

STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
ENERGY AND MINERALS DEPARTMENT  
OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION  
STATE LAND OFFICE BUILDING  
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

19 June 1985

EXAMINER HEARING

IN THE MATTER OF:

Application of Ray Westall for an  
exception to Order No. R-3221, Eddy  
County, New Mexico.

CASE

8629 &  
8630

BEFORE: Michael E. Stogner, Examiner

TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING

A P P E A R A N C E S

For the Oil Conservation  
Division:

Jeff Taylor  
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## I N D E X

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1  
2 MR. STOGNER: Call next Case  
3 Number 8629.

4 MR. TAYLOR: The application of  
5 Ray Westall for an exception to Order R-3221, Eddy County,  
6 New Mexico.

7 MR. JENNINGS: I'm James T.  
8 Jennings, Jennings and Christy, Roswell, and appearing upon  
9 behalf of Ray Westall, and at this time I'd like for the  
10 Commission in the interest of expediting the hearing and of  
11 time, to let us present both Cases 20 -- or 8629 and 8630 at  
12 the same time.

13 They're on the same area, same  
14 questions, and the only difference is they're about six  
15 miles apart.

16 If that's satisfactory, I'll  
17 proceed.

18 MR. STOGNER: At this time  
19 we'll call Case Number 8630, which is the application of Ray  
20 Westall for and exception to Order Number R-3221, Eddy Coun-  
21 ty, New Mexico.

22 These cases will be consoli-  
23 dated for purposes of testimony.

24 Mr. Jennings, you wish to also  
25 enter an appearance in that case, also?

1 MR. JENNINGS: Yes, sir.

2 MR. STOGNER: Are there any  
3 other appearances in either one of these matters? Or both?

4 There being none will the wit-  
5 nesses please stand and be sworn in.

6 MR. JENNINGS: Mr. Westall and  
7 Mr. Nutter.

8  
9 (Witnesses sworn.)

10  
11 MR. JENNINGS: Will it be  
12 satisfactory for Mr. Westall to remain where he is?

13 MR. STOGNER: I have no objec-  
14 tions to that.

15  
16 RAY WESTALL,  
17 being called as a witness and being duly sworn upon his  
18 oath, testified as follows, to-wit:

19  
20 DIRECT EXAMINATION

21 BY MR. JENNINGS:

22 Q Would you state your name, place of  
23 residence, and occupation, please, sir?

24 A Ray Westall. I'm an independent oil pro-  
25 ducer; live in Loco Hills, New Mexico.

1           Q           Mr. Westall, how long have you lived in  
2 Loco Hills?

3           A           Off and on for 39 years.

4           Q           How many wells do you operate in the Loco  
5 Hills area?

6           A           I operate, oh, between 90 and 100.

7           Q           Are you familiar with the application  
8 which has been filed here in connection with Case 8629 and  
9 8630?

10          A           Yes, sir, it's for an exception to Rule  
11 R-3221, the no-pit order.

12          Q           Did you operate the leases which are sub-  
13 ject to these cases, one lease being in Section 20 and 21,  
14 Township 19 South, Range 30 East, and the others in the west  
15 half east half and west half of Section 35, Township 18  
16 South, Range 30 East?

17          A           Yes, sir.

18          Q           Basically, referring first to the -- what  
19 is known as the Ritz Lease, which is in Section 35, 18, 30,  
20 would you review the production in the west half of the east  
21 half of this section?

22          A           Out of those four wells we're producing  
23 between 24 and --between 22 and 25 barrels of oil per day,  
24 making approximately 120 to 140 barrels of water per day.

25          Q           I hand you what has been marked Exhibit

1 One and ask you if that indicates the location of the wells  
2 and the acreage in question in yellow.

3 A Yes, it does.

4 Q How much water are you making from these  
5 wells?

6 A Approximately between 120 and 140 barrels  
7 per day.

8 Q Now, I notice on this plat that the west  
9 half is also colored in yellow. Do you have a plan for  
10 development of the west half of Section 35?

11 A Yes, sir, we've purchased that and at the  
12 present have an application in to drill a well in the west  
13 half of 35.

14 Q That's to be known as the Trigg No. 1?

15 A Yes, sir.

16 Q Do you have any plans -- or do you have  
17 any present means of disposing of the water which you are  
18 producing from the four wells in Section 35?

19 A No, sir, not at the present.

20 Q What are you doing with the water?

21 A We've been pitting the water there.

22 Q Is -- I think you testified it was appro-  
23 ximately 115 barrels per day?

24 A Yes, sir.

25 Q Do you have any idea about the future of

1 this water? Do you think it will increase or decrease?

2 A I would say it would probably increase as  
3 we have fluids offsetting on both sides.

4 Q All the leases in question are Federal  
5 leases, are they not?

6 A Yes, sir, they are.

7 Q Now, would you refer to what's been mar-  
8 ked Exhibit Two and indicate the wells located thereon which  
9 is Section 20 and 21 in 19, 31, indicate the wells that are  
10 located thereon.

11 A Okay. In Section 21 there we have Amoco  
12 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6; the Hill 1 and 2 and the Texax Crude  
13 1, plus we have Parsley No. 1 in Section 20.

14 Q How much -- what is the production from  
15 these wells? First give us the oil and then the water.

16 A The Parsley No. 1 makes approximately 15  
17 barrels of oil and 20 barrels of water.

18 The Texas Crude No. 1 makes 15 barrels of  
19 oil and 20 barrels of water.

20 The Amoco 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 make about  
21 120 barrels of oil and about 200 barrels of water, and the  
22 Hill 1 and 2 make around 20 barrels of oil and 30 barrels of  
23 water.

24 Q And what are you -- how are you presently  
25 handling the disposal of these wells?

1           A           At the present we have Wells 2, 4, and 5  
2 shut in because we cannot handle water and we're just pro-  
3 ducing 1, 3, and 6 on the Amoco leases and we're hauling  
4 that water. We're hauling the water on that partially in  
5 the Texas Crude and also on the Hill 1 and 2.

6           Q           How long of a haul do you have with the  
7 water?

8           A           It's approximately 25 miles.

9           Q           Roughly how much does it cost you per  
10 barrel to haul the water and dispose of it?

11          A           From \$1.25 to \$1.50.

12          Q           You said you shut in three of the wells.  
13 Was that because it's no longer economical to produce the  
14 wells?

15          A           Yes, sir.

16          Q           Do you have any feeling as to whether the  
17 water production from these wells will increase or decrease  
18 in the future?

19          A           It probably -- in the future we have had  
20 plans in putting a flood in here to that we can re-inject  
21 the water, although at the present time it seems to be sta-  
22 bilized.

23          Q           I believe in this application, these ap-  
24 plications, Mr. Westall, you are seeking Permission to dis-  
25 pose of this water into unlined pits.



1           A           Yes, sir.

2           Q           Do you know of any fresh water that's  
3 within the area any place?

4           A           Not within a mile radius.

5           Q           That's potable water.

6           A           Potable water, right.

7           Q           Is there any water in the area, any pot-  
8 able water in the area that you believe would be in any way  
9 affected by disposal of the water in these pits?

10          A           No, sir.

11                   MR. STOGNER: Excuse me, Mr.  
12 Jennings.

13                   MR. JENNINGS: Yes, sir.

14                   MR. STOGNER: It is 8:29. Mr.  
15 Biderman, Mr. Nutter's -- I mean Mr. Stamets' supervisor has  
16 called a Bureau Chiefs' meeting at this time. I must attend  
17 that so I'm going to call a five minute recess. It  
18 shouldn't take any longer than that.

19

20                   (Thereupon a recess was taken.)

