1	NEW MEXICO OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION
2	STATE LAND OFFICE BUILDING
3	STATE OF NEW MEXICO
4	CASE NO. 10576
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6	IN THE MATTER OF:
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8	The Application of Merrion Oil & Gas Company for a Unit Agreement,
9	Sandoval County, New Mexico.
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15	BEFORE:
16	MICHAEL E. STOGNER
17	Hearing Examiner
18	State Land Office Building
19	October 29, 1992
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2 1	RECEIVED
2 2	NOV 3 0 1992
2 3	1 0
2 <b>4</b>	CARLA DIANE RODRIGUEZ  Certified Shorthand Reporter
2 5	Certified Shorthand Reporter & for the State of New Mexico

# **ORIGINAL**

# APPEARANCES FOR THE NEW MEXICO OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION: ROBERT G. STOVALL, ESQ. General Counsel State Land Office Building Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504 FOR THE APPLICANT: THE TANSEY LAW FIRM Post Office Box 1020 Farmington, New Mexico 87499 BY: B. TOMMY ROBERTS, ESQ. 1 1

1	I N D E X	Page Number
2	Appearances	2
3	WITNESSES FOR THE APPLICANT:	
4	1. STEVEN S. DUNN, P.E.	
5	Examination by Mr. Roberts	4
6	2. <u>L. D. ENDSLEY</u> Examination by Mr. Roberts	٥
7	Examination by Mr. Roberts Examination by Mr. Stovall	8 13, 15
8		
9	3. <u>PATRICK HEGARTY, C.P.L.</u> Examination by Mr. Roberts	16
10	Examination by Mr. Stogner Examination by Mr. Stovall	2 5 2 7
11	Certificate of Reporter	30
12	E X H I B I T S	Page Marked
13	Exhibit No. 1 Exhibit No. 2	9 17
14	Exhibit No. 3 Exhibit No. 4	2 2 2 1
15	Exhibit No. 5	23
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
2 2		
23		
2 4		
2 5		

1	EXAMINER STOGNER: Call the next case,
2	No. 10576.
3	MR. STOVALL: Application of Merrion
4	Oil & Gas Corporation for a unit agreement,
5	Sandoval County, New Mexico.
6	EXAMINER STOGNER: Call for
7	appearances.
8	MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Examiner, my name's
9	Tommy Roberts with the Tansey Law Firm in
10	Farmington, New Mexico, and I'm appearing on
11	behalf of Merrion Oil & Gas Corporation. I have
12	three witnesses to be sworn.
13	EXAMINER STOGNER: Will the witnesses
14	please stand to be sworn.
15	[The witnesses were duly sworn.]
16	MR. ROBERTS: I would call as my first
17	witnesses, Steve Dunn.
18	STEVEN S. DUNN, P.E.
19	Having been first duly sworn upon his oath, was
20	examined and testified as follows:
21	EXAMINATION
2 2	BY MR. ROBERTS:
23	Q. Would you please state your name and
2 4	your place of residence for the record.
2 5	A. Steven Dunn. Farmington, New Mexico.

1 Q. What is your occupation? 2 Α. I am operations manager for Merrion Oil & Gas and I work as a petroleum engineer. 3 How long have you been employed in that Q. capacity? 5 6 Α. Over 16 years. 7 Q. Have you testified before the Oil Conservation Division on prior occasions? 8 9 Α. Yes, I have. 10 Q. In what capacity? 11 As a petroleum engineer. Α. 12 Q. Are you familiar with the application 13 in this case? 14 Α. Yes, I am. Are you familiar with Merrion's 15 Q. 16 operations in the area which is the subject of 17 this application? Yes, I am. 18 Α. MR, ROBERTS: I would tender Mr. Dunn 19 20 as an expert petroleum engineer. 21 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Dunn is so 22 qualified. Mr. Dunn, would you briefly describe 23 the purpose of this application? 24

Merrion Oil & Gas seeks approval from

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the state for its exploratory unit, namely the Rock Mesa Unit, comprising approximately 10,823 of federal and state land in portions of Townships 18 and 19 North, Range 3 West, Sandoval County, New Mexico.

