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W. THOMAS KELLAHIN*

*NEW MEXICO BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION
RECOGNIZED SPECIALIST IN THE AREA OF
NATURAL RESOURCES-OIL AND GAS LAW

JASON KELLAHIN (RETIRED 1991)

October 7, 1996

HAND DELIVERED

Mr. Michael E. Stogner
Hearing Examiner
Oil Conservation Division
2040 South Pacheco
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

Re: *NMOCD Case 11613*
Application of Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company
for Compulsory Pooling, Lea County, New Mexico

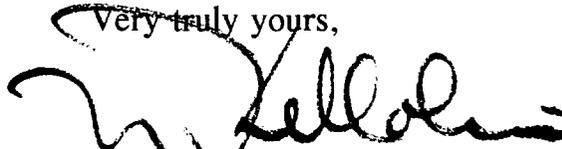
Re: *NMOCD Case 11622*
Application of Penwell Energy, Inc.
for Compulsory Pooling, Lea County, New Mexico

Dear Mr Stogner:

On behalf of Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company, please find enclosed:

- (1) Copy of Burlington's APD for the subject well which was approved on May 4, 1995. Please note the second page which show this APD is effective until May 4, 1997
- (2) Burlington's proposed order for these cases.

Very truly yours,



W. Thomas Kellahin

cc: William Fraiser Carr, Esq.
Attorney for Penwell Energy, Inc.
cc: Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company
Attn: Leslyn Swierc

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Form approved
Budget Bureau No. 1004-0136
Expires: December 31, 1991

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO DRILL OR DEEPEN

1a. TYPE OF WORK
DRILL **DEEPEN**

b. TYPE OF WELL
 OIL WELL GAS WELL OTHER SINGLE BORE MULTIPLE BORE

2. NAME OF OPERATOR
 Meridian Oil Inc.

3. ADDRESS AND TELEPHONS
 P.O. Box 51810 Midland, Texas 79710-1810 915-688-6943

4. LOCATION OF WELL (Report location clearly and in accordance with any State requirements.)
 At surface: 1980' FSL & 1980' FEL
 At proposed prod. zone: SAME AS SURFACE Unit J

5. DISTANCE IN MILES AND DIRECTION FROM NEAREST TOWN OR POST OFFICE
 28 miles west of Eunice, NM

6. DISTANCE FROM PROPOSED LOCATION TO NEAREST PROPERTY OR LEASE LINE, FT. (Also to nearest dril. unit line, if any) 1980'

7. DISTANCE FROM PROPOSED LOCATION TO NEAREST WELL, DRILLING, COMPLETED OR APPLIED FOR, ON THIS LEASE, FT. N/A 1st well

8. ELEVATION (Show whether DF, RL, GN, etc.) 3720'

9. CARLSBAD CONTROLLED WATER BASIN

10. LEASE DESIGNATION AND SERIAL NO.
 NM 81633

11. IF INDIAN, ALLOTTEE OR TRIBE NAME

12. UNIT AGREEMENT NAME

13. FARM OR LEASE NAME, WELL NO.
 Checkmate '24' Federal

14. APPELLING
 Unassigned

15. FIELD AND POOL OR WILDCAT
 Red Tank Bone Spring

16. SEC., T., R., N., OR S.E., AND SURVEY OR AREA
 24, T22S, R32E

17. COUNTY OR PARISH 18. STATE
 Lea NM

PROPOSED CASING AND CEMENTING PROGRAM

| SIZE OF HOLE | GRADE OF CASING | WEIGHT PER FOOT | SETTING DEPTH | QUANTITY OF CEMENT |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 17 1/2" | 13 3/8" | 48# | 850' | 800 SXS 'C' Circ. |
| 12 1/4" | 8 5/8" | 28#/32# | 4500' | 1550 SXS 'C' Circ. |
| 7 7/8" | 5 1/2" | 17# | 10,200' | 1200 SXS 'H', TOC @ 4400' +/- |

