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

CASE 10,595

EXAMINER HEARING

IN THE MATTER OF:

Application of Southland Royalty Company for a high angle/horizontal directional drilling pilot project, special operating rules therefor, and an unorthodox oil well location, Rio Arriba County, New Mexico

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

ORIGINAL

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NOV 23 1992

OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION

BEFORE: DAVID R. CATANACH, EXAMINER

STATE LAND OFFICE BUILDING

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

November 5, 1992

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A P P E A R A N C E S

FOR THE DIVISION:

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1 WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had
2 at 9:00 a.m.:

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8 EXAMINER CATANACH: At this time call Case
9 Number 10,595.

10 MR. STOVALL: Application of Southland
11 Royalty Company for a high angle/horizontal directional
12 drilling pilot project, special operating rules
13 therefor, and an unorthodox oil well location, Rio
14 Arriba County, New Mexico.

15 EXAMINER CATANACH: Are there appearances in
16 this case?

17 MR. KELLAHIN: If the Examiner please, I'm
18 Tom Kellahin of the Santa Fe law firm of Kellahin &
19 Kellahin, appearing on behalf of the Applicant, and I
20 have three witnesses to be sworn.

21 EXAMINER CATANACH: Are there any other
22 appearances?

23 Will the witnesses please stand to be sworn
24 in?

25 (Thereupon, the witnesses were sworn.)

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ALAN ALEXANDER,

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

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. KELLAHIN:

Q. Mr. Alexander, for the record would you please state your name and occupation?

A. Yes, my name is Alan Alexander. I'm employed by Meridian Oil, Inc., in their Farmington, New Mexico, office as a senior land advisor.

Q. On prior occasions, Mr. Alexander, have you testified as an expert petroleum landman before the Division?

A. I have.

Q. Pursuant to your employment in this case by Southland Royalty Company, have you made a study of and are you familiar with the ownership within the spacing unit as well as the offsetting operators that are adjacent to this spacing unit?

A. I have.

MR. KELLAHIN: We would tender Mr. Alexander as an expert petroleum landman.

EXAMINER CATANACH: He is so qualified.

Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) Mr. Alexander, let's for informational purposes have you turn to the exhibit

1 booklet and turn to exhibit tab number 1 and identify
2 for the Examiner what you have placed in the exhibit
3 book behind that tab number.

4 A. The exhibits that are behind tab number 1
5 consist of our Application to the Division to drill a
6 horizontal well with the well name being the Tapacitos
7 Number 3 well, located in Section 16 of 26 North, 2
8 West.

9 Attached to that Application are exhibits
10 which consist of Exhibit A is a plan view of the well,
11 and Exhibit B is a vertical view of the well, and
12 Exhibit C is the offset operator owner plat, attached
13 to the Application.

14 Q. As part of compliance with the notice
15 procedures of the Oil Conservation Division concerning
16 applications of this type, have you tabulated the
17 ownership that may be affected by this Application?

18 A. Yes, I have.

19 Q. And let me show you what is marked as Exhibit
20 Number 8 and ask you if the notifications that have
21 been made have been made in this case have been made to
22 all the appropriate parties?

23 A. Yes, sir, they have.

24 Q. Pursuant to --

25 MR. STOVALL: Mr. Kellahin, excuse me,

1 this is Exhibit 8?

2 MR. KELLAHIN: That will be Exhibit 8.

3 MR. STOVALL: Okay.

4 Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) Have you received any
5 objection from any of the parties notified concerning
6 this Application?

7 A. No, sir, we have not.

8 Q. All right. Let's turn now to exhibit tab
9 number 2 and look more specifically at the proposal
10 that Southland Royalty Company is seeking. First of
11 all, what have you placed on the first display behind
12 exhibit tab number 2?

13 A. This is a plat showing the position and the
14 names of the offset operators. And behind the plat is
15 attached a list of those participants and their
16 addresses.

17 Q. When we look at the plat of the proposed
18 surface location of the well, the target formation is
19 what, sir?

20 A. It's the Niobrara.

21 Q. And have you determined for yourself your
22 best understanding of the pool under Oil Conservation
23 Division nomenclature to which this production would be
24 dedicated?

