

**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. 15328  
ORDER NO. R-14024**

**APPLICATION OF COG OPERATING LLC FOR A NON-STANDARD  
SPACING AND PRORATION UNIT AND COMPULSORY POOLING, LEA  
COUNTY, NEW MEXICO.**

**ORDER OF THE DIVISION**

**BY THE DIVISION:**

This case came on for hearing at 8:15 a.m. on June 25, 2015 at Santa Fe, New Mexico, before Examiner Michael McMillan, and July 9, 2015 before Examiner William V. Jones.

NOW, on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of July, 2015, the Division Director, having considered the testimony, the record and the recommendations of Examiner McMillan,

**FINDS THAT:**

(1) Due public notice has been given, and the Division has jurisdiction of this case and of the subject matter.

(2) COG Operating LLC ("COG" or "Applicant") seeks approval of a non-standard 200-acre oil spacing and proration unit and project area (the "Unit") in the Yeso formation, Maljamar; Yeso, West Pool (pool code 44500), comprised of the S/2 of the S/2 of Section 9, and the SW/4 of the SW/4 of Section 10, Township 17 South, Range 32 East, NMPM, Lea County, New Mexico. Applicant further seeks an order pooling all uncommitted interests in the Unit.

(3) The Unit will be dedicated to the Applicant's Branex-COG Federal Com. Well No. 18H (the "proposed well"; API No. 30-025-41007), a horizontal well to be drilled from a surface location 330 feet from the South line and 330 feet from the West line (Unit M) of Section 9, to a standard terminus 330 feet from the South line and 990 feet from the West line (Unit M) of Section 10. The completed interval of the proposed well in the Yeso formation will be orthodox.

(4) The proposed well is within the Maljamar; Yeso, West Pool (pool code 44500). Spacing in this pool is governed by statewide Rule 19.15.15.9A. NMAC, which provides for standard 40-acre units, each comprising a governmental quarter-quarter section. The proposed Unit and project area consists of five adjacent quarter-quarter sections.

(5) Applicant appeared at the hearing through counsel and presented land and geologic evidence to the effect that:

- (a) Applicant provided notice of this application by publication before hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in Lea County, New Mexico, the county in which the property is located for the unlocatable interests;
- (b) Applicant seeks to compulsory pool; i) a single working interest owner in the Unit; ii) all interest owners of bare record title within the Unit; and iii) several overriding royalty interest owners within the Unit who leases do not authorize communitization;
- (c) Applicant is preparing to submit the proposed Communitization Agreement to the United States Bureau of Land Management ("BLM"); however, the Communitization Agreement cannot be approved because the record title owners and a group of overriding royalty interest owners have not ratified or otherwise approved the Communitization Agreement;
- (d) Applicant mailed a copy of the Communitization Agreement to record title owner and a group of overriding royalty interest owners on May 13, 2015, and did not receive a response;
- (e) Applicant mailed a copy of the well proposal to the working interest owner on February 26, 2015, and did not receive a response;
- (f) the Yeso formation in this area is suitable for development by horizontal drilling;
- (g) the proposed orientation of the horizontal well East to West or West to East is appropriate for the proposed Unit;
- (h) all of Section 9 and the west half of Section 10 are Federal acreage owned by the Applicant, and the Applicant will develop these lands with a combination of horizontal and vertical wells in the Yeso formation;

- (i) record title owners and select royalty interest owners are being compulsory pooled without penalty; and
- (j) all quarter-quarter sections to be included in the Unit are expected to be productive in the Yeso formation, so that formation of the Unit as requested will not impair correlative rights.

(6) No other party appeared at the hearing, or otherwise opposed the granting of this application.

The Division concludes that:

(7) Approval of the proposed unit will enable Applicant to drill a horizontal well that will efficiently produce the reserves underlying the Unit, thereby preventing waste, and will not impair correlative rights.