21

22                   MR. JENNINGS: Mr. Examiner,  
23 shall I proceed?

24                   MR. STOGNER: This hearing will  
25 resume to order.

1 I apologize for the delay.  
2 Let's continue, Mr. Jennings.

3 Q Mr. Westall, what is the source of fresh  
4 water for ranchers and others using fresh water in this  
5 area?

6 A The main source is the potash mine fresh  
7 water pipelines that run through there.

8 Q Generally the ranchers use that?

9 A Yes, they do.

10 Q In your experience in the area do you  
11 feel that the disposal of water in the pits will provide a  
12 safe and economical manner of disposal which will not endan-  
13 ger any fresh water in the area?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q Do you have anything else you wish to  
16 add, Mr. Westall?

17 A Not right now, I don't.

18 MR. JENNINGS: That's all.

19 MR. STOGNER: Thank you, Mr.  
20 Jennings. I have no questions for Mr. Ray Westall at this  
21 time.

22 Are there any other questions  
23 of the witness?

24 If not, he may be excused but  
25 we may recall you, Mr. Westall.

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DANIEL S. NUTTER,  
being called as a witness and being duly sworn upon his  
oath, testified as follows, to-wit:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. JENNINGS:

Q Would you state your name and place of  
residence, please, sir.

A My name is Dan Nutter. I live in Santa  
Fe, New Mexico.

Q And what is your occupation?

A I'm a consultant in charge of engineer-  
ing.

Q And how long have you been engaged in  
this?

A I've been engaged in the consulting prac-  
tice two and a half years.

MR. JENNINGS: Does the exami-  
ner wish me to further qualify Mr. Nutter or are his quali-  
fications accepted?

MR. STOGNER: Since he has ap-  
peared as a witness before, his qualifications are so ac-  
cepted.

Q Mr. Nutter, would you please refer to

1 what we have marked as Exhibit One and just identify and  
2 discuss that?

3 A Exhibit Number One, as discussed by Mr.  
4 Westall, is a plat of the area in Section 35, Township 18  
5 South, Range 30 East.

6 The west half of the east half is the  
7 Westall Ritz Lease and it has four wells on it. Starting  
8 from the bottom there's the 1, 2, 3, and 4, going north.

9 To the west is the west half of the sec-  
10 tion which is another lease, and it had been intended to  
11 call this the Ritz Lease, also, when it was obtained recent-  
12 ly, and the proposed first well on there would be the Ritz  
13 Well No. 5; however, it has been determined that it would be  
14 better to call this the Trigg Lease, so that will not be  
15 Well -- Ritz Well No. 5. It will be Trigg Well No. 1, so on  
16 your exhibit, Mr. Examiner, if you'd scratch out the "5" and  
17 make a "1" there, that would be the proposed location.

18 There are two pits on the Ritz Lease, one  
19 down near Well No. 1 in the southwest quarter of the south-  
20 east quarter of Section 35, and one to the northeast of Well  
21 No. 3 in the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of  
22 Section 35.

23 A proposed pit would also be located over  
24 near the Trigg Well No. 1.  
25

1 Q Mr. Nutter, would you now refer to what  
2 has been marked Exhibit Two and tell us what that is and  
3 discuss it, please.

4                   A                   Exhibit Two is the area of   Sections   20  
5   and 21, Township 19 South, Range 31 East.

6                   There are a number of Westall leases  
7 here.

8 In Section 20, the northeast quarter of  
9 the northeast quarter is the Parsley Lease. There's one  
10 well on that lease and a proposed pit at that location.

11                   The east half of the northeast quarter of  
12 Section 21 is the Westall Hill Federal Lease, an 80-acre  
13 lease which has two wells on it, and there's one proposed  
14 pit on that lease nearby to Well No. 1 in the southeast  
15 quarter of the northeast quarter.

The three 80-acre tracts, being the west half of the northeast quarter and the east half and west half of the northwest quarter are the Amoco Federal and Amoco Leases, and there are six wells on those leases.

There are also two proposed pits on those leases, being in the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter by Well No. 1 and the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 21, being near Well No. 2, Amoco Federal No. 2.

25 Also in the north half of the southeast

1 quarter of Section 21 is the Texas Crude Federal Lease.  
2 There's one well on that in the northwest quarter of the  
3 southeast quarter and there is a proposed pit alongside of  
4 that well.

5 There's a proposed Well No. 2 in the  
6 northeast quarter of the southeast quarter.

7 Now it's my understanding that these pits  
8 were there at one time and used when water production was at  
9 a minimum and could be tolerated under the Division's rules;  
10 however, those pits have been covered up at the present time  
11 and would simply be reopened upon approval of this applica-  
12 tion by the Division.

13 MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Nutter, do you  
14 have another copy of Exhibit One?

15 A I'll give you this -- okay, you gave him  
16 one?

17 MR. TAYLOR: On Exhibit One are  
18 the pits shown by the squares?

19 A Yes. The red squares are the pits, and  
20 while those pits on Exhibit Number Two are shown in -- as  
21 solid red squares, they are not in existence at the present  
22 time and they really technically should have been shown as  
23 open red squares, because they would be -- they're proposed  
24 at this time, they're not in existence.

25 Now, on the Exhibit Number One, the two

1 pits on the Ritz Lease are in existence.

2 The proposed pit over on the Trigg Lease  
3 in the west half is a proposed pit.

4 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

5 Q Mr. Nutter, would you now refer to what  
6 has been marked as Exhibit Three and tell what that is and  
7 explain it, please, sir?

8 A Exhibit Three is an exhibit which is a  
9 tabulation of exceptions to the Division's Order Number R-  
10 3221 in this area. I researched the Commission's records  
11 and found that this number of exceptions have been granted.

12 In addition to that, there has been a  
13 large exception granted to the south of the immediate area  
14 which is under R-3221-B, which was an exemption of a large  
15 area. We will discuss that when we get to Exhibit Four.

16 You'll note that there were a plethora of  
17 exceptions during the late 1969's and early 70's. At that  
18 time it was a short time after the establishment of the no-  
19 pit order and being in the immediate vicinity of the exemp-  
20 ted area, a number of operators asked for and did receive  
21 approval for the exceptions to R-3221.

22 The exceptions have dwindled down to just  
23 a few since that time because most of the producing leases  
24 are either underactive waterfloods and the produced water is  
25 being reinjected, or exceptions have already been obtained.

1           The last one of note is Cavalcade Oil  
2 Corporation, which got an exception in Section 33, Township  
3 18 South, Range 30 East, on April 30th, 1981. That's the  
4 last exception in this area, which, incidentally, is just a  
5 mile or so away from one of our applications today.

6           Q           Mr. Nutter, would you now refer to what  
7 has been marked as Exhibit Four?

8           A           Exhibit Four is the large map, Mr. Exam-  
9 iner, and I'm sorry I don't have another copy.

10                   Mr. Baca, if you can get over there  
11 closer you can follow this with Mr. Stogner.

12                   Shown on this exhibit, the large yellow  
13 area is the area which was exempted by Order Number R-3221.

14                   This is part of the Nash Draw/Clayton  
15 Basin exempted area, which is the potash, the active potash  
16 mining area.

17                   If you'll notice over in the northwest  
18 portion of the big yellow colored area, there is a mining  
19 establishment in Sections 9 and 10. That is the Amax Mine  
20 and Plant.

21                   If you come further south you'll see down  
22 in Sections -- Section 4 of Township 20 South, Range 30  
23 East, is the Potash Company of America plant, and all the  
24 tailings plant piles and the ponds and the pits in associa-  
25 tion with that mine are also shown on this exhibit.



1 Over to the east side of the exhibit is  
2 Laguna Plata, which is a salt lake, and that was granted an  
3 exception to the rules under Order No. R-3725. The number  
4 in the parentheses, (3), indicates the number as it -- of  
5 the exception on the tabulation, Exhibit Number Three.  
6 That's true in all of these other cases on this exhibit.  
7 There are two numbers given for each of these colored areas  
8 which are outlined in green, and those would be in paren-  
9 theses the number on the Exhibit Number Three and then the  
10 order number which was entered.

11 Exhibit Number Three, of course, gives  
12 the order number, the date that that order was entered and  
13 the description of the area which was excepted from the dis-  
14 posal order.