- Q. Mr. Dunn, you testified in Case No.

  10478 which was heard by the Examiner on May 28th
  of this year. What was the nature of the
  application in that case?
- A. In that case, Merrion Oil & Gas was seeking creation of a new pool, namely the Rock Mesa Fractured Mancos pool and also the creation of temporary pool rules.
- Q. What is the relationship of the application in this case being heard today to Case No. 10478?
- A. Identical acreage is involved in both cases, and they are completely intertwined in relationship.
- Q. When you say "intertwined," do you mean in terms of the geology of the area, the engineering factors that are relevant to that area? Is that what you mean?
- A. That's what I mean. The engineering data would be relevant in both cases, and also

the geologic data, the land data. In fact, the pool boundary coincides with the proposed unit boundary.

- Q. Would you very briefly summarize the evidence that was submitted in support of the application in Case 10478?
- A. In 10478, Merrion submitted information consisting of proposed special pool rules that we were seeking. We introduced land information which identified the acreage that was involved in the proposed pool, well location information, economics, notice requirement information, and finally geologic information concerning the proposed pool in that hearing.
- Q. What was the result of the hearing in Case 10478?
- A. The Rock Mesa pool was created with two-year temporary pool rules and 640-acre spacing.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Examiner, I have no other questions for this witness.

We would move that the record that was established in Case No. 10478 be incorporated into the record for this case today.

EXAMINER STOGNER: I'll take

administrative notice of Case No. 10478. 1 Do you remember the order number that was issued in that 2 3 case? MR. ROBERTS: It was R-9701 and 5 R-9701-A. EXAMINER STOGNER: That was a nunc pro 6 7 tunc of some type? MR. ROBERTS: It added some acreage 8 that had been omitted from the original order. 9 EXAMINER STOGNER: Like I said, I'll 10 take administrative notice of that case. 11 other questions of Mr. Dunn? He may be excused. 12 MR. ROBERTS: We would call Doug 13 14 Endsley. L. D. ENDSLEY 15 16 Having been first duly sworn upon his oath, was examined and testified as follows: 17 18 EXAMINATION BY MR. ROBERTS: 19 20 Would you state your name and your Q. 2 1 place of residence for the record. My name is Doug Endsley. I live in 22 Α. 23 Farmington, New Mexico. What is your occupation? 24 Ο. 25 Α. I'm a petroleum geologist and I work as

- 1 | a geologic manager at Merrion Oil & Gas.
- Q. How long have you been employed in that capacity?
  - A. 11 years.

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- Q. Have you testified on prior occasions before the Oil Conservation Division?
  - A. I have.
    - Q. In what capacity?
      - A. As a petroleum geologist.
- Q. Are you familiar with the application in this case?
- 12 A. I am.
- Q. Are you familiar with the operations
  proposed by Merrion Oil & Gas in the area that's
  the subject of this application?
- 16 A. I am.
- 17 Q. Did you testify in Case No. 10478?
- 18 A. I did.
- MR. ROBERTS: We tender Mr. Endsley as an expert petroleum geologist.
- EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Endsley is so qualified.
- Q. Mr. Endsley, would you refer to what's been marked as Merrion's Exhibit No. 1 and identify it?

A. Exhibit 1 is a geologic justification for the Rock Mesa exploratory unit, the boundaries that we established for that unit. In essence, it's just a write-up that describes how we decided on the boundaries for the unit, the geologic model that we had developed that we wanted to explore.

- Q. Would you summarize the factors which resulted in your decision to propose the boundaries for this unit as they have been proposed?
- A. Merrion has access to a large seismic database, and through the investigation of that database we uncovered a fault in this area that looked interesting to us. It's a north/south trending fault with a lot of flexure on the downthrone side of the fault, which we think indicates fracturing.

We decided to make the boundaries of the unit coincide with the fault insofar as the north and south boundaries would be the lessening displacement of the fault in those directions.