25 A. Yes, we have.

1 Q. And what is that pool?

2 A. We believe it is the Gavilan-Mancos Pool.

3 Q. And what is the spacing in the pool that
4 would apply for this well?

5 A. It is 640 acres.

6 Q. And to have a standard well location would
7 require what, sir? You'll have to at least stay how
8 far back from the side boundaries of the section?

9 A. 790 feet from the boundaries of the section.

10 Q. This well, then, is only unorthodox insofar
11 as it is closer to one of the interior boundaries of
12 the section, as opposed to one of the outside
13 boundaries?

14 A. Yes, sir, that's correct.

15 Q. The -- How do I read the first display in
16 terms of identifying the offset interest owners?

17 A. The offset interest owners are identified
18 first numerically in their respective quarter or half
19 sections, and then there is a reference to that numeric
20 position or that numeric number at the bottom of the
21 page that shows which operator corresponds to that
22 numeric number.

23 Q. Okay, when we get to number 5, which is the
24 southwest quarter section adjoining Section 16, we get
25 to all these other additional owners shown on the

1 attachment?

2 A. Yes, sir that's correct.

3 Q. Okay. Let's turn now, sir, to Exhibit Number
4 3 and the information behind that tab, and give us a
5 general idea of where we are located geographically in
6 relation to other production.

7 A. Well, this exhibit consists of a nine-section
8 area with the target section being Section 16 of 26
9 North, 2 West, Rio Arriba County, in the center of the
10 display, and you will note that we are directly
11 offsetting the Bear Canyon Unit that is located in this
12 area.

13 Q. The Examiner may remember the multitude of
14 cases generating out of the Gavilan-Mancos Pool. Where
15 were those issues in terms of the well locations
16 involved in those other cases?

17 A. Most of those issues were to the south of
18 this Application.

19 Q. When we look to the immediate east we're in
20 the Bear Canyon Unit. If you move down to the
21 southeast, towards what area are you moving?

22 A. We would be moving down towards the Cañada-
23 Ojito Unit and the offsetting production to the west of
24 the Cañada-Ojito Unit that was the subject of a great
25 many hearings in the past here.

1 Q. Okay. And in relation to Section 16, then,
2 where is the American Hunter projects in the Mancos
3 Reservoir that this Examiner is familiar with?

4 A. They would be located just several miles, not
5 more than, oh, three or four miles to the north and to
6 the east of Section 16, above the Bear Canyon Unit.

7 Q. To the best of your knowledge, information
8 and belief, Mr. Alexander, have you provided proper
9 notice to all appropriate parties in this case?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 MR. KELLAHIN: That concludes my examination
12 of Mr. Alexander. We would move the introduction of
13 Exhibits 1, 2 and 3.

14 EXAMINER CATANACH: Exhibits 1, 2 and 3 will
15 be admitted as evidence.

16 MR. KELLAHIN: As well as Exhibit Number 8,
17 Mr. Examiner.

18 EXAMINER CATANACH: And Exhibit Number 8 will
19 be also admitted.

20 EXAMINATION

21 BY EXAMINER CATANACH:

22 Q. Mr. Alexander, Section 16 is a fee lease; is
23 that correct?

24 A. No, sir, it's a federal lease.

25 Q. It is a federal lease.

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. All of Section 16?

3 A. Yes, sir, that's correct.

4 Q. And that's a common -- one common lease?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. And that Section 16 is currently dedicated to
7 the Tapacitos Number 3 well, or --

8 A. Yes, sir, it was originally.

9 I'm not exactly familiar with the history of
10 the wellbore, and our geologist can give you a more up-
11 to-date history of that wellbore and what it's
12 currently dedicated to.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. But initially it was.

15 EXAMINER CATANACH: I don't have any more
16 questions.

17 MR. STOVALL: Just interesting to see all the
18 old names I haven't seen for a while, Coods [phonetic]
19 and all the others.