(8) Two or more separately owned tracts are embraced within the Unit, and/or there are royalty interests and/or undivided interests in oil and gas minerals in one or more tracts included in the Unit that are separately owned.

(9) The interests of the lessors who have not amended their leases to allow for pooling should be pooled for the purpose of combining all interests in the Unit.

(10) Applicant is owner of an oil and gas working interest within the Unit. Applicant has the right to drill and proposes to drill the proposed well to a common source of supply within the Unit.

(11) There are interest owners in the Unit that have not agreed to pool their interests.

(12) To avoid the drilling of unnecessary wells, protect correlative rights, prevent waste and afford to the owner of each interest in the Unit the opportunity to recover or receive without unnecessary expense its just and fair share of hydrocarbons, this application should be approved by pooling all uncommitted interests, whatever they may be, in the oil and gas within the Unit.

(13) Once the interests of select interest owners of bare record title and overriding royalty interest owners are pooled by order of the Division, then all heirs, devisees, and successors will have either ratified and joined the Communitization Agreement or will have had their interests combined by order of the Division.

(14) COG Operating LLC should be designated the operator of the proposed well and of the Unit.

(15) Any pooled working interest owner who does not pay its share of estimated well costs, should have withheld from production its share of reasonable well

costs, plus an additional 200% thereof as a reasonable charge for the risk involved in drilling the proposed well.

(16) Reasonable charges for supervision (combined fixed rates) should be fixed at \$7,000 per month while drilling and \$700 per month while producing, provided that these rates should be adjusted annually pursuant to Section III.1.A.3. of the COPAS form titled "*Accounting Procedure-Joint Operations*", for the working interest owners who have not ratified the Joint Operating Agreement.

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:**

(1) A non-standard 200-acre oil spacing and proration unit (the "Unit") is hereby established for the Yeso formation, the Maljamar; Yeso, West Pool (pool code 44500), consisting of the S/2 of the S/2 of Section 9, and the SW/4 of the SW/4 of Section 10, Township 17 South, Range 32 East, NMPM, in Lea County, New Mexico.

(2) Pursuant to the application of COG Operating LLC, all uncommitted interests, whatever they may be, in the oil and gas in the Yeso formation underlying the Unit, are hereby pooled.

(3) The Unit shall be dedicated to the Applicant's Branex-COG Federal Com. Well No. 18H (the "proposed well"; API No. 30-025-41007), a horizontal well to be drilled from a surface location 330 feet from the South line and 330 feet from the West line (Unit M) of Section 9, to a standard terminus 330 feet from the South line and 990 feet from the West line (Unit M) of Section 10. The completed interval of the proposed well in the Yeso formation will be orthodox.

(4) The operator of the Unit shall commence drilling the proposed well on or before July 31, 2016, and shall thereafter continue drilling the proposed well with due diligence to test the Yeso formation.

(5) In the event the operator does not commence drilling the proposed well on or before July 31, 2016, Ordering Paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be of no effect, unless the operator obtains a time extension from the Division Director for good cause demonstrated by satisfactory evidence.

(6) Should the proposed well not be drilled and completed within 120 days after commencement thereof, then Ordering Paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be of no further effect, and the unit and project area created by this order shall terminate, unless the operator appears before the Division Director and obtains an extension of the time for completion of the proposed well for good cause shown by satisfactory evidence. If the proposed well is not completed in all of the quarter-quarter sections included in the proposed Unit within 120 days after commencement of drilling, then the operator shall apply to the Division for an amendment to this Order to contract the Unit so that it includes only those quarter-quarter sections in which the well is completed.

(7) Upon final plugging and abandonment of the proposed well and any other well drilled on the Unit pursuant to Division Rule 19.15.13.9 NMAC, the pooled Unit created by this Order shall terminate, unless this Order has been amended to authorize further operations.

(8) COG Operating LLC (OGRID 229137) is hereby designated the operator of the well and the Unit.

