

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE HEARING  
CALLED BY THE OIL CONSERVATION  
DIVISION FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
CONSIDERING:

*CASE NO. 11642*  
*ORDER NO. R-10701*

**APPLICATION OF MARALO, INC. FOR COMPULSORY POOLING AND AN  
UNORTHODOX OIL WELL LOCATION, LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO.**

ORDER OF THE DIVISION

BY THE DIVISION:

This cause came on for hearing at 8:15 a.m. on November 7, 1996, at Santa Fe, New Mexico, before Examiner Michael E. Stogner.

NOW, on this 15th day of November, 1996, the Division Director, having considered the testimony, the record and the recommendations of the Examiner, and being fully advised in the premises,

FINDS THAT:

(1) Due public notice having been given as required by law, the Division has jurisdiction of this cause and the subject matter thereof.

(2) The applicant, Maralo, Inc., seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Strawn formation underlying the NE/4 NE/4 (Unit A) of Section 17, Township 17 South, Range 38 East, NMPM, Lea County, New Mexico, to form a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit.

(3) Within said vertical extent there are currently no designated oil pools within one mile of the subject 40-acre tract, therefore these intervals are subject to Division General Rule 104.B(1)(b), which require standard 40-acre spacing and proration units with wells to be located no closer than 330 feet from the outer boundary of the spacing unit.

(4) The applicant proposes to dedicate to said unit its proposed Burrows "17" Well No. 1 (API No. 30-025-33583), to be drilled at an unorthodox oil well location 870

feet from the North line and 1180 feet from the East line of said Section 17.

(5) The applicant presented geologic testimony for the Strawn interval only which, based on "three-dimensional" seismic and the extrapolation of well log analysis from two wellbores in offsetting sections that penetrated this interval, indicated the presence of a small "algal reef mound" within the Strawn formation that trends in a northwesterly/southeasterly direction and which is approximately one-half to three-quarters of a mile in length and approximately one-third mile in width and centered within the NE/4 of said Section 17.

(6) The geological evidence further indicates that a well drilled at the proposed unorthodox location should encounter a greater amount of net pay within this relatively small "algal mound" than a well drilled at any other location within the NE/4 of said Section 17 that would be considered "standard", thereby increasing the likelihood of obtaining commercial oil production within this geologic feature.

(7) The subject 40-acre tract is included in a single 160-acre fee lease in which mineral ownership is common throughout and, since the mineral ownership is common and the proposed location is not encroaching on properties controlled by other operators, mineral interests, or royalty owners not a party to this action, correlative rights should therefore be protected.

(8) The applicant has a right to develop the subject unit and to recover oil underlying the same. At this time however, not all working interest owners in the proposed 40-acre spacing and proration unit have agreed to pool their interests.

(9) No other affected party, owner or operator appeared at the hearing and/or objected to this application.

(10) To avoid the drilling of unnecessary wells, to protect correlative rights, to prevent waste, and to afford to the owner of each interest in said unit the opportunity to recover or receive without unnecessary expense his just and fair share of the oil in any pool resulting from this order, the subject application should be approved by pooling all mineral interests, whatever they may be, within said unit.

(11) The applicant should be designated the operator of the subject well and unit.

(12) Any non-consenting working interest owner should be afforded the opportunity to pay his share of the estimated well costs to the operator in lieu of paying his share of reasonable well costs out of production.

(13) Any non-consenting working interest owner who does not pay his share of estimated well costs should have withheld from production his share of the reasonable well costs plus an additional 200 percent thereof as a reasonable charge for the risk involved in the drilling of the well.

(14) Any non-consenting interest owner should be afforded the opportunity to object to the actual well costs but actual well costs should be adopted as the reasonable well costs in the absence of such objection.

(15) Following determination of reasonable well costs, any non-consenting working interest owner who has paid his share of estimated well costs should pay to the operator any amount that reasonable well costs exceed estimated well costs and should receive from the operator any amount that paid estimated well costs exceed reasonable well costs.

(16) \$5,434.00 per month while drilling and \$543.00 per month while producing should be fixed as reasonable charges for supervision (combined fixed rates); the operator should be authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of such supervision charges attributable to each non-consenting working interest, and in addition thereto, the operator should be authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of actual expenditures required for operating the subject well, not in excess of what are reasonable, attributable to each non-consenting working interest.

(17) All proceeds from production from the subject well which are not disbursed for any reason should be placed in escrow to be paid to the true owner thereof upon demand and proof of ownership.

(18) Upon the failure of the operator of said pooled unit to commence drilling of the subject well to which said unit is dedicated on or before February 15, 1997, the order pooling said unit should become null and void and of no effect whatsoever.