20 No, no questions.

21 MR. KELLAHIN: Thank you.

22 I'd like to call at this time Mr. David
23 Schoderbek.

24 He is a petroleum geologist with -- in this
25 case, working for Southland Royalty Company.

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DAVID SCHODERBEK,

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

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. KELLAHIN:

Q. Mr. Schoderbek, for the record would you please state your name and occupation?

A. My name is David Schoderbek. I'm a geologist with Meridian Oil in Farmington, New Mexico.

Q. On prior occasions, Mr. Schoderbek, have you testified as an expert petroleum geologist before the Oil Conservation Division?

A. Yes.

Q. On prior occasions, have you testified concerning high-angle horizontal wells?

A. Yes, I have, most recently in the case of our Piedra Lumbre well that was heard last fall.

Q. Have you continued your involvement on behalf of Southland Royalty Company to look for high-angle wellbore opportunities in the San Juan Basin?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is this particular project one that you've identified as some opportunity for additional hydrocarbon production with a high bore -- high-angle wellbore technology?

1 A. Yes, it is. This particular project is in an
2 area, specifically Section 16, where we don't believe
3 the reserves can be recovered from the existing
4 vertical wellbore.

5 Q. Based upon your studies, have you now come to
6 certain geologic conclusions about this project and
7 developed certain geologic maps and information for the
8 Examiner to consider?

9 A. Yes, we have.

10 MR. KELLAHIN: We tender Mr. Schoderbek as an
11 expert petroleum geologist.

12 EXAMINER CATANACH: He is so qualified.

13 Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) Let me ask you first to
14 turn to Exhibit 4, and before we look at the large
15 displays on the board, let's identify for the Examiner
16 the three displays behind exhibit tab number 4,
17 starting with the first one. What is that?

18 A. The first display that is a foldout display
19 is a small-scale schematic of the proposed high-angle
20 sidetrack of the Tapacitos Number 3.

21 Q. All right. We have a larger copy on the wall
22 of the hearing room?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. All right, let's turn past that and show me
25 what the next display is.

1 A. The next display is an even smaller scale
2 version, a similar display, but we've removed the type
3 log from the right-hand side just for clarity.

4 Q. All right. And the last display behind
5 exhibit tab number 4?

6 A. That's a one-section plat showing the
7 existing surface location, 1540 feet from the north
8 line and 995 feet from the east line. That's the
9 circle on the right-hand side.

10 It also shows the 790-foot setback from all
11 four boundaries of the section, and our proposed
12 wellbore being a 2000-foot -- 2000 feet drilled in the
13 azimuth of 270 degrees, or due west.

14 Q. And then finally in the pocket behind exhibit
15 tab number 5, what do we find in that portion of the
16 exhibit there?

17 A. There's a three-well cross-section that's
18 also hung on the wall to the Examiner's right.

19 Q. Let me have you now go back to the first
20 exhibit behind exhibit tab number 4 and go to the
21 board, if you would, and let's discuss, then, the large
22 copy of this display.

23 First of all, let's talk vertically. Show us
24 what was accomplished with the Tapacitos Number 3 when
25 it was drilled vertically.

1 A. This well was drilled vertically in late 1988
2 down to about 100 feet below the display. It did not
3 go into the Dakota formation or the Greenhorn. It was
4 drilled as a -- strictly a Niobrara test.

5 Shows were observed every -- throughout the
6 section where you see these show symbols in the depth
7 track.

8 Q. You've identified those show areas by
9 nomenclature, using Niobrara "A", "B" and "C" that are
10 the conventional nomenclatures to apply to the various
11 producing zones that have any potential in the Mancos
12 Pool?

13 A. Yes, that's correct. It's a standard but
14 informal nomenclature.

15 Q. Describe for us what you found when you
16 drilled and attempted to complete the well as a
17 vertical well.

18 A. When we completed this well, we perforated
19 and stimulated both the Niobrara "B" zone and the
20 Niobrara "C" zone and tested the well at uneconomic
21 rates.