Not in Hydrogen Sulfide Area
 Not in Potash Designated Area

Contact Person: Donna Williams, 915-688-6943

Notice of Staking Submitted on February 6, 1995

OPER. CONSID. NO. 26485
 PROPERTY NO. 17025
 POOL CODE 51683
 EFF. DATE 5/8/95
 API NO. 30-025-32945



ABOVE SPACE DESCRIBE PROPOSED PROGRAM: If proposal is to deepen, give data on present productive zone and proposed new productive zone. If proposal is to drill or run directionally, give pertinent data on subsurface locations and measured and true vertical depths. Give blowout preventer program, if any.

APPROVED BY: Donna Williams TITLE: Regulatory Assistant DATE: 2/16/95
 (This space for Federal or State office use)

PERMIT NO. _____ APPROVAL DATE _____

Application approval does not warrant or certify that the applicant holds legal or equitable title to those rights in the subject lease which would entitle the applicant to conduct operations thereon.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL, IF ANY:

APPROVED BY: Acting AREA MANAGER DATE: 5-4-95

*See Instructions On Reverse Side

18 U.S.C. Section 1001, makes it a crime for any person knowingly and willfully to make to any department or agency of the United States any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations as to any matter within its jurisdiction.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

OPERATOR'S COPY

FORM APPROVED
Budget Bureau No. 1004-0135
Expires: March 31, 1993

SUNDRY NOTICES AND REPORTS ON WELLS

Do not use this form for proposals to drill or to deepen or reentry to a different reservoir.

Use "APPLICATION FOR PERMIT -" for such proposals

SUBMIT IN TRIPLICATE

1. Type of Well
 Oil Well Gas Well Other

2. Name of Operator
MERIDIAN OIL INC.

3. Address and Telephone No.
P.O. Box 51810, Midland, TX 79710-1810 915-688-6943

4. Location of Well (Homage, Sec., T., R., M., or Survey Description)
**Sec. 24, T22S, R32E
 1980' FSL & 1980' FEL**

5. Lease Designation and Serial No.
NM 81633

6. If Indian, Allottee or Tribe Name

7. If Unit or CA, Agreement Designation

8. Well Name and No.
**Checkmate '24' No. 1
 Federal**

9. API Well No.
30-025-32945

10. Field and Pool, or exploratory Area
Red Tank Bone Spring

11. County or Parish, State
Lea NM

12. CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX(S) TO INDICATE NATURE OF NOTICE, REPORT, OR OTHER DATA

| TYPE OF SUBMISSION | TYPE OF ACTION |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Intent | <input type="checkbox"/> Abandonment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subsequent Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Recompletion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Final Abandonment Notice | <input type="checkbox"/> Plugging Back |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Casing Repair |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Making Casing |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Extend Drig Permit</u> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Plans |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Routine Fracturing |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Shut-Off |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Conversion to Injection |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Dispose Water |

(Note: Report results of multiple completion on Well Completion or Recompletion Report and Log form.)

Describe Proposed or Completed Operations (Clearly state all pertinent details, and give pertinent dates, including estimated date of starting any proposed work. If well is directionally drilled, give subsurface locations and measured and true vertical depths for all markers and zones pertinent to this work.)*

Meridian Oil Inc. respectfully requests to extend the drilling permit for the above referenced well for a term ending in one (1) year.

The original drilling permit was issued on May 4, 1995.

APPROVED 12 MONTH PERIOD
 BY 5/4/97

MAY 12 1997
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
 DENVER, COLORADO

6. I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signed [Signature] Title Regulatory Compliance Date 5/3/96

(This space for Federal or State official use)
 Approved by [Signature] Lara Title PETROLEUM ENGINEER Date 5/23/96
 Conditions of approval, if any:

Title 18 U.S.C. Section 1001, makes it a crime for any person knowingly and willfully to make to any department or agency of the United States any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations as to any matter within its jurisdiction.