15 You'll see that in Section 35 of Township  
16 18 South, Range 30 East, we have a green area outlined which  
17 has not been colored yellow. What we're seeking here today  
18 is to see that this area would be colored yellow in accor-  
19 dance with the other exceptions in the area.

20 This is our proposal, those two pits that  
21 are on the Ritz Lease are shown, as is that proposed pit in  
22 the west half, which would be adjacent to the proposed Trigg  
23 Well No. 1.

24 If you go down into Sections 20 and 21 of  
25 Township 19 South, Range 31 East, you'll see our proposed

1 order, our proposed exception, which would be for the Par-  
2 sley Lease in the northeast northeast of Section 20; the  
3 Amoco leases, which are the three 80-acre tracts in Section  
4 21; the Hill Federal Lease, which is the east half of the  
5 northeast quarter of Section 21; and the Texas Crude Federal  
6 Lease, which is the north half of the southeast quarter of  
7 Section 21.

8 Also on this map you'll notice that  
9 there's a dotted line which starts in the extreme upper  
10 righthand corner of the map in Section 16. You'll see that  
11 dotted line running in a west/southwest direction and it  
12 comes across those little yellow excepted areas and ends up  
13 down at the Amax Plant in Sections 9 and 10.

14 That is the fresh water line which many  
15 of hte ranchers are tapped into and use the water for stock  
16 and domestic purposes.

17 It's easy to see on this map the outline  
18 of the Clayton Basin because of the terrain.

19 Now to understand what has occurred here,  
20 we've got to review what caused the Clayton Basin and the  
21 Nash Draw.

22 The Rustler formation immediately over-  
23 lies the Salado formation, the salt, and there was a natural  
24 flow of water through the basal Rustler formation eons ago.  
25 As this flow occurred through the Rustler formation it

1 eroded the top of the salt and created a void there, which  
2 the upper formations then collapsed into.

3 So the salt contours, the contours on the  
4 top of the salt would conform quite closely to the contours  
5 of the surface of the land here, and you can see the channel  
6 coming down through here that's in the salt and it is re-  
7 flected on the surface of the land.

8 The application in Section 35 is right in  
9 the depression between Loco Hills and Nimenim Ridge.

10 There is a flow of water through this  
11 area which is bounded on the right by the hackberry Hills in  
12 the east half of section -- of Township 19 South, Range 30  
13 East. You can see the close contours there where the Hack-  
14 berry Hills come up there.

15 And over to the west side of the -- of  
16 the canyon there's a flow of water that comes down from the  
17 Amax Plant through the draw there and into the lower portion  
18 of the Clayton Basin, which then flows on into Nash Draw  
19 further to the south and southwest.

20 I believe that's all that I have at this  
21 time on Section 4 -- on Exhibit Number Four.

22 Q Mr. Nutter, again referring to Exhibits  
23 Three and Four, you've shown all the areas where the appli-  
24 cations have been approved?

25 A Yes, sir. All of the applications that

1 have been approved and are listed on Exhibit Number Three  
2 are shown on Exhibit Number Four.

3 Q Have you made any inquiries to determine  
4 whether any applications have been denied?

5 A Yes, I have, and there are two exceptions  
6 to the Commission's Orders which were denied.

7 If you'll look at the group of wells --  
8 of exceptions in the upper lefthand corner, that would be  
9 numbers, starting from the top, Number (18), (17), 15, 16,  
10 14, and that's all.

11 Those were originally denied and you'll  
12 note that the order that approved them has an "A" on it be-  
13 cause the operator in those cases came in and did not put on  
14 a very comprehensive case and the Examiner denied the appli-  
15 cation for the exceptions to the no-pit order.

16 Subsequently the operator came back at a  
17 de novo hearing and did obtain approval for the exceptions.

18 So those are indicated by an "A" number.  
19 The Number 25 there, which was R-6621, which is the south  
20 half of the -- the north half of the southwest quarter was a  
21 separate exception. I believe that was the last one that we  
22 had on our list. Yes, that was the Cavalcade application,  
23 which was the last one.

24 Now there was also another application  
25 which was denied, and it covered a rather large area in --

1 portions of it were in Section 35 where we've got Case 8629  
2 today.

3 It was also in Section 26. It was also  
4 in Section 34, and 25, I believe, to the east, and maybe on  
5 up into Section 24 to the north.

6 And that was denied. Now the reason that  
7 that was denied was that the -- I've examined the record in  
8 that case and they found that there was a fresh water well  
9 which would have been endangered by the disposal of water  
10 into one of the pits that had been proposed in that case.

11 That case, by the way, was --

12 Q Isn't that a Hanson Oil case?

13 A That was Hanson Oil Company, yes, sir,  
14 and I've got the case number so the Examiner can look it up.  
15 This is Case Number 4710 and it was heard May the 5th, 1972,  
16 and the application was for areas in Section 24, 25, 26, 35,  
17 and also Section 34 of Township 18 South, Range 34 East.

18 It was a large application covering a  
19 great deal of area and the examiner noted that there was a  
20 fresh water well, you see in Section 26, do you see in the  
21 southeast quarter that little blue circle there, Mr. Exami-  
22 ner?

23 MR. STOGNER: Yes, sir, I show  
24 it to be a black one in the southeast quarter.

25 A Well, there's also a blue circle there if

1 you'll look closely.

2 MR. STOGNER: Oh, yeah, I see  
3 it.

4 A There's a little, tiny lake there and the  
5 rancher had a windmill right there next to that little lake.  
6 It's some kind of a sink there -- and 560 feet north of that  
7 windmill and that well that had proposed to put a -- they  
8 had proposed to put a pit in right here and the examiner was  
9 perturbed by the existance of that pit so close to that  
10 fresh water well and he made a recommendation that the en-  
11 tire application be thrown out, so it was denied.

12 It was fully expected at the time, as I  
13 recall that they, that the operator would come back in and  
14 eliminate that one pit and probably his entire application  
15 would have been eligible for approval; however, he never  
16 came back. He trucked the water out and since then has --  
17 is not operating Section 35. We're operating Section 35 at  
18 this time and are here today seeking an exception.

19 So those are the only two applications --  
20 that was a group of applications over to the west there, and  
21 then the application in Section 26, those are the only two  
22 in this area that's shown on this map that were denied, to  
23 my knowledge.

24 Q Mr. Nutter, would you now refer to what  
25 has been marked Exhibit A and tell what it is and what it

1 reflects?

2 A Exhibit what, sir?

3 Q Exhibit Five, I'm sorry, sir.

4 A Exhibit Five is a copy of Plate IV, a  
5 portion of Plate IV, Groundwater Report Three for Eddy Coun-  
6 ty, New Mexico, put out by the New Mexico Bureau of Mines.

7 Colored in yellow on this exhibit is, the  
8 large area is the exemption granted by R-3221-B, which was  
9 the big colored area on Exhibit Number Four.

10 We've also colored in yellow the excep-  
11 tions we're seeking in Section 35 of Township 18 South,  
12 Range 30 East, and in Sections 20 and 21 of Township 19  
13 South, Range 31 East.

14 The reason I'm showing this exhibit is  
15 because when this groundwater report was issued the wells  
16 that are shown on here were the wells that were in existence  
17 at the time, I presume; at least they were the wells that  
18 were studied to make the report, and you'll note there  
19 aren't any wells in Township 18 South, Range 35 -- 30 East  
20 for your application in Case 8629.

21 Now if you come down into Township 19  
22 South, Range 31 East, you'll see that there were two wells  
23 shown at that time.

24 The first well was in Section 28 and  
25

1 shows a depth to the water of 180 feet with a question mark  
2 after it, and no depth for the well.

3 In Section 33 immediately south, there's  
4 another well shown which has a depth to water of 101 feet  
5 and a total depth at the well of 160 feet.

6 Those are the only two wells that were in  
7 the immediate vicinity of our applications that we've got  
8 today.

9 All the other wells are either farther to  
10 the west away from this drainage area or a few wells to the  
11 north, the far north, or in the south in the exempted area.