22 Q. Uneconomic rates?

23 A. Uneconomic rates, yes, sir. It was
24 approximately 2 1/2 barrels of oil a day and 30 MCF a
25 day.

1 Q. Let's go now to the next display which gives
2 us a locator map in addition to the structure.

3 A. Yes, that's correct. This is about a two-
4 township area. Township 26 North, Range 2 West, is on
5 the right-hand side. 26 North -- The east part of 26
6 North, 3 West, is on the left side.

7 This line that divides the two townships is
8 the west boundary of the Gavilan-Mancos Pool.

9 MR. STOVALL: That's a dotted line; is that
10 correct?

11 THE WITNESS: Yes, it is. All the -- all of
12 our -- this is -- It's a dotted line, because this
13 being reservation land, it's essentially an unsurveyed
14 township.

15 Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) When you look at the
16 locator map that you've superimposed the structure on,
17 you've got a lot of wells on there other than Gavilan
18 Mancos wells?

19 A. Yes, sir, that's correct. All penetrations
20 are -- All wells are shown on this map.

21 The wells that penetrate the Niobrara "B"
22 marker, which is the marker I've made both the
23 structure map and on and hung this stratigraphic cross-
24 section on, are shown with their -- there are symbols
25 by them for datums.

1 There are about 35 penetrations of the
2 Niobrara "B" zone in this roughly two-township area.

3 Q. Have you used a different type of well symbol
4 to identify the Mancos or the Niobrara wells on the
5 plat?

6 A. Yes, I have. Like in the plats that Alan
7 described, a Gallup producing well, by our
8 nomenclature, is an oil-well symbol surrounded by a
9 diamond or a square turned 45 degrees.

10 Q. Give us the key wells that have helped you as
11 a geologist define your project and helped you proceed,
12 then, with the conclusion about the viability of a
13 high-angle well.

14 A. Okay, I'll go right to the three wells that
15 are in the stratigraphic cross-section. It runs from
16 the Amoco Bear Canyon Unit Number 1 on the east or
17 right-hand side through the Tapacitos Number 1, a
18 Dakota test drilled in 1969, just north of the location
19 where we subsequently drilled the Tapacitos 3, to an
20 offset to our proposed Jicarilla 99 Number 17, that
21 well being the Jicarilla 99 Number 16.

22 All three of these wells were either
23 completed economically or tested the Niobrara "B" zone
24 and "A" zone -- I'm sorry, "B" and "C" zone.

25 The Amoco Bear Canyon Unit Number 1 is our

1 best example of why we chose the "B" and "C" zones as
2 the targets for our high-angle wellbore.

3 When this well was drilled in 1987, it was
4 completed in just the Niobrara "C" zone for about 167
5 barrels of oil a day. It only produced about 40,000
6 barrels in its first year.

7 It was subsequently recompleted in the
8 Niobrara "B" zone. The two zones were combined for
9 initial production of 568 barrels a day, and it
10 subsequently produced 333,000 barrels of oil and 460
11 million cubic feet of gas.

12 We estimate its ultimate recovery to be over
13 500,000 barrels of oil equivalent.

14 Q. How does the first well in the cross-section,
15 that Bear Canyon well, how does it compare to other
16 wells in this area in terms of its productivity?

17 A. It is among the best vertical Niobrara wells.
18 There are six wells in the Bear Canyon Unit. Four of
19 them are economic, two are uneconomic. It is the best
20 of the economic wells.

21 Q. As you move to the west, how far west do you
22 have to go until you get another Mancos well that is
23 comparable to that high-capacity Bear Canyon well?

24 A. Well, if you were moving in a westerly
25 direction you'd come on to our Cheney Federal B Number

1 2 well. That isn't in the cross-section, just because
2 I wanted to pass through a well closer to the Tapacitos
3 3.

4 The majority of the wells in the intervening
5 area, in the area between, say, the Bear Canyon Unit --
6 the Bear Canyon Unit part of the northern Gavilan Pool,
7 and this economic unit of the Northeast Ojito Pool are
8 uneconomic.