(9) After pooling, uncommitted working interest owners are referred to as pooled working interest owners. ("Pooled working interest owners" are owners of working interests in the Unit, including unleased mineral interests, who are not parties to an operating agreement governing the Unit.) After the effective date of this order, the operator shall furnish the Division and each known pooled working interest owner in the Unit an itemized schedule of estimated costs of drilling, completing and equipping the proposed well ("well costs").

(10) Within 30 days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished, any pooled working interest owner shall have the right to pay its share of estimated well costs to the operator in lieu of paying its share of reasonable well costs out of production as hereinafter provided, and any such owner who pays its share of estimated well costs as provided above shall remain liable for operating costs but shall not be liable for risk charges. Pooled working interest owners who elect not to pay their share of estimated well costs as provided in this paragraph shall thereafter be referred to as "non-consenting working interest owners."

(11) The operator shall furnish the Division and each known pooled working interest owner (including non-consenting working interest owners) an itemized schedule of actual well costs within 90 days following completion of the proposed 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 the schedule, the actual well costs shall be deemed to be the reasonable well costs. If there is an objection to actual well costs within the 45-day period, the Division will determine reasonable well costs after public notice and hearing.

(12) Within 60 days following determination of reasonable well costs, any pooled working interest owner who has paid its share of estimated costs in advance as provided above shall pay to the operator its share of the amount that reasonable well costs exceed estimated well costs and shall receive from the operator the amount, if any, that the estimated well costs it has paid exceed its share of reasonable well costs.

(13) The operator is hereby authorized to withhold the following costs and charges from production from the well for the working interest owners who have not ratified the Joint Operating Agreement:

- (a) the proportionate share of reasonable well costs attributable to each non-consenting working interest owner; and
- (b) as a charge for the risk involved in drilling the well, 200% of the above costs.

(14) The operator shall distribute the costs and charges withheld from production, proportionately, to the parties who advanced the well costs.

(15) Reasonable charges for supervision (combined fixed rates) for the well are hereby fixed at \$7,000 per month while drilling and \$700 per month while producing, provided that these rates shall be adjusted annually pursuant to Section III.1.A.3. of the COPAS form titled "*Accounting Procedure-Joint Operations*" for working interest owners. The operator is authorized to withhold from production the proportionate share of both the supervision charges and the actual expenditures required for operating the well, not in excess of what are reasonable, attributable to pooled working interest owners.

(16) Except as provided in Paragraphs (13) and (15) above, all proceeds from production from the proposed well that are not disbursed for any reason shall be held for the account of the person or persons entitled thereto pursuant to the Oil and Gas Proceeds Payment Act (NMSA 1978 Sections 70-10-1 through 70-10-6, as amended). If not disbursed, such proceeds shall be turned over to the appropriate authority as and when required by the Uniform Unclaimed Property Act (NMSA 1978 Sections 7-8A-1 through 70-8A-31, as amended).

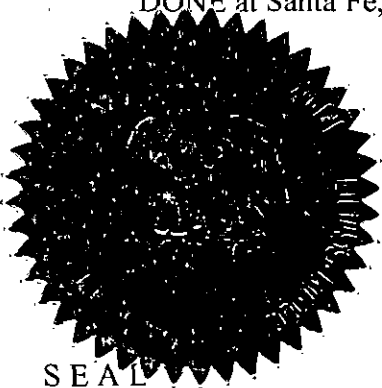
(17) Any unleased mineral interests shall be considered a seven-eighths (7/8) working interest and a one-eighth (1/8) royalty interest for the purpose of allocating costs and charges under this order. Any well costs or charges that are to be paid out of production shall be withheld only from the working interests' share of production, and no costs or charges shall be withheld from production attributable to royalty interests.

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

(19) The operator of the well and Unit shall notify the Division in writing of the subsequent voluntary agreement of all parties subject to the compulsory pooling provisions of this Order.

(20) Jurisdiction of this case 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

*David R. Catanach*

DAVID R. CATANACH  
Director