12 Q Mr. Examiner, would you now refer to --  
13 or Mr. Nutter, would you now refer to what has been marked  
14 Exhibit Six and identify that and tell what it reflects?

15 A Okay, this is a portion of Plate III of  
16 Groundwater Report Number Three, that I just referred to.

17 Again, the yellow colored areas are the  
18 same, being the big exempted area and the two areas that  
19 we're seeking exemptions for today; however, this plat, or  
20 plate in the book is entitled The General Direction of Move-  
21 ment of Groundwater in Eddy County, New Mexico and as stated  
22 in the report, the ground movement -- groundwater movement  
23 in this area is to the south and to the west. It comes down  
24 through Clayton Basin and into Nash Draw to the southwest.

25 Now all of the arrows that are shown on



1 there as solid arrows are the arrows as taken from the plate  
2 in the book. It's a duplicate of it; however I have added  
3 two arrows, which are the dashed arrows, and you'll note  
4 that the one in Section 35 of 18 South, 30 East, simply  
5 shows the movement of groundwater in the depression between  
6 Loco Hills and Nimenim Ridge, and it's a dashed line moving  
7 to the south down into Clayton Basin.

8 Over to the southeast we have the dashed  
9 arrow coming off of the exceptions we're seeking in Township  
10 19 South, Range 31 East, and this water would be -- this  
11 movement would be to the west. It would be down the ridge  
12 and into the Clayton Basin there.

13 Q Mr. Nutter, what conclusions have you  
14 drawn from your study of these two exhibits?

15 A Well, I would say studying these two ex-  
16 hibits that there isn't any indication that any fresh water  
17 wells that are in existence in this area at the time this  
18 report was written, at any rate, would be endangered.

19 Q Is there any -- when was this report  
20 made?

21 A This is an old report. I don't know the  
22 exact date on it. I believe it was back in the late for-  
23 ties, '47 or '48, I think. It may have been in the early  
24 fifties.

25 Q Is there any data that you're aware of

1 that has been acquired since that date?

2           A           Oh, yes. Now I've researched the records  
3 of the State Engineer's office and I have found certain  
4 wells which were apparently drilled after the report.

5                       Now these wells are shown on Exhibit Num-  
6 ber Four and they're located as follows:

7                       If you come into Township 18 South, Range  
8 30 East, in Section 21 you'll see a little black circle  
9 there. That is a well that's in existence at the present  
10 time on the State Engineer reports.

11                      If you come into Section 22 you'll see  
12 two wells up there in the northeast quarter of Section 22.

13                      If you come into Section 26 you'll see  
14 the well which is the black circle and it is immediately  
15 north of the little blue lake.

16                      Then if you come back over into Section  
17 32 to the west, you'll see immediately to the northwest of  
18 the number 32 in the center of the section, right in that  
19 depression there, there's another well.

20                      Now these wells that are drilled in these  
21 depressions for the most part are not deep wells. They're  
22 simply wells to tap the supply of rainwater that accumulates  
23 in these lakes and after the rainwater has all soaked into  
24 the lake they have -- they sink a windmill as close to the  
25 lake as possible and they can produce a little bit more

1 water out of that before the sand beneath the lakebeds com-  
2 pletey dry up.

3 That's what those lakes are -- or those  
4 wells are in those lakebeds.

5 Now if you go over into Township 18  
6 South, Range 31 East, in Section 35, in the middle of that  
7 large excepted area, there's a well there which is now aban-  
8 doned. It's not producing any more but it was listed on the  
9 current State Engineer reports.

10 Then if you come south in Section 27 in  
11 the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 27  
12 of Township 19 South, Range 31 East there is another water  
13 well that's currently shown on the State Engineer reports.

14 The State Engineer reports show the well  
15 in Section 28 which was -- I don't know if it's the same  
16 well or not; apparently it is the same well that was the  
17 well in Section 28 that was shown on Exhibit Number Five.  
18 Remember there was one in Section 28 and also one in Section  
19 33 immediately to the south.

20 So the State Engineer current reports  
21 show the well in Section 28 but they don't show the well in  
22 Section 33, so I presume it's been abandoned.

23 And then over in Section 31 of Township  
24 19 South, Range 31 East there's a Hackberry Unit Well which  
25 was drilled by an oil company to a depth of over 4000 feet

1 and it was a dry hole and it was subsequently turned over to  
2 the Bureau of Reclamation, and that well is not produced.  
3 It's used as a water level study well by the U. S. Bureau of  
4 Reclamation.

5 So that well is shown there with a black  
6 circle in Section 31. You've got a well file on that well  
7 in your files, Mr. Examiner.

8 Q That's a real deep well, is it not?

9 A That's a very deep well. It's over 4000  
10 feet.

11 And those are the only wells that the  
12 State Engineer reports currently show in this area.

13 Q Mr. Nutter, does the existence of these  
14 wells affect your opinion as to the reasonableness of the  
15 application made?

16 A No, not at all, because if you go up to  
17 our application in Section 35 of 18, 30, you'll see that  
18 while there are two, three, four, five wells in that town-  
19 ship, they're all to the north of the area that we've re-  
20 quested the exception to, so the natural drainage from the  
21 pits would be to the south and would not affect those wells  
22 in any manner.

23 Now if you come over to the application  
24 that we've got in Sections 20 and 21 of Township 19 South,  
25 Range 31 East and study the contour maps, you'll see that

1 the contours go to the west.

2 Now while there is a well shown down  
3 there in Section 25, by the -- by the Hackberry Lake, this  
4 is in the excepted area and there's active oil fields all  
5 through here.

6 As a matter of fact, Gulf Oil is oper-  
7 ating floods and there are a number of other wells operated  
8 by other operators in Section 25, 24, 36, and I believe also  
9 over into Section 26, and of course, this is in the exempted  
10 area so pits are used in that area.

11 So while the flow would be from the --  
12 would be down structure from the exceptions in Section 20  
13 and 21, it wouldn't be in any way endangering to the wells  
14 in the -- the water well in Section 25 because it's right in  
15 the excepted area where there's disposal into pits, anyway.

16 And as I mentioned before, the water from  
17 the Amax Plant runs right down through this channel and into  
18 the Clayton Basin and Nash Draw.

19 So I don't foresee any endanger -- and I  
20 can't find any records of that well being produced, anyway.

21 So in my opinion there's no fresh water  
22 wells anywhere here that would be endangered. The flow into  
23 the -- the flow from the pits if there was natural under-  
24 ground flow, the flow from the pits in Sections 20 and 21  
25 would not go south towards the James -- towards the Lusk

1 Ranch Well in Section 28 to the south because it would have  
2 to go up hill to go there, so the flow would be to the west  
3 down the -- it would, as I mentioned before, the -- the un-  
4 derlying beds conform to the surface topography and the flow  
5 would be not only on the surface to the west but underground  
6 would also be to the west.

7 It would not go toward that Lusk Ranch  
8 well in Section 28.

9 Q Mr. Nutter, would the approval of these  
10 applications be in the interest of conservation and prevent  
11 waste?

12 A Well, it would most likely, because if  
13 you can reduce the operating costs you can produce the wells  
14 to a further economic limit, and this should result in addi-  
15 tional recovery of hydrocarbons that wouldn't otherwise be  
16 recovered.

17 Q Would the approval of such applications  
18 impair the correlative rights of any parties in the area?

19 A No, they would impair no correlative  
20 rights.

21 Q In your considered opinion would the ap-  
22 proval of these applications pose a hazard to fresh ground-  
23 waters in the area?

24 A I've made an honest, what I think is an  
25 honest appraisal of these applications and I do not think it  
imposes a hazard to any fresh waters in the area.