9 Basically, the vertical well success rate on
10 this map is about 50 percent, unlike perhaps further
11 south in the Gavilan Pool where there is a very well
12 connected fracture system.

13 Here, the fractures appear to have been
14 cemented in places. That's our interpretation of what
15 we saw in the Tapacitos Number 3. We did see as we
16 drilled that well, hydrocarbon shows. We saw a lot of
17 free calcite. That would be an indication that
18 fractures had existed at one time.

19 Our subsequent completion attempt convinces
20 us that it is in an area essentially where the
21 reservoir is tight.

22 Our goal in sidetracking it approximately
23 2000 feet west is to intersect the fractures that we
24 interpret trend north-south.

25 Q. Give me a summary, then, geologically, of why

1 you've chosen a horizontal high-angle well to further
2 test for Mancos production in Section 16, rather than
3 another vertical well in that section.

4 A. We believe that as this is a fracture
5 reservoir with vertical fractures that trend northerly,
6 we have a much greater probability of encountering them
7 in a high-angle wellbore than we do in another vertical
8 well.

9 In addition, we can do that for about a third
10 the cost of a new vertical well.

11 Q. That's the reason to use this well as a re-
12 entry, then, for the horizontal attempt?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Give us your geologic opinions concerning the
15 fracture system that may exist in Section 16 and upon
16 what data you draw that conclusion?

17 A. We believe the fractures in this area of the
18 Gavilan Pool trend approximately due north from both
19 subsurface and surface information.

20 In the Amoco Bear Canyon Unit Number 2 was
21 recorded a borehole televiewer log. It's an acoustic
22 fracture orientation tool. That log indicated due-
23 northerly trending fractures.

24 High-resolution dip meters processed for
25 fracture orientation run in these two Merrion wells in

1 the eastern side of Northeast Ojito Pool also have a
2 northerly orientation, though they show other fracture
3 sets as well. They have a north set.

4 Another strong factor is that right through
5 this part of -- this land trends a dike on the surface.
6 That dike indicates -- That dike is an igneous feature
7 that was intruded into open fractures that existed
8 approximately 25 million years ago. The fact that that
9 dike parallels what we see in these borehole -- in
10 these dip-meter logs and this televiwer log, in
11 addition to other areas along the eastern side of the
12 basin where dikes parallel north-trending fractures,
13 that convinces us that the fractures are due north
14 oriented.

15 So going west is our -- we can encounter the
16 most of them that we can in a 2000-foot wellbore.

17 MR. STOVALL: Just for the record, to make it
18 clear, you're talking about the dike as being at the --
19 basically at the west end of Township 2, Range 2 West?

20 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir. It's called
21 Tapacitos Ridge dike. It's on topographic maps. It's
22 a very obvious feature.

23 Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) Summarize for us now,
24 using that display, what you attempt to do geologically
25 with the high-angle horizontal well.

1 A. Our goal is to stay in what we determine --
2 what we interpret not just from the Bear Canyon Unit
3 Number 1, but a study of wells on this map and adjacent
4 to it, to get as much lateral exposure as we can in the
5 Niobrara "B" and "C", which we view to be the primary
6 reservoir zones in both the northern part of the
7 Gavilan Mancos Pool and the Northeast Ojito Pool.

8 Q. Going back, then, to the vertical profile,
9 show us how you propose to have the high-angle lateral
10 cut the reservoir.

11 A. Basically, this is an enlarged version of any
12 of those logs. This is actually from the Tapacitos
13 Number 3 well, the well that we're sidetracking.
14 Here's the Niobrara "B" zone and "C" zone, denoted as
15 the main pay zone.

16 Our goal is to -- or our plan, I should say,
17 is to mill out the casing up here and set a cement plug
18 and then sidetrack on around the bend. We'll intersect
19 the top of the Niobrara "B" zone approximately 200 feet
20 west of the surface location and angle through it at 79
21 degrees for approximately 1800 more feet, giving us a
22 total lateral extent of 2000 feet.

23 The dip, as you can see from that map --
24 those are 50-foot contours -- is very gentle. It's
25 less than a degree in this area.