* See instruction on Reverse Side

**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. 11613

**APPLICATION OF BURLINGTON RESOURCES
OIL & GAS COMPANY FOR COMPULSORY POOLING,
LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO**

CASE NO. 11622

**APPLICATION OF PENWELL ENERGY, INC.
COMPULSORY POOLING LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO**

ORDER NO. R-_____

**BURLINGTON RESOURCES OIL & GAS COMPANY'S
PROPOSED**

ORDER OF THE DIVISION

BY THE DIVISION:

This cause came on for hearing at 8:15 a.m. on October 3, 1996 at Santa Fe, New Mexico, before Examiner Michael E. Stogner.

NOW, on this ____ day of October, 1996, The Division Director, having considered the testimony, the recorded 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) Division Case Nos. 11613 and 11622 were consolidated at the time of the hearing for the purpose of testimony because the approval of one case will correspondingly require the denial of the other and in order to provide a comprehensive decision in these cases, one order should be entered for both cases.

(3) On August 26, 1996, the applicant in Case 11613, Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company, formerly Meridian Oil Inc. ("Burlington"), filed its application seeking an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Bone Springs formation underlying the NW/4SE/4 of Section 24, Township 22 South, Range 32 East, NMPM, Lea County, New Mexico, forming 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, which presently includes but is not necessarily limited to the Undesignated West Red Tank Delaware Pool and the Red Tank-Bone Springs Pool. Said unit is to be dedicated to its proposed Checkmate "24" Federal Well No. 1 to be drilled at a standard oil well location within said unit.

(4) On September 10, 1996, the applicant in companion Case No. 11622, Penwell Energy, Inc. ("Penwell"), filed a competing pooling application against Burlington in which Penwell seeks to be designated operator of this well.

(5) From April 21, 1995 to September 27, 1996, the working interest owners in the NW/4SE/4 of Section 24, T22S, R32E, NMPM, Lea County, New Mexico were as follows:

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Frederick Prince | 50.251 % |
| C. W. Trainer | 31.324 % |
| Burlington | 13.401 % |
| Ann Losee | 2.512 % |
| Elizabeth Losee | 2.521 % |

EFFORTS TO OBTAIN A VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT

(6) Burlington's witnesses submitted land, geological and petroleum engineering evidence which demonstrated that:

(a) On February 16, 1995, Meridian (now Burlington) filed an application for permit to drill which was approved by the BLM on May 4, 1995 and is still in full force and effect.

(b) On April 21, 1995, Burlington's predecessor, Meridian, formally proposed to the other working interest owners the voluntary formation of a 40-acre oil spacing unit consisting of the NW/4SE/4 of said Section 24 to be dedicated to the Checkmate 24 Federal Well No. 1 to be drilled and operated by Meridian at a standard oil well location to test for potential production from the surface to the base of the Bone Spring formation.

(c) On May 4, 1995, C. W. Trainer rejected Meridian's proposal and counter proposed that he operate this well which Meridian agreed to by signing Trainer's authority for expenditure ("AFE").

(d) From April, 1995 to August 14, 1996, Burlington had numerous discussions with Trainer concerning the subject well and repeatedly requested Trainer to commence the well.

(e) During these discussions in 1996, Trainer stated that he would sell his interest to Burlington for \$4,000 per acre.

(f) On August 14, 1996, Burlington having determined that Trainer had no intentions of commencing this well, again proposed the subject well with Burlington as operator to these same interest owners and requested their voluntary joinder in this well within 30-day of their receipt of this proposal.

(g) As of August 23, 1996, Burlington had been advised by C. W. Trainer that he would not voluntarily agree to Burlington's proposal.

(h) On August 26, 1996, Burlington filed its pooling case and requested that this matter be set for a hearing before the Division on the next available Examiner's docket then scheduled for September 19, 1996.

(i) On August 30, 1996 Trainer signed a certified mail- return receipt card showing acceptance of Burlington's pooling application.