1           Q           Mr. Nutter, were Exhibits One through Six  
2 prepared by you or under your supervision?

3           A           Yes, they were.

4                       MR. JENNINGS: We pass the wit-  
5 ness for cross examination.

6  
7                       CROSS EXAMINATION

8 BY. MR. STOGNER:

9           Q           Mr. Nutter, on Exhibit Number Four you  
10 talked about the Hampton Oil Company application that was  
11 denied --

12          A           Yes.

13          Q           -- Case Number 4710, due to the little  
14 lake that had the windmill --

15          A           Yes, sir.

16          Q           -- on it. How deep was that well, that  
17 little windmill well?

18          A           I don't recall. I read the transcript  
19 and I looked at the exhibits in there and I don't believe I  
20 recall right offhand just how deep that was.

21                       I've got some notes on that case here;  
22 maybe I can find something on it.

23                       I don't imagine it's one of the deep  
24 wells, though, because --

25          Q           Less than 100, more than 100?

1           A           No, it would be more than 100 because I  
2 do have the water level. The water level was standing at  
3 230 feet in 1972.

4           Q           And the whole application was denied be-  
5 cause of that one pit that was --

6           A           Yes, sir. If you'll review the tran-  
7 script and the testimony and the arguments in the case,  
8 everything centered on that one well.

9                       And the examiner in his recommendation  
10 said we cannot condone the use of this pit to endanger this  
11 fresh water. I think it had a chloride content of about  
12 140. He said we cannot condone the use of this pit so close  
13 to this well that makes a water of only 140 parts per mil-  
14 lion chlorides.

15          Q           Okay, let's stick to Section No. 35 up  
16 here where your proposed pits are.

17          A           Okay.

18          Q           Water flow from pits that were allowed in  
19 this area would be in what direction?

20          A           The waterflow, okay, it's obvious which  
21 way the waterflow would be for the north -- northernmost  
22 pit.

23          Q           Okay.

24          A           It's in the depression. The depression  
25 comes around to the southwest and flow south, then. The



1 water flow from that pit would be toward the other pit below  
2 the number in Section 35. It would be southwest.

3 The waterflow from the southernmost pit  
4 would be to the north for just a short distance going down-  
5 hill into that basin, and then it would turn around and come  
6 to the southwest also.

7 So the water from both -- from all three  
8 pits would end up in that depression which is in the middle  
9 of Section 35 and then flow to the south down towards the  
10 Amax Plant.

11 Q Straight south.

12 A Straight south through the channel there.

13 If the -- if the water migrated. I pre-  
14 sume it would upon -- upon absorption of enough to saturate  
15 te sands down there, I presume it would start migrating and  
16 it would be in a southerly, southwesterly direction to the  
17 Clayton Basin.

18 Q In your opinion where would it enter that  
19 large yellow area on this exhibit?

20 A It would enter between the contours, you  
21 can see easily where the contours are to the west side  
22 there.

23 The contours -- I believe -- I believe  
24 that railroad track probably comes down the lowest part of  
25 that canyon through there. You see that railroad track com-

1 ing down through Section 3, cuts across the northeast corner  
2 of Section 2 and into Section 11 and then into Section 14,  
3 that would be about the lowest contours if you contoured all  
4 that out to where you could read the contours.

5 Q So it's your opinion that it would prob-  
6 ably enter in Section 10 and 11.

7 A Yes, sir, because you can see the head of  
8 the draw comes up into Section 14 there, coming from the  
9 south; the head of the draw comes right up into that, so  
10 that railroad was following the lowest terrain in there un-  
11 til they had to make a turn in the northwest corner of Sec-  
12 tion 14. They had to make a turn to the southwest to join  
13 that other railroad, so it had to go uphill from that point.

14 Q We've alluded to several of the blue dots  
15 or blue areas.

16 A Uh-huh.

17 Q Would you please explain to me what these  
18 blue --

19 A I think Mr. Westall could probably ex-  
20 plain those better than I can. They call them lakes on  
21 these maps but I think they're -- they're dry lakebeds which  
22 don't hold water except maybe some runoff water in the --  
23 during rainstorms.

24 I'll hand the Exhibit Number Four to Mr.  
25 Westall. He's more acquainted with the ground conditions

1 out there, having lived there all his life.

2 Q Mr. Westall could you answer that ques-  
3 tion?

4 MR. WESTALL: Yes, they're --  
5 they're kind of clay depressions in there that hold water,  
6 you know, after rains is the main one.

7 The, really the only one that I  
8 know of in the area, probably, that really holds -- holds  
9 any amount of water is probably this Walters Lake area up  
10 there.

11 Q Where is Walters Lake?

12 MR. WESTALL: It's in 26, north  
13 -- the northwest of 26, and also there is some water held in  
14 the, oh, right in 26 in that south -- southeast of 26.

15 MR. NUTTER: That little bitty  
16 lake?

17 MR. WESTALL: That little bitty  
18 lake right there.

19 Q Mr. Nutter, do you concur with Mr. West-  
20 all?

21 A I haven't examined the ground so I can't.

22 Q In your opinion, Mr. Nutter, let's go  
23 back up there to that little windmill that was drilled  
24 alongside the little lake in Section 26, that subsequently  
25 had Case Number 4710 denied.

1           A           Uh-huh.

2           Q           Do these depressions, in particular, the  
3 little depression on the west side of Section 35 and the  
4 south end of Section 3, could those hold fresh water after  
5 rain after a period of time?

6           A           Section 3?

7           Q           Yes, sir, that's right -- well, actually  
8 it straddles Section 3 and Section 10.

9           A           I don't know. I don't know if those  
10 would hold water or not. They're shown as intermittent  
11 lakes on this exhibit.

12          Q           Okay, Mr. Westall, could those depres-  
13 sions hold water (not understood).

14                   MR. WESTALL: I'm familiar with  
15 the one there in 35 and there's a road that goes right  
16 through the bottom of this one here and when we have a pret-  
17 ty good rain it will hold enough water to make it green for  
18 just a few days, and it will go right on through it.

19          Q           Are you familiar with that little lake  
20 bottom up there in Section 26?

21                   MR. WESTALL: Yes, sir, I am in  
22 26, yes, sir.

23          Q           How does that one differ than the one in  
24 Section 35?

25                   MR. WESTALL: The one in Sec-

1 tion 26, they have a holding pond dug there.

2 Q A holding pond?

3 MR. WESTALL: Uh-huh.

4 Q What do you mean? Describe it.

5 MR. WESTALL: Well, it's dug  
6 out, had a dozer in there and it dug out, dug banks on each  
7 side of it there where the water will run down into that,  
8 and on each side of that is kind of a -- on one side is a  
9 sandstone ridge that runs down through there, and on the  
10 north side of it up there where Hanson was proposing to put  
11 that pit, is the upper part there comes from sand hills in  
12 there and it all drains down into that little basin there.

13 Q Could the disposed water in Section 35  
14 migrate over to the little pond in the west end of Section  
15 35 and contaminate what rainwater is held in there?

16 MR. WESTALL: What rainwater, I  
17 feel like, that comes through there is surface water and I  
18 feel like that probably, from my experience with the dispo-  
19 sal and everything up there, that most of the water that  
20 we're going to put in the pits will go down instead of run  
21 on the surface.

22 MR. NUTTER: You said that's  
23 the one that had the road right through it, anyway.

24 MR. WESTALL: It has a road and  
25 you can drive across it. I do not feel like that we'll have

1 any water running on the surface. We'll have -- the pits  
2 will be deep enough to where there would not be any water  
3 running on the surface.

4 Q Mr. Nutter, in your testimony you said  
5 that little windmill that was north of that little lake  
6 showed a level of fresh water at 203 feet.

7 A That's what my note here that I made when  
8 I was studying that case --

9 Q And since the rainwater that collects in  
10 that little pond in Section 35 is in the same area, it  
11 sounds like to me it absorbs quicker than the one in Section  
12 26. Could that possibly have fresh water underneath that  
13 pond?

14 A Well, I don't know. If it does, they  
15 missed a bet by not putting a windmill there, I guess, but  
16 if you can drive across that lakebed at any time, as Mr.  
17 Westall has testified, I wouldn't imagine there's any water  
18 of considerable amount that would accumulate there.

