 Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public, HEREBY 8 CERTIFY that the foregoing transcript of proceedings before the Oil Conservation Division 9 was reported by me; that I caused my notes to be 10 transcribed under my personal supervision; and 11 that the foregoing is a true and accurate record 12 of the proceedings. 13 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a 14 15 relative or employee of any of the parties or attorneys involved in this matter and that I have 16 no personal interest in the final disposition of 17 18 this matter. WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL November 25, 19 1992. 20 21 22 23 24 CARLA DIANE

CSR No. 4