The western boundary, we felt as the upthrone side of the fault, we felt that that would tend to be less fractured because of the

nature of the faulting. The eastern boundary, there's some production on the east side of the proposed unit, and the wells range anywhere from 500 barrels to \$20,000 barrels of cumulative production a few years ago, and we felt that those ranges of production indicated that probably there was a lessening of the fracture the further east you moved.

So, to kind of summarize, we used the north/south attitudes of the fault and lessening of displacement in those directions as the north/south boundaries. We used less fracturing on the west side of the fault and production on the east side, to establish the boundaries.

- Q. Is it your opinion, then, that the geologic data you have examined justifies the proposed boundaries for the unit?
  - A. It is my opinion, that's correct.
- Q. Based on the geologic data you have examined, do you have an opinion as to whether the proposed unit boundaries are such that they will give the operator and the interest owners within the unit effective and efficient control of the Mancos reservoir underlying this area?
  - A. That's correct.

- Q. Why is exploration and development of this area on a unit basis preferable to exploration and development on a competitive leasing basis?
- A. The idea is that we wanted to establish, since it's an unknown, really, we wanted to establish a larger spacing to start with, and in order to do that we had to come to hearing and get 640-acre spacing approved.

Our feeling is that that prevents potential waste, it cuts down on the number of wells that initially are drilled in a reservoir that we don't know a lot about yet. So, in essence, it cuts down on waste and unnecessary economic hardship by the number of wells that have to be drilled.

- Q. Does it also reduce the to the participants?
  - A. Yes.

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- Q. In your opinion, will the granting of this application be in the best interests of conservation and result in the protection of correlative rights and the prevention of waste?
  - A. That's my opinion.
- Q. Was Exhibit No. 1 prepared by you?

A. It was.

MR. ROBERTS: I move the admission of Exhibit No. 1, and I have no other questions for this witness.

EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibit No. 1 will be admitted into evidence.

### EXAMINATION

BY MR. STOVALL:

- Q. Mr. Endsley, this is a narrative summary of the geology of the unit area, is that correct?
  - A. That's correct.
- Q. Is it correct that all of the exhibits supporting and the backup data was submitted in the case that's been taken, of which administrative notice has been taken?
- A. Right. In the pooling hearing that we came to, we submitted some geologic exhibits that had structure maps, and identified the fault that we just talked about here. Those are all in the exhibits from the previous hearing.

MR. STOVALL: I'm assuming, Mr.

Roberts, it was your intent in this case, rather than to redo that testimony and resubmit those exhibits, that was your intent in incorporating

that record and use what's already been done?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, that was my intent

and the reason for the request that the record in that case be incorporated into the record in this

5 case. It's not clear to me whether the

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6 Examiner's decision to take administrative notice

7 of that case will create the same result as

incorporating the record. I assume it will.

MR. STOVALL: As a practical result, I think it's probably not significantly different.

MR. ROBERTS: We would be happy to go through in some detail the geologic justification, if you would prefer that we do that in this case.

EXAMINER STOGNER: I don't believe that will be necessary. I'm somewhat aware of the previous case. I was not the Hearing Examiner nor did I sit in on the testimony, but I don't doubt Mr. Endsley that this was in there.

And with that, I don't have any questions at this time. Perhaps after we hear renext witness I might have some additional questions.

MR. STOVALL: I do have one more and it's more out of--it may have something to do

1 | with the unitization.

# FURTHER EXAMINATION

#### BY MR. STOVALL:

- Q. The current rules, I believe, are 640-acre standard section spacing, is that correct?
  - A. That's correct.
- Q. Would you anticipate, based upon what you know of the geology and the flexure of the rock out there, that you may want to come in at some later point and get some unorthodox proration units or some flexibility as far as crossing the section lines with wells or anything, or is that— We have other experience in other units in this area that have done that, with similar geologic conditions, and that's why I'm asking the question.
- A. I'll offer an opinion. If we find that the reservoir was to lend itself to horizontal drilling, then I could see where we might get into a situation where we would be crowding lease lines or going over lease lines or something like that.