1 MR. KELLAHIN: All right. That concludes my
2 examination of Mr. Schoderbek.

3 We move the introduction of his Exhibits 4
4 and 5.

5 You may return to your seat.

6 EXAMINER CATANACH: Exhibits 4 and 5 will be
7 admitted as evidence, and I have no questions.

8 Do you?

9 MR. STOVALL: Well, let me see. No.

10 MR. KELLAHIN: Thank you, Dave.

11 PAUL ALLEN,

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

14 DIRECT EXAMINATION

15 BY MR. KELLAHIN:

16 Q. Sir, would you please state your name and
17 occupation?

18 A. My name is Paul Allen. I'm a drilling
19 engineer with Meridian Oil in Farmington, New Mexico.

20 Q. Mr. Allen, on prior occasions have you
21 testified as a drilling engineering expert before the
22 Division?

23 A. Yes, I have.

24 Q. Tell us in what cases you have testified that
25 involve high-angle horizontal wellbores.

1 A. The Huerfano Unit 300, the Huerfano Unit 306,
2 the USA Number 2 and the Huerfano Unit 218.

3 Q. And have you provided the drilling
4 engineering expertise for this particular project?

5 A. Yes, I have.

6 MR. KELLAHIN: We tender Mr. Allen as an
7 expert drilling engineer.

8 MR. KELLAHIN: He is so qualified.

9 Q. (By Mr. Kellahin) Let me have you take one
10 of the same displays that Mr. Schoderbek identified for
11 us, and perhaps it's as easy for you to go to the large
12 one on the wall.

13 Looking at the first one that gives us both
14 the vertical and the horizontal profile of the well,
15 let's have you summarize first the general elements of
16 the drilling and completion program, and then we'll
17 come back through and talk about the specific details.

18 A. Okay. We've got the original wellbore here.
19 We'll be setting a cement retainer above the original
20 production perforations and squeeze-cementing off that
21 entire wellbore.

22 We'll then be cutting an 80-foot section in
23 the pipe and setting a cement plug in that section.
24 We'll then drill out and begin directional operations
25 at that point.

1 We'll drill down to TD here at 2000 foot out.
2 We'll then run perforated tubing throughout this
3 interval, and that's mainly to keep cave-ins from
4 shutting off production.

5 Q. How do you propose to complete the well?

6 A. With the perforated tubing, just by running
7 that open-hole completion, perforating tube.

8 Q. Is there any type of stimulation program
9 planned for the well?

10 A. No, there is not.

11 Q. Summarize for us how this well is different
12 or similar to the other high-angle wellbores that you
13 have testified about to this Division.

14 A. This well is very similar to the USA Number
15 2. We had 5-1/2-inch existing pipe with that well.
16 This is 5-1/2-inch existing pipe.

17 The major difference is the lack of dip in
18 this well. We had 12-1/2-degree on the USA Number 2
19 and no dip on this particular well.

20 Q. Take us back to the surface now and tell us
21 how you keep yourself oriented to where you are and
22 where you want to be.

23 A. We'll be using a wireline steering tool
24 device that is a real-time connection to the drill
25 string right above the bit. This wireline provides

1 data on angle and inclination and azimuth at all times.

2 Q. Do you have any reservations or questions
3 about the drilling technology that is to be applied for
4 this case?

5 A. No, I do not. I think the last two wells
6 have proven it a viable option.

7 Q. Why do you propose to do a high-angle well
8 versus another vertical well?

9 A. Well, really two reasons. The cost of
10 another vertical well is approximately three times
11 that. This is approximately \$240,000, \$250,000 to
12 complete a well in this manner, versus upwards of
13 \$700,000 for a new drill. So economically it makes
14 sense.

15 Also, the intersection of more fracturing
16 along the wellbore paths.

17 Downhole damage to typical frac fluids is
18 another element here. Typical frac fluids would do
19 damage to the Niobrara zone. We've not touching that
20 because we're drilling with a gas medium in this case.