19 I don't know and I'm not even positive  
20 that this note of 230 feet is correct. I presume that it  
21 is.

22 It says water is at 230 feet in 1972, and  
23 it's referring to, I believe it's referring to that well  
24 that's at the windmill. It's that little blue circle in 19  
25 -- in Section 26.

1                   There was a well there and that's the  
2 only well that was in the vicinity and that's the only well  
3 I could find in my search of the State Engineer records, and  
4 of course, our pits are to the south of that and the flow is  
5 from north to south in the area.

6                   MR. WESTALL: Can I make a  
7 comment?

8                   MR. STOGNER: Regarding what,  
9 Mr. Westall?

10                  MR. WESTALL: Regarding this  
11 well that's there in Section 35.

12                  MR. STOGNER: Are you familiar  
13 --

14                  MR. WESTALL: Section 26,  
15 excuse me.

16                  MR. STOGNER: Are you familiar  
17 with that water well?

18                  MR. WESTALL: Yes, sir, pretty  
19 much so.

20                         I think in a previous hearing  
21 we also had on our water disposal Mr. Squires also testified  
22 I think if you'll look back, that at one time they did use  
23 that water for cattle watering and since then they have  
24 connected up to the fresh water off of the Amax line.

25                  MR. STOGNER: So this well is

1 no longer there.

2 MR. WESTALL: Well, it is still  
3 there, yes, sir.

4 MR. STOGNER: What's it being  
5 used for?

6 MR. WESTALL: It's not being  
7 produced.

8 MR. STOGNER: Is the windmill  
9 still on it?

10 MR. WESTALL: There's a -- I  
11 think they've got an electric motor -- electric pump set on  
12 it.

13 MR. STOGNER: Is it able to  
14 pump?

15 MR. WESTALL: I have no idea.  
16 I just know that the water that they get off of Amax line is  
17 a lot better water than what they were getting out of the  
18 well. \*

19 A Mr. Examiner, I have a letter that was  
20 from Fred Henninghousen with the State Engineer Office, that  
21 was written in conjunction with Case Number 4710 back in  
22 1972, and he states, the records of the State Engineer Of-  
23 fice reflect in fairly comprehensive field checks of the a-  
24 rea that there are stock water wells located in the north-  
25 east quarter of Section 22, okay, we have those two wells on



1 the map; the southwest quarter of Section 26, I think he  
2 meant the southeast quarter of Section 26, because that's  
3 where we know the well was; and the southwest quarter of  
4 Section 32 of Township 18, 30.

5 Also, in the southwest quarter of Section  
6 13, now we're over in Township 19, 29, to the west, which  
7 would be off of this map, so I won't even discuss those, but  
8 he was talking about water wells in Section 13, 23, and 25  
9 of the Township to the west.

10 And in the northeast quarter of Section  
11 17 and the northwest quarter of Section 25 of 19, 30, I  
12 don't believe that those wells are shown in the current re-  
13 cords of the State Engineer. Section 17 would be right up  
14 at the top of the map there under the -- just to the west of  
15 the highway where it goes to the north. We don't show a  
16 well there, although the map doesn't show the whole section.

17 And Section 25 is way over to the east  
18 and I have an idea that that benchmark is where there was a  
19 water well at that time, but it doesn't show a well there at  
20 the current time.

21 He says, we have little quality informa-  
22 tion on these wells, although the well in Section 26 of 18,  
23 30, which is the one that's right by the little lake, has  
24 chlorides of less than 200 parts per million.

25 He closes his letter by saying the sur-

1 face drainage in the general area is generally towards the  
2 south and west.

3 Q Mr. Nutter, was that letter made part of  
4 the record in --

5 A That was an exhibit in -- that was Exhi-  
6 bit Number Six in Case No. 4710, yes.

7 Q We'll take administrative notice of Case  
8 Number 4710, I may note at this time.

9 A I actually wish you would because I think  
10 that the arguments are all centered on that one well to the  
11 lake -- right close by the lake, and I think that the exam-  
12 ination of the evidence will show that drainage in this --  
13 from our proposed application would not be towards that lake  
14 and towards that well.

15 Q In your opinion would any surface water  
16 flow into the little lake on the west side of Section 35 in  
17 the vicinity of your two ponds that we're proposing here to-  
18 day in Section 35?

19 A I'm -- I'm questioning whether there is a  
20 lake there or not. If there's a road right through the mid-  
21 dle of it, I wouldn't call it a lake.

22 Q Well, Mr. Nutter, there's a blue mark on  
23 this map.

24 A Yeah, there's -- there's an accumulation  
25 of rainwater. Now these topography maps are made from

1 aerial photographs and the day they took the photograph  
2 there may have been some -- it may have rained that day, be-  
3 cause Mr. Westall testifies there's a road that goes right  
4 through there and you can drive through there at any time.

5 Q Mr. Nutter, I lived in Hobbs for awhile  
6 and I remember when the Carlsbad Highway was under water,  
7 too.

8 A Yeah.

9 Q So, regardless, there is that blue mark  
10 right here, in your opinion would surface water from the vi-  
11 cinity of your two proposed ponds, would they flow into that  
12 depression?

13 A I can't read the contours closely enough  
14 to tell.

15 The amazing part about it is that that --  
16 that that pond is higher than the depression in which both  
17 of those pits would be located.

18 Q Thank you, Mr. Nutter.

19 A So the pond might contaminate these pits,  
20 if you look at it that way.

21 Apparently that pond is a little bit  
22 higher. It's a little depression that's up higher than that  
23 major depression.

24 MR. STOGNER: Are there any  
25 other questions of this witness concerning the vicinity of

1 Section 35 before we move down to the other portion of this  
2 case today?

3 MR. TAYLOR: I have a couple of  
4 questions.

5

6

CROSS EXAMINATION

7 BY MR. TAYLOR:

8 Q Could you tell us approximately how much  
9 water is going to go into each of the pits and what the TDS  
10 of that water is?

11 A The pits up here in this end are produc-  
12 ing from the Seven Rivers and Yates and the water quality of  
13 the produced water there is not all that bad. It's -- Seven  
14 Rivers and Yates don't make real nasty water and I'd say  
15 that the total, the TDS on it are not going to be more than  
16 25,000.

17 Now this other pit down here to the  
18 southeast is from the Shugart Pool and the water is a little  
19 --

20 MR. WESTALL: It's vice versa  
21 there. This up here is the Shugart.

22 A Oh, this is the Shugart up here?

23 MR. WESTALL: Yes, sir.

24 A And this is the --

25 MR. WESTALL: Yates.

1           A           Okay, I've got it reversed. The water up  
2 here in this area is the worst quality water and the one in  
3 the southeast is the --

4           Q           Can you give us an approximation of the  
5 TDS on that?

6           A           In the Shugart Pool I've seen statistics  
7 all the way from 25,000 to 82,000 parts per million of TDS,  
8 so it varies from well to well.

9           Q           And there's going to be three pits in  
10 this section that we're talking about?

11          A           Yes, sir, that's our proposal.

12          Q           And can you give us an estimate of the  
13 water that would go into each pit?

14          A           No, I can't, because at the present time  
15 those wells are producing the half barrel per day that's the  
16 maximum and who knows what the future might bring as far as  
17 future production of water and Mr. Westall -- Mr. Westall  
18 testified that they would like to put in a waterflood pro-  
19 ject in here sometime.

20                   MR. WESTALL: Well, let's --  
21 those wells up there are producing more water than that.  
22 Those wells up there are producing -- they wanted to -- are  
23 producing around 40 barrels a day and the 3 and 4 are pro-  
24 ducing 30 to 40 barrels a day.

25          Q           So would you just estimate, how many

1 wells are there.