(j) However, because of a conflict with the Commission schedule, the Division postponed its September 19 docket until September 26th.

(7) Penwell's witnesses submitted land and geological evidence which demonstrated that:

(a) After August 30, 1996, C. W. Trainer and Frederick Prince had contacted Penwell, told Penwell that they were about to be pooled by Burlington and entered into a verbal agreement with Penwell to sell their interests to Penwell for \$100.00 per acre plus an overriding royalty, provided Penwell could obtain the right to operate the well originally proposed by Burlington and commence drilling the well by November 15, 1996.

(b) Under this verbal agreement with Trainer and Prince, Penwell had the option to withdraw from purchasing Trainer and Prince's interest if they were not successful in obtaining operations for the drilling of the subject well.

(c) On September 10, 1996, Penwell filed a competing pooling case against Burlington seeking to operate this well

and requested its case be set for hearing on the October 3, 1996 docket.

(d) Also on September 10, 1996, the same date as filing its pooling application, Penwell sent its written proposal to Burlington.

(e) On September 12, 1996, William F. Carr, attorney for Penwell, formally advised Burlington that Penwell had filed a compulsory pooling application and provided a copy of said application.

(f) As of the date of the hearing, Penwell had obtained the voluntary agreement of Trainer, Prince and Losee and had assigned part of its interest to CoEnergy Central of Detroit Michigan such that the parties would pay for the costs of the well as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Burlington | 13.40100 % |
| Penwell Energy, Inc. | 12.23625 % |
| CoEnergy Central | 69.33875 % |
| Losee | 5.02400 % |

DISPUTE OVER OPERATIONS

(8) Burlington contends it should be designated the operator because:

(a) Burlington first proposed the well;

(b) Burlington has an approved Application for Permit to Drill the subject well;

(c) Burlington afforded an opportunity to Trainer for more than 15 months for Trainer to drill the well and Trainer failed to do so;

(d) Trainer failed to timely commence this well, Trainer has forfeited the right to now select Penwell as the operator;

(e) Trainer, after being served with a compulsory pooling application, should not be allowed to avoid the consequences of compulsory pooling by attempting to transfer his interest to other parties;

(f) Burlington in the last two years has drilled and now operates 27 wells in these two pools and has a working interest in 14 other wells operated by Pogo Producing Company;

(g) Penwell has no operations in either of these pools and its nearest well is some 6 miles away;

(h) Burlington has extensive operational experience in this area and has been instrumental in the last year in reducing well costs from \$700,000 to \$650,000 and has an established plan which is likely to reduce costs by another \$74,000 per well;

(i) Burlington has developed substantial geologic experience in this area and has already assumed the exploratory risk of drilling and completing commercial wells in these two pools which will now be to the benefit of all parties;

(j) Penwell has no experience in this area;

(k) Penwell has devoted none of its geologic or engineering resources to exploring or developing either of these two pools;

(l) Burlington must commence the drilling of this well by December 31, 1996 or risk losing the availability of funds with which to drill and complete this well.

(9) Penwell contends it should be designated the operator because:

- (a) a majority of the interest owners desire Penwell to operate even though Burlington will be paying more of the actual costs of this well than Penwell.
- (b) Penwell is in agreement with all terms and conditions proposed by Burlington for this well, except that Penwell wants to be designated operator.

(10) The Division **finds that:**

(a) For more than 17 months, Burlington has sought to drill and operate this well only to be frustrated by the "last minute" efforts of Trainer and Prince to avoid being pooled and to delay this matter;

(b) It would circumvent the purposes of the New Mexico Oil and Gas Act to allow a record owner of a working interest (Trainer and Prince) in the spacing unit at the time said party was served with a compulsory pooling application to avoid or delay having that entire percentage interest pooled by assigning, conveying, selling or otherwise burdening or reducing that interest;

(c) The cutoff dates for notification of affected interest owners is necessary in this case and should be consistent with the precedent established by the Division by Order R-10672;

(d) The cutoff dates for this case are the dates each adverse party was served with notice of Burlington's pooling application which was Trainer on August 30, 1996, Elizabeth Losee on August 30, 1996, Prince on September 3, 1996, Ann Losee on September 4, 1996

(e) The adoption of these cut off dates preclude these parties from transferring their property interest to Penwell/CoEnergy.