21 Q. Are there any other components of the
22 drilling or completion procedures that are unusual or
23 different in this case than were used in the others?

24 A. No.

25 MR. KELLAHIN: Okay. That concludes my

1 examination of Mr. Allen.

2 EXAMINATION

3 BY EXAMINER CATANACH:

4 Q. Mr. Allen, I'd just briefly like to go back
5 over how you propose to actually do the directional
6 drilling.

7 You are going to cement -- entirely cement
8 off the lower portion of the wellbore; is that correct?

9 A. Right, we'll be setting a cement retainer in
10 the original pipe. We then sting into that with tubing
11 and pump cement down into the original wellbore, and --

12 Q. Where -- Excuse me, where is your cement
13 retainer going to be set?

14 A. Right -- Approximately 6950.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Right above -- Right below the kickoff point.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. We then cement off the original wellbore, and
19 then come above that and mill an 80-foot section of
20 pipe, and that's just cutting away the pipe for 80
21 feet, 50 feet above the kickoff point and 30 feet below
22 the kickoff point.

23 Q. Do you have those depths that you're going to
24 be building the casing at? Do you have the actual
25 depths?

1 A. Yes, it's actually -- The kickoff point is at
2 6877, so it will be 6822 to 6897.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. 6827, actually.

5 We then fill that -- Well, actually, then we
6 go in and under-ream that original hole out to the
7 original wellbore. That gets us exposure to the
8 original rock. And then pump a real dense cement
9 slurry into that.

10 At that point we have a wellbore to work with
11 for horizontal operations, and we begin drilling
12 horizontally.

13 We drill down to our kickoff point with a
14 packed assembly, and from that point on go in with our
15 directional tools and begin building angle.

16 When we get to this point here, we come back
17 out of the hole and go with a steerable assembly to TD
18 here.

19 MR. STOVALL: "This point here" is -- say
20 that -- Describe that in words or -- with relation to
21 the exhibit.

22 In other words, you pointed to a point --

23 MR. KELLAHIN: The top of the Niobrara.

24 MR. STOVALL: -- on the exhibit. Where is
25 that point?

1 THE WITNESS: Approximately 220 feet, 200
2 feet.

3 MR. STOVALL: Is that where you end your
4 curve buildup and actually start --

5 THE WITNESS: Correct.

6 MR. STOVALL: Okay.

7 THE WITNESS: And that's right at the top of
8 the zone we've identified here, the main pay zone.

9 We then drill to the TD with a 2000-foot
10 lateral here. And this is an aggressive target at 2000
11 feet. The most optimal pay is in the top part of the
12 zone, and that gave us a higher angle through that part
13 of the zone.

14 We feel based on USA and the Huerfano 218
15 that we've got a very, very good chance of hitting our
16 target.

17 Q. (By Examiner Catanach) You've already
18 drilled the other two wells?

19 A. Yes, I have.

20 Q. Have you been able to -- Well, how's the
21 drilling mechanism worked out in those wells?

22 A. Very well, actually. Very well.

23 Q. Okay. What's the longest lateral you've been
24 able to drill?

25 A. Approximately 1100 feet, but that was not

1 really limited by any of the drilling mechanics. It
2 was limited on the production we were receiving from
3 the wellbore.

4 EXAMINER CATANACH: Okay. I have nothing
5 further of the witness.

6 Is there anything further?

7 MR. STOVALL: I just have one question.

8 EXAMINATION

9 BY MR. STOVALL:

10 Q. Would Meridian be interested in suggesting a
11 package of rules by which these could be processed
12 administratively?

13 A. Very much so.

14 MR. KELLAHIN: We're already working on
15 those, Mr. Stovall.

16 MR. STOVALL: I'd suggest if we -- I think
17 the Division may be interested in doing that, but
18 just -- They haven't had the time to sit down and work
19 with it, and I'd prefer to see it come from industry,
20 so...

21 MR. KELLAHIN: Well, that's been part of our
22 problem too, is finding the time to devote to
23 administrative procedure. But we've already discussed
24 that and have began considering how to set up some
25 administrative procedure.