2 MR. WESTALL: There are four  
3 right now.

4 Q Four wells and three pits.

5 MR. WESTALL: No, there's only  
6 four wells and two pits at the present time.

7 Q Okay, but you're going to have three  
8 pits?

9 MR. WESTALL: Right, when we  
10 drill the Trigg No. 1, which would be our main central bat-  
11 tery for that area.

12 Q So the four wells together you estimate  
13 are producing around 100 barrels of water or less?

14 MR. WESTALL: The four wells  
15 are producing a little less than 100 barrels a day.

16 Q Okay, and that 100 barrels would go into  
17 the three pits.

18 MR. WESTALL: Well, the two  
19 pits and then we will drill some more wells.

20 MR. TAYLOR: Okay, that's all I  
21 have.

22

23 RECROSS EXAMINATION

24 BY MR. STOGNER:

25 Q Okay, Mr. Nutter, I'm trying to get the

1 geological testimony out of the way first. Then I will come  
2 back and ask certain questions about the pits and such as  
3 that, but right now I'm just trying to stay with the geology  
4 in the area.

5 In your testimony concerning the pits in  
6 20 and 21, the flow would essentially be in the direction of  
7 the Hackberry Lake, which is in 23, Section 23, 24, 25, and  
8 26, which is to the west, is that right?

9 A That's correct.

10 Q Okay. And the two wells that have been  
11 reported for the Lusk Ranch in Section 28 and 33, those are  
12 uphill from your proposed ponds, is that correct?

13 A Yes, sir.

14 Q As was the well in Section 27 that you  
15 have marked.

16 A Yeah, the well in Section 27 is back up  
17 above that, yeah. I don't think it would be affected in any  
18 manner.

19 Q Okay. Now then, let's go to that well,  
20 the deep well that you said that the BLM or the Bureau of  
21 Reclamation is using as a water level meter.

22 A Yeah, in Section 31.

23 Q Right. Is that for the deep water that's  
24 down at 4000 feet or does it measure any of the shallow  
25 groundwater?

1           A           I can't tell if they plugged the well or  
2 not from the reports in the Commission's file on the well,  
3 and I can tell you what they're reporting as water level.  
4 Now where that water is coming from, I don't know; whether  
5 it's Yates Reef water or Seven Rivers Reef, or just what it  
6 is, but they reported in the State Engineer records that  
7 it's 4103 feet deep.

8 Now whether they plugged it back, I do  
9 not know. They reported the -- the latest water level that  
10 I have is 1977 and the water level was at 574 feet below the  
11 surface.

12                                So it could be reef water standing up to  
13 574 feet or they may have plugged it back to some lesser  
14 depth and it's less water than that, but at any rate, in '77  
15 it was standing at 574.56 feet below the surface.

16 Q What was the quality of that water?

17           A           They don't report the quality at all. I  
18 have an idea that that's in conjunction with the Capitan  
19 Reef, though, because David Hale with the State Engineer,  
20 with the Interstate Stream Commission, was the one that made  
21 the comprehensive study of the Capitan Reef and he was the  
22 one that signed the papers when they took this well over  
23 from Hank Sweeney, the operator that was ready to plug the  
24 well.

25 So I think that it was probably obtained



1 in conjunction with David Hale's Capitan Reef study and I  
2 have an idea that that's where it's completed, down near the  
3 Capital Reef, or that's where it's open.

4 Q Do you know the quality of the Capitan  
5 Reef water?

6 A No, I don't.

7 Q Okay. You show a well in Section 25.  
8 That's over in the R-3221-B area.

9 A Right.

10 Q Near the Hackberry Lake. Would you elab-  
11 orate a little bit more on that well?

12 A The latest depth of water that I show for  
13 that well was 21 feet below the surface, so I believe that  
14 again, I don't have anything on the quality of the water. I  
15 don't know, it's in the drainage area that comes down from  
16 the Amax Mine and into the Hackberry Lake.

17 Since the water level is 21 feet, I have  
18 an idea that it's just surface water again that accumulates  
19 either from rainwater or from the flow that comes from the  
20 Amax Plant through the -- through the Canyon there.

21 There's nothing that I can obtain as far  
22 as whether the well is producing whether the water levels  
23 are stable to 21 feet or whether that was just that one oc-  
24 casion.

25 I've got the elevation of the well. It's

1 at 3239 so it would be just inside that contour where I  
2 placed it on your map. I believe I placed it correctly.

3 You'll notice that there's a 3250. Then  
4 the next contour down would be 3240. It should be just in-  
5 side that contour and the lake bed itself is apparently  
6 3222. So it's some 17 feet above the lowermost contour in  
7 there. I don't know what that 3222 actually refers to.  
8 Maybe that refers to what they measured the lake -- the well  
9 at at one time, but the report from the State Engineer Of-  
10 fice indicates it's 3239 feet, so I placed it on the 3239  
11 contour.

12 Can you tell on your exhibit, Mr. Stog-  
13 ner, if there was a little "X" there where I put that cir-  
14 cle, like they use for those benchmarks?

15 A Yes, it looks like there was one there.

16 Q Okay. They frequently put those at the  
17 elevation of the well, so that well would be at 3222, then,  
18 instead of 3239, as the current report is.

19 Of course the exceptions have been gran-  
20 ted in Section 30 on the assumption that the flow would be  
21 from the Section 30 west into that immediate area, also, and  
22 then thence into the Clayton Basin.

23 Q How do you base that remark on?

24 A Well, I base it on these contours here.  
25 That checkerboard exception in Section 30.

1           Q           Would the water disposed over there at  
2 the Amax Plant or any water discharged out of there, would  
3 it also migrate its way over to the Hackberry Lake?

4           A           Yes, it would. It would follow right  
5 down through that canyon.

6                       MR. STOGNER: Are there any  
7 other questions of Mr. Nutter concerning this area?

8                       MR. BACA: Yes, Mr. Examiner, I  
9 have some questions.

10                      MR. STOGNER: Mr. Baca, would  
11 you please identify yourself, your name and what's your  
12 position?

13                      MR. BACA: My name is Philip  
14 Baca. I'm employed by the New Mexico Oil Conservation  
15 Division as an environmental engineer.

16  
17 QUESTIONS BY MR. BACA:

18           Q           Mr. Nutter, you made mention of  
19 Groundwater Report No. 3 and your survey of wells in that  
20 area.

21           A           Yes.

22           Q           Did you also take a look at any chemical  
23 analysis done on any of the wells in that area?

24           A           Yes, I did.

25           Q           Could you elaborate on that?

1                   A               Well, there are not too many wells that  
2 are recorded in there. As a matter of fact, the report  
3 shows water levels and the existence of many more wells than  
4 it shows the chemical analysis on, but the chemical analysis  
5 on the wells -- I don't have a chemical analysis on anything  
6 in Township 19 South -- 18 South, Range 30 East.

7                               I do have an analysis on some wells in  
8 Township 19, 31.

9                   Q               Could you give us a summary of that?

10                  A               Okay. The one in Section 28 is reported  
11 to have total dissolved solids of 855 parts per million.  
12 That would include 55 chlorides, 398 sulfates, 219 bicarbon-  
13 ates, 56 sodiums and potassiums, 54 magnesiums, 139 cal-  
14 ciums, 23 silicas, and 21 nitrates; 9/10ths of one part per  
15 million chlorides.

16                               So it had TDS 855; hardness as CaCO<sub>3</sub>  
17 569; percent sodium, 18 percent.

18                               The well in Section 33, which we can't  
19 find record of at the present time, and probably the reason  
20 we can't find record of it, had total dissolved solids of  
21 3340. Now the chlorides weren't a great deal more in there  
22 but sulfates were very high. So the ranch probably quit us-  
23 ing that well on account of the high sulfates.

24                  Q               Does the --

25                  A               And that's the only two wells that I have

1 an analysis on that are on this exhibit.

2 Q Mr. Nutter, does the absence of any wells  
3 in Sections 20 and 21 mean that there are no aquifers below  
4 the surface in that area?