Initially, since we don't know whether the reservoir is even going to be a highly

productive reservoir or not until we get out 1 there and drill our first well, we felt it was 3 prudent to start on regular 640-acre spacing and develop accordingly until we learned more about 5 the reservoir. 6 Q. But that could be an additional benefit of unitized operations if, in fact, you make that 7 determination, is that correct? 8 That would be correct. 9 Α. 10 MR. STOVALL: Nothing further. 11 EXAMINER STOGNER: With that, Mr. 12 Endsley, you may be excused at this time. Mr. Roberts? 13 MR. ROBERTS: I would call my next 14 15 witness, Mr. Patrick Hegarty. 16 PATRICK HEGARTY, C.P.L. 17 Having been first duly sworn upon his oath, was 18 examined and testified as follows: 19 EXAMINATION BY MR. ROBERTS: 20 State your name and place of residence 21 Q. 22

- for the record.
- 23 Patrick Hegarty, Farmington, New Α. Mexico. 24
- 2.5 Q. What's your occupation?

Petroleum landman. 1 Α. 2 Q. By whom are you employed? Merrion Oil & Gas. Α. 3 How long have you been employed in that Q. 5 capacity? 6 Α. 12 years. Have you testified before the Oil 7 Q. Conservation Division on prior occasions? 8 Α. Yes. 9 In what capacity? 10 Q. As a petroleum landman. 11 Α. 12 Are you familiar with the application Q. 13 in this case? Α. Yes. 14 Are you familiar with the operations of 15 Merrion Oil & Gas proposed for the area which is 16 17 the subject of this application? Yes, I am. 18 Α. MR. ROBERTS: We tender Mr. Hegarty as 19 20 an expert petroleum landman. 21 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Hegarty is so 22 qualified. Mr. Hegarty, would you refer to what's 23

been marked as Merrion's Exhibit No. 2 and

identify the exhibit?

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- A. It is a state and federal fee exploration unit agreement.
  - Q. Would you describe the area that it covers?
  - A. All right. It covers, in 19 North 3 West, it covers sections 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 33 and 32. In 18 North 3 West, it covers Sections 4 and 5.
  - Q. Is this a form of unit agreement that was provided to you by an agency, or is this an agreement that you have drafted in form?
  - A. This is the state-approved form that was revised in January of 1992, with amendments made at the request of the Bureau of Land Management.
  - Q. Does this form of agreement cover state, federal and fee lands?
    - A. Yes.

- Q. What kind of lands are covered in your proposed unit?
- A. There are federal and fee lands. I'm sorry, federal and state lands. The state lands account for 5.9 percent of the total, the total acres being 10,823.16 acres.
- Q. Other than the BLM modifications to the

form of agreement, have there been other modifications?

A. No.

- Q. Are there attachments to the form of agreement?
  - A. Yes.
  - Q. What are those attachments?
- A. They are exhibits. Exhibit A is the map of the unit area. Exhibit B is the schedule of ownership including an addendum which identifies the overriding royalty interest owners, and then Exhibit C is the schedule of tract participation.
- Q. Would you refer to Exhibit A to the unit agreement and, in a little bit more detail, describe what's contained?
- A. Basically, it's a map that identifies the lands involved with the unit, as well as identifying the federal and state lease numbers, and identifies the ownership, and it is color-coded to identify the ownership. It sets out the pool boundary and also it describes the tract numbers that relates to the schedule of ownership, which is Exhibit B.
  - Q. And then Exhibit C, describe in a

1 little bit more detail what's contained in that
2 exhibit.

- A. All right. Exhibit C is simply a description of the lease number, the legal description of the acreage associated with that lease, as it pertains to the unit. It gives the amount of acreage that each tract contributes to the unit, it's net revenue interest, expiration date, and then the resulting percentage that each tract contributes to the unit.
- Q. Have you contacted all of the leasehold operating rights owners and the owners of unleased minerals in the proposed unit area to solicit their joinder?
  - A. Yes, we have.

- Q. What are the results of those contacts?
- A. We have 79.93 percent that have joined us in this unitization effort.
- Q. Do you anticipate any further voluntary joinder?
  - A. There is that possibility.
- Q. Are you continuing to contact those who have not yet joined?
- A. Yes. And do you want me to give specifics in that regard?