(f) As of the cutoff dates established in this case, Trainer, Prince and the Losees **and not Penwell** were the owners pursuant to Section 70-2-17(C)

(g) Penwell's pooling application is nothing more than an attempt by Trainer/Prince to defeat Burlington's effort to be designated operator in this case.

(h) As of the cutoff dates established in this case Penwell had no ownership interest and therefore no standing to file its compulsory pooling application on September 10, 1996 and accordingly the Penwell application should be dismissed.

(11) The Division finds that Burlington's proposal is fair and reasonable and should be adopted by the Division in order to provide an equitable solution for the exploration of this spacing unit with the parties owning the majority having already been provided the opportunity to drill but having failed to drill.

(12) Time is of the essence in this matter and Burlington should be required to commence its well within 90-days following the issuance of an order in this case but in no event later than December 31, 1996.

(13) To avoid the drilling of unnecessary wells, to protect correlative rights, to avoid waste, and to afford to the owner of each interest in said unit the opportunity to recover or receive with out unnecessary expense his just and fair share of the production in any pool completion resulting from this order, the application of Burlington should be approved by pooling all mineral interests, whatever they may be, within said unit and correspondingly the application of Penwell **should be denied**.

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

(15) 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(s).

(16) Any non-consenting working 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.

(17) Following determination of reasonable well costs, any non-consenting working interest owner who has paid his share of estimated 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.

(18) \$5000.00 per month while drilling and \$500.00 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 operation the subject well, not in excess of what are reasonable, attributable to each non-consenting working interest.

(19) 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.

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

(21) The operator(s) of the well and unit shall notify the Director of the Division in writing of the subsequent voluntary agreement of all parties subject to the forced pooling provisions of the order.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

(1) The application of Penwell Energy, Inc. in Case 11622 is **hereby denied.**

(2) The application of Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company in Case No. 11613 for an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Bone Springs formation underlying the NW/4SE/4 of Section 24, Township 22 South, Range 32 East, NMPM, Lea County, New Mexico, forming a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any and all formation and/or pools developed on 40-acre oil spacing within said vertical extent which presently include but is not necessarily limited to the Red Tank-Bone Springs Pool and the West Red Tank Delaware Pool is hereby **approved.**

PROVIDED HOWEVER THAT, Burlington as the operator of said unit shall commence the drilling of said well on or before the 31st day of December, 1996, and shall thereafter continue the drilling of said well with due diligence to a depth sufficient to test the Bone Springs formation.

PROVIDED FURTHER THAT, in the event Burlington as the said operator does not commence the drilling of said well on or before the 31st day of December, 1996, Ordering 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 Director 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 Ordering Paragraph No (1) of this order should not be rescinded.

(3) After the effective date of this order and within 90 days prior to commencing said well, Burlington shall furnish the Division and to Prince, Trainer, Elizabeth Losee and Ann Losee, (being each of the known working interest owners of record as of August 30, 1996 in the subject unit) an itemized schedule of estimated well costs.

(4) Within thirty (30) days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished to him, any said non-consenting working interest owner shall have the right to pay his share of estimated well costs to Burlington 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 operation 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 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 well 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 thirty (30) days from the date the schedule of estimated well costs is furnished.

(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 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) \$5000.00 per month while drilling and \$500.00 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 operation 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 immediately 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 parties to this forced pooling order reach voluntary agreement subsequent to entry of this order, this order shall thereafter be of no further effect.

Case Nos. 11613 & 11622
Order No. R-
Page 13

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

(15) Jurisdiction is hereby 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