5 A In Sections --

6 Q 20 and 21, the area that you're applying  
7 for an exception.

8 A Oh. I can't say for sure that that would  
9 be the case but in an area where water is of vital concern,  
10 I would think that if there was a possibility of drilling a  
11 well a well would have been drilled, and I imagine there  
12 have probably been a lot of dry holes drilled that didn't  
13 make water that we don't have any record of, so I would ima-  
14 gine that the absence of wells probably is a good indication  
15 of the absence of water.

16 Q Are you familiar with the Water Quality  
17 Control Commission regulations, in particular Section 3-  
18 101A, regarding the waters to be protected in the State of  
19 New Mexico?

20 A I'm not sure if I am or not. You'd have  
21 to be more specific.

22 I'm in a general way acquainted with  
23 those regulations but that particular section, I don't know.

24 MR. BACA: Mr. Examiner, I re-  
25 commend that we take administrative notice of Water Quality

1 Control Commission Regulations, Section 3, 101.

2 MR. STOGNER: How long, how  
3 lengthy of a document is that?

4 MR. BACA: A paragraph. It  
5 basically says that the State of New Mexico and the Oil Con-  
6 servation Divison must protect waters with TDS lower than  
7 10,000 parts per million as a potential future or present  
8 source of water.

9 MR. STOGNER: If there are no  
10 objections, we'll take administrative notice of that fact.  
11 Thank you.

12 Any further questions of the  
13 geologic nature of this particular area?

14

15 RECROSS EXAMINATION

16 BY MR. STOGNER:

17 Q Mr. Nutter, I don't believe I've been  
18 handed any particular dimensions or plans on what your pits  
19 are going to consist of and what size or anything such as  
20 that.

21 A No, sir, you sure haven't. I don't have  
22 them available at this time.

23 If you'd like a sketch of the proposed  
24 pits, we'll be glad to prepared it and submit it --

25 Q That will suffice. Now if I understand

1 right, in 8629, case number, you have two pits at the pre-  
2 sent time, those being in Units G and O.

3 A That's correct.

4 Q And a proposed pit to the west at a later  
5 date, is that correct?

6 A That's correct.

7 Q Okay. I should have mentioned this ear-  
8 lier, but 8630 was misadvertised in the Artesia paper and  
9 will have to be readvertised for the hearing scheduled July  
10 17th, 1985.

11 Also, Mr. Nutter, whenever you submit to  
12 us schematics or drawings or sketches of your pits, if you  
13 would include the volume of water coming into each pit, what  
14 particular well is supplying that pit, and the quality --  
15 quantity, quantity of the volumes going into the pit.

16 A For each pit.

17 Q Yes, sir.

18 A That's under current conditions.

19 Q Yes, sir.

20 A Yes, sir, we'll be happy to.

21 MR. STOGNER: Are there any  
22 further questions of this witness?

23 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, I'd just  
24 like to ask the same questions I did as to the other ones.

25

## 1 RE CROSS EXAMINATION

2 BY MR. TAYLOR:

3 Q On, I guess this is your Exhibit Two.

4 A Yes, sir, that's Exhibit Two.

5 Q Would you go through the five pits and  
6 just approximately tell us how much water you think will be  
7 going into each one.8 A Again, Mr. Westall would have to do that  
9 because he's more acquainted with the actual water produc-  
10 tion.11 Some of those wells are shut in right now  
12 because it's too expensive to truck the water.13 Q On these, the quality of water that's  
14 going in is the one that was about 25,000?

15 A Yes, sir, that's the better water.

16 Q Okay.

17 MR. WESTALL: That water will  
18 freeze, you know, when it gets down to freezing, it will be  
19 --20 Q Okay, and what's the approximate amount  
21 of volume?22 These wells are producing 200 barrels a  
23 day, right, of water?24 MR. WESTALL: Well, the 2 and 5  
25 Wells are, oh, producing between a hundred -- I'd say 130



1 and 160 barrels of water per day and approximately 60 bar-  
2 rels of oil.

3 Q And are they both going to go into that  
4 pit that's on that section?

5 MR. WESTALL: Yes, sir.

6 Q Okay, so that can be up to 400 barrels a  
7 day, or so.

8 MR. WESTALL: No, that's both  
9 wells.

10 Q Oh, that's both together would up to 200  
11 barrels a day.

12 MR. WESTALL: Yes, sir.

13 Q Okay. How about the others?

14 MR. WESTALL: The 1, 3, 4, and  
15 6 Wells will approximately 80 barrels a day all -- all four  
16 wells.

17 Q That's a total.

18 MR. WESTALL: Right.

19 Q And each of those wells will have a sepa-  
20 rate pit?

21 MR. WESTALL: No, sir, they  
22 will all be at the Number One battery.

23 A The number 3 and the 4, Mr. Taylor, --

24 MR. WESTALL: 3 and the 5.

25 A The 3 and the 4 jump over and go to the

1 pit where the Number 1 is.

2 Q Okay.

3 A And also the Number 6 and the Number 1 go  
4 into that pit, so there's four wells into that pit that's in  
5 the southwest of the northwest of Section 21.

6 Q So we could estimate --

7 MR. WESTALL: Around 80 barrels  
8 a day.

9 Q -- 80 barrels a day. Okay.

10 MR. WESTALL: The Texas Crude  
11 and the Parsley both make between 15 and 20 barrels of water  
12 per day.

13 Our future plans on this thing,  
14 after we get everything drilled up there and taken care of,  
15 is reinjecting this water as a waterflood.

16 Q Do you have any estimate on the amount of  
17 time that may be?

18 MR. WESTALL: Probably within  
19 the next 24 months.

20 Q Okay.

21 MR. WESTALL: We're trying to  
22 pick up some more acreage in the area.

23 Q It's your testimony, Mr. Nutter, that in  
24 your expert opinion fresh water would be protected under  
25 this -- under this, your plan.

1           A           I see no hazard presented to any fresh  
2 water supplies by these proposals.

3           Q           Thank you.

4                       MR. TAYLOR: That's all the  
5 questions I have.

6                       MR. STOGNER: Any other ques-  
7 tions of this witness?

8                       MR. BROOKS: I have one, Mr.  
9 Examiner.

10                      MR. STOGNER: Mr. Brooks, would  
11 you please identify yourself, state your name, and your pos-  
12 ition?

13                      MR. BROOKS: Larry Brooks. I'm  
14 employed as a geologist in Artesia for the OCD.

15  
16 QUESTIONS BY MR. BROOKS:

17           Q           Mr. Nutter, do you feel that the Clayton  
18 Basin and associated drainage to the south is the active  
19 KARST feature?

20           A           Active what?

21           Q           KARST topography feature, in other words,  
22 formed by collapse?

23           A           Yes.

24           Q           Thank you.

25                      MR. STOGNER: Any further ques-

1 tions for this witness or Mr. Westall, for that matter?

2 If not, they may be excused.

3 Mr. Jennings, do you have  
4 anything further in either case?

5 MR. JENNINGS: No, sir, we have  
6 nothing further.

7 MR. STOGNER: Does anybody else  
8 have anything further in either case?

9 MR. JENNINGS: We'll offer  
10 Exhibits One through Six in this case.

11 MR. STOGNER: Exhibits One  
12 through Six will be admitted into evidence.

13 Case Number 8529 and 8630 will  
14 be held open pending the request for information.

15 8630 will be further continued  
16 to accommodate the readvertisement till the hearing  
17 scheduled for July 17th, 1985.

18

19 (Hearing concluded.)

20

21

22

23

24

25

## C E R T I F I C A T E

I, SALLY W. BOYD, C.S.R., DO HEREBY  
CERTIFY that the foregoing Transcript of Hearing before the  
Oil Conservation Division was reported by me; that the said  
transcript is a full, true, and correct record of the  
hearing, prepared by me to the best of my ability.

Sally W. Boyd CSR

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is  
a complete record of the proceedings in  
the Examiner hearing of Case No. 8629 + 8630  
heard by me on 19 June 1985.

Michael E. Logan Examiner  
Oil Conservation Division