- Q. I don't think it's necessary, unless
  the Examiner may ask a question about that
  later. But you say there's 79.6 percent joinder?
  A. 79.93 percent joinder.
  Q. Let me turn your attention to what has
- Q. Let me turn your attention to what has been marked as Exhibit No. 4. We're skipping Exhibit 3 for the movement and moving on to Exhibit No. 4. Would you identify that exhibit?
- A. Exhibit No. 4 is the unit operating agreement for the development and operation of the Rock Mesa Unit Area.
- Q. Has the unit operating agreement been circulated to parties who have joined the unit?
  - A. Yes.

- Q. What's the status of the execution of that agreement?
- A. The same percentage that's executed the unit agreement have also executed the unit operating agreement.
- Q. I assume it's proposed that Merrion Oil & Gas corporation will be the operator of the unit?
  - A. That's correct.
- Q. Moving back now to Exhibit No. 2, has the unit agreement been approved by the Bureau of

Land Management?

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- A. Yes, it has.
- Q. When was it approved?
- A. October 6, 1992.
  - Q. What is the evidence of that approval?
- A. The certification determination, which is Exhibit 2, a part of Exhibit 2 of 5.
  - Q. Is it the first page of Exhibit No. 2?
  - A. Yes, it is.
  - Q. Now I would like you to refer to what has been marked as Merrion Exhibit 3, and identify that exhibit?
  - A. That exhibit is a letter from the office of the Commissioner of Public Lands, signed by Floyd Prando, a letter dated October 27th, and basically describing or detailing the preliminary approval of the Rock Mesa Unit by the Commissioner of Public Lands.
  - Q. It appears that the preliminary approval is conditional in nature. What conditions must be satisfied before final approval would be granted?
  - A. There are three items, one of which has already been satisfied, but the first requirement is that the OCD approve the unit. The second

requirement is they want copies of all well records. The third is a copy of the finalized unit operating agreement, which we've already provided them and that requirement has been satisfied.

- Q. When do you propose to commence unit operations?
- A. We propose to commence unit operations at the point in time that an APD is approved and we're ready to clear a location for drilling.
  - Q. And is that work in progress?
  - A. Yes.

- Q. Now turn to what you have marked as Exhibit No. 5, and would you identify that exhibit?
- A. Okay. Exhibit No. 5 is the return receipt request mail, copies of the return receipt request receipts, as well as the letters that were sent to the working interest owners that have not agreed to participate in the unit effort.
- Q. This notice was notification of the scheduling of this hearing today?
- A. That's correct. And we also included in that list all of the overriding royalty

interest owners that did not agree to participate in this unitization effort.

- Q. Mr. Hegarty, in your opinion, have the notification requirements applicable to this application and hearing been satisfied?
  - A. Yes, they have.

- Q. Were Exhibit Nos. 2 through 5 either prepared by you or at your direction and under your supervision?
  - A. Yes, they were.

MR. ROBERTS: I would move the admission of Exhibit Nos. 2 through 5.

EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibits 2 through 5 will be admitted into evidence.

MR. ROBERTS: I have no other questions for this witness.

MR. STOVALL: As a preliminary matter, would you mind submitting an affidavit to go along with Exhibit 5, stating that notice has been given to all parties required to receive notice under the rules and regulations of the Division? And attach as an exhibit a list of those parties. It makes it easier for us to look at it and identify it.

EXAMINER STOGNER: That can be made a

1 part or a supplement to Exhibit No. 5. 2 MR. ROBERTS: Do you want that to be my 3 affidavit? MR. STOVALL: It can be yours or Mr. 5 Hegarty's, whoever wants to put his oath on the line ought to be the one to sign the affidavit. 6 7 EXAMINATION BY MR. STOGNER: 8 9 Q. So that I'm understanding, I'm trying to find the definition of the unit substance or 10 11 the formation that's unitized, and maybe you can Where do you need to look? 12 help me. MR. STOVALL: You're looking at page 13 14 2-A, Mr. Examiner? EXAMINER STOGNER: 15 Yes. MR. STOVALL: I think there's some 16 confusion when you read that initially. 17 18 understand that to mean that all the substances in the unit area are unitized with the exception 19 of the Entrada formation within the areas 20 21 specified in paragraph 2-A of the unit 22 agreement?