(19) Should all the parties to this force-pooling reach voluntary agreement subsequent to entry of this order, this order should thereafter be of no further effect.

(20) The operator of the well and unit should notify the Director of the Division in writing of the subsequent voluntary agreement of all parties subject to the force-pooling provisions of this order.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

(1) All mineral interests, whatever they may be, from the surface to the base

of the Strawn formation underlying the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (Unit A) of Section 17, Township 17 South, Range 38 East, NMPM, Lea County, New Mexico, are hereby pooled to form a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 40-acre spacing within said vertical extent. Said unit is to be dedicated to its proposed Burrows "17" Well No. 1 (API No. 30-025-33583), to be drilled at an unorthodox oil well location 870 feet from the North line and 1180 feet from the East line of said Section 17.

PROVIDED HOWEVER THAT, the operator of said unit shall commence the drilling of said well on or before the fifteenth day of February, 1997, and shall thereafter continue the drilling of said well with due diligence to a depth sufficient to test the Strawn formation.

PROVIDED FURTHER THAT, in the event said operator does not commence the drilling of said well on or before the fifteenth day of February, 1997, Decretory Paragraph No. (1) of this order shall be null and void and of no effect whatsoever, unless said operator obtains a time extension from the Division for good cause shown.

PROVIDED FURTHER THAT, should said well not be drilled to completion, or abandonment, within 120 days after commencement thereof, said operator shall appear before the Division Director and show cause why Decretory Paragraph No. (1) of this order should not be rescinded.

(2) Maralo, Inc. is hereby designated the operator of the subject well and unit.

(3) After the effective date of this order and within 90 days prior to commencing said well, the operator shall furnish the Division and each known working interest owner in the subject unit an itemized schedule of estimated well costs.

(4) Within 30 days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished to him, any non-consenting working interest owner shall have the right to pay his share of estimated well costs to the operator in lieu of paying his share of reasonable well costs out of production, and any such owner who pays his share of estimated well costs as provided above shall remain liable for operating costs but shall not be liable for risk charges.

(5) The operator shall furnish the Division and each known working interest owner an itemized schedule of actual well costs within 90 days following completion of the well, if no objection to the actual well costs is received by the Division and the Division has not objected within 45 days following receipt of said schedule, the actual well costs shall be the reasonable well costs; provided however, if there is an objection to

actual well costs within said 45-day period the Division will determine reasonable well costs after public notice and hearing.

(6) Within 60 days following determination of reasonable well costs, any non-consenting working interest owner who has paid his share of estimated costs in advance as provided above shall pay to the operator his pro rata share of the amount that reasonable well costs exceed estimated well costs and shall receive from the operator his pro rata share of the amount that estimated well costs exceed reasonable well costs.

(7) The operator is hereby authorized to withhold the following costs and charges from production:

- (A) The pro rata share of reasonable well costs attributable to each non-consenting working interest owner who has not paid his share of estimated well costs within 30 days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished to him; and
- (B) As a charge for the risk involved in the drilling of the well, 200 percent of the pro rata share of reasonable well costs attributable to each non-consenting working interest owner who has not paid his share of estimated well costs within 30 days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished to him.

(8) The operator shall distribute said costs and charges withheld from production to the parties who advanced the well costs

(9) \$5,434.00 per month while drilling and \$543.00 per month while producing are hereby fixed as reasonable charges for supervision (combined fixed rates); the operator is hereby authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of such supervision charges attributable to each non-consenting working interest, and in addition thereto, the operator is hereby authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of actual expenditures required for operating such well, not in excess of what are reasonable, attributable to each non-consenting working interest.

(10) Any unleased mineral interest shall be considered a seven-eighths (7/8) working interest and a one-eighth (1/8) royalty interest for the purpose of allocating costs

and charges under the terms of this order

(11) Any well costs or charges which are to be paid out of production shall be withheld only from the working interest's share of production, and no costs or charges shall be withheld from production attributable to royalty interests.

(12) All proceeds from production from the subject well which are not disbursed for any reason shall be placed in escrow in Lea County, New Mexico, to be paid to the true owner thereof upon demand and proof of ownership; the operator shall notify the Division of the name and address of said escrow agent within 30 days from the date of first deposit with said escrow agent.

(13) Should all the parties to this force-pooling reach voluntary agreement subsequent to entry of this order, this order shall thereafter be of no further effect.

(14) The operator of the subject well and unit shall notify the Director of the Division in writing of the subsequent voluntary agreement of all parties subject to the force-pooling provisions of this order.

(15) Jurisdiction of this cause is retained for the entry of such further orders as the Division may deem necessary.

DONE at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on the day and year hereinabove designated.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION



WILLIAM J. LEMAY  
Director

S E A L