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this portion of the unit agreement by the Bureau

of Land Management, and the reason being is that

THE WITNESS: We were directed to amend

- because within the Rock Mesa Unit boundaries, we have the Media Entrada Unit, and so we had to exclude the Media Entrada formation from this unit and that was the purpose of this language.

  All other horizons are covered.
  - Q. So, other than the Entrada, all horizons above and below the Entrada are in this unit agreement?
  - A. Well, basically all the horizons are covered other than the Entrada in the lands described on that page. So it's only those Entrada rights in the Media Entrada Unit.
  - Q. That Media Entrada Unit is an all-federal unit, I would assume?
    - A. Yes.

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- Q. I'm looking at Exhibit No. 2, your Exhibit A attached to that Exhibit No. 2.
  - A. Our color-coded map?
- Q. Yes, the color-coded map. Where is the initial well? Is it located on here?
- 21 A. No, it's not. It's identified--it's in 22 Section 32, the southeast quarter, but--
- MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Examiner, Mr. Dunn, I
  think, has the location or can readily find it.
- 25 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Dunn, do you

know what that location will be? 1 MR. DUNN: It's 2310 from the South, 2 1650 from the East, Section 32, Township 19 North, Range 3 West, Sandoval County, New Mexico. And the only acreage that is sta -5 property is that Section 16, is that correct? 6 7 Α. That's correct. Other than that, the state land office 8 would not have been involved? 9 Α. That's correct. 10 EXAMINER STOGNER: Any other questions 11 of this witness? 12 MR. STOVALL: Yes, a couple of them. 13 14 EXAMINATION BY MR. STOVALL: 15 Mr. Hegarty, am I reading this right 16 Q. that this appears to be a divided unit? 17 18 familiar with the divided versus undivided 19 terminology? Yes, right. Well, it's--20 Α. 21 Q. By that I mean it has participating 22 areas and it's not going to be an entire unit participation? 23 24 Correct. Α. 2.5 Q. And those areas will be subject to the

BLM approval?

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- Α. Right.
- Q. Now, with respect to what is commonly referred to as nonconsent provisions--I think you referred to it in the unit operating agreement as nondrilling parties, am I correct in reading that so-called not drilling or nonconsent parties forfeit their interest to the unit to the drilling parties until they've recovered, essentially, cost plus 200 percent on drilling and completing costs and operational costs, is that correct? referring to paragraph 12.3, I think, is where I'm getting that.

The language of the agreement is 300 percent, but I believe in statutory language that's equivalent to cost plus 200 percent, is that correct?

Α. Right. That's correct.

MR. STOVALL: I don't think I have any 20 other questions.

21 EXAMINER STOGNER: Any other questions of Mr. Hegarty? If not, he may be excused. 22

Mr. Roberts, do you have anything 23

24 further?

25 MR. ROBERTS: No, sir.

1	EXAMINER STOGNER: Anybody else have
2	anything further in Case 10526? If not, this
3	case will be taken under advisement.
4	(And the proceedings concluded.)
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14	I do hereby come that the foregoing is
15	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.
15 16	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.
15 16 17	the Examiner hearing of Case its. 10576, heard by me on 29 Car. 1992.
15 16 17	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.
15 16 17 18	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.
15 16 17 18 19	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.
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15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	the Examiner hearing of Case No. 10576.  heard by me on 29 Opt. 1992.

## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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

I, Carla Diane Rodriguez, Certified
Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public, HEREBY
CERTIFY that the foregoing transcript of
proceedings before the Oil Conservation Division
was reported by me; that I caused my notes to be
transcribed under my personal supervision; and
that the foregoing is a true and accurate record
of the proceedings.

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

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL November 25, 1992.

2 2

CARLA DIANE RODRIGUEZ, RPR

CSR No. 4