## 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. 12,274

APPLICATION OF DAVID H. ARRINGTON OIL AND GAS, INC., FOR COMPULSORY POOLING DIRECTIONAL DRILLING AND AN UNORTHODOX WELL LOCATION, LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

ORIGINAL

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# REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS EXAMINER HEARING

BEFORE: DAVID R. CATANACH, Hearing Examiner

November 4th, 1999

Santa Fe, New Mexico

This matter came on for hearing before the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division, DAVID R. CATANACH,
Hearing Examiner, on Thursday, November 4th, 1999, at the
New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources

Department, Porter Hall, 2040 South Pacheco, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Steven T. Brenner, Certified Court Reporter No. 7

for the State of New Mexico.

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## INDEX

November 4th, 1999 Examiner Hearing CASE NO. 12,274

	PAGE
APPEARANCES	3
APPLICANT'S WITNESSES:	
DALE DOUGLAS (Landman)	
Direct Examination by Mr. Carr	4
Examination by Examiner Catanach	16
BILL D. BAKER, JR. (Geologist)	
Direct Examination by Mr. Carr	18
Examination by Examiner Catanach	24
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE	27

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# EXHIBITS

Applicant's	Identified	Admitted
Exhibit 1	7	15
Exhibit 2	9	15
Exhibit 3	12	15
Exhibit 4 Exhibit 5	12 14	15 15
Exhibit 6	19	23

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## APPEARANCES

## FOR THE DIVISION:

BRUCE ROGOFF
Assistant General Counsel
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department
2040 South Pacheco
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

## FOR THE APPLICANT:

CAMPBELL, CARR, BERGE and SHERIDAN, P.A. Suite 1 - 110 N. Guadalupe P.O. Box 2208
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2208
By: WILLIAM F. CARR

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WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had at 1 9:05 a.m.: 2 EXAMINER CATANACH: At this time we'll call Case 3 12,274, the Application of David H. Arrington Oil and Gas, 4 Inc., for compulsory pooling directional drilling and an 5 unorthodox well location, Lea County, New Mexico. 6 Call for appearances in this case. 7 MR. CARR: May it please the Examiner, my name is 8 9 William F. Carr with the Santa Fe law firm Campbell, Carr, Berge and Sheridan. We represent David H. Arrington Oil 10 and Gas, Inc., in this matter, and I have two witnesses. 11 12 EXAMINER CATANACH: Okay, will the witnesses please stand to be sworn in? 13 (Thereupon, the witnesses were sworn.) 14 DALE DOUGLAS, 15 the witness herein, after having been first duly sworn upon 16 his oath, was examined and testified as follows: 17 DIRECT EXAMINATION 18 BY MR. CARR: 19 Would you state your full name for the record? 20 Q. 21 Α. My name is Dale Douglas. Where do you reside? 22 Q. Midland, Texas. 23 Α. By whom are you employed? 24 Q. I'm self-employed. 25 Α.

What is your current relationship with David H. 1 Q. Arrington Oil and Gas, Inc.? 2 I'm a contract landman. Α. 3 Are you the landman that has been responsible for 4 0. 5 the land issues concerning the compulsory pooling Application before the Division in this matter? 6 Α. Yes, sir. Have you previously testified before this 8 Q. Division? 9 Yes, sir. 10 Α. At the time of that testimony were your 11 Q. credentials as an expert in petroleum land matters accepted 12 and made a matter of record? 13 14 A. Yes, sir. Are you familiar with the Application filed in 15 Q. this case? 16 Yes, sir. 17 Α. And are you familiar with the status of the lands 18 Q. in the subject pooling -- the unit which is the subject of 19 the Application and the offsetting properties? 20 Yes, sir. 21 Α. MR. CARR: Are Mr. Douglas's qualifications 22 23 acceptable? 24 EXAMINER CATANACH: They are. (By Mr. Carr) Would you briefly summarize for 25 Q.

Mr. Catanach what it is that Arrington seeks with this Application?

A. Yes, sir, we're -- Mr. Arrington is seeking an order pooling all of the minerals from the surface to the base of the Wolfcamp formation under the southeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 29, Township 15 South, Range 36 East, in Lea County, New Mexico. This tract would be dedicated to the Prince Nymph Well Number 1-A.

The well will be re-entered at its surface location, which is 2308 feet from the south line and 943 feet from the east line, which is located in Unit I of Section 29. It will be kicked off and directionally drilled in a northerly direction to an unorthodox bottomhole location, which will be within 50 feet of a point located 2440 feet from the north line and 866 feet from the east line, which is in Unit H, Section 29.

The bottomhole location, however, will not be closer than 200 feet to the southern boundary of this 40-acre tract.

- Q. The original Prince Nymph Number 1 was 200 feet from the common lease line; is that right?
  - A. That is correct.
- Q. And you're going to directionally drill from that wellbore to the north, and you will be at least 200 feet, again, from that common boundary?

A. That's correct.

- Q. Let's go to Exhibit Number 1, and I'd ask you,
  Mr. Douglas, to identify this and review the information on
  the exhibit for Mr. Catanach.
- A. Okay. Exhibit Number 1 is a plat which shows the land in the area where the Prince Nymph Number 1 well and the bottomhole location is located.

The southeast quarter of Section 29, which has the stippling around it, is a 40-acre tract that shows the bottomhole location with the footages spaced off, which is 2440 feet from the north line of the section and 866 feet from the east line of the section, which also places that bottomhole location 200 feet north of the south line of that 40-acre tract.

Just to the south of it, we've also indicated a 40-acre tract, which is the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter where the original well was drilled. It was drilled at that surface location, and its bottomhole location was likewise 200 feet from the north line of that 40-acre tract.

Over on the right-hand side of the plat I have listed the status of the land, some unleased mineral owners, some uncommitted leasehold owners and then who the committed acreage owners are, along with the percentages of ownership.

I've also sited on this plat or shown the current owners of the minerals and/or leasehold estate in the 40-acre tract where the surface location is located for the Prince Nymph Number 1 well.

- Q. The Prince Nymph Number 1 was drilled by Mr. Arrington earlier this year?
  - A. That is correct, yes, sir.
  - Q. And that was a dryhole?

- A. It was drilled to the Strawn formation, and it was plugged as a dryhole.
- Q. What is the current status of Mr. Arrington's efforts to acquire the rights to use the surface and that old wellbore for the purposes of developing reserves from the northern tract?
- A. Okay, Mr. Arrington currently owns a portion of the leasehold estate under the 40-acre tract where the -- surface, where the well is located. It's therefore our opinion right now that he has the ownership of that wellbore by virtue of those leases.

However, when those leases expire, that wellbore will revert to the surface owner, and we're negotiating with the surface owner to acquire a surface lease to utilize that wellbore at such time as this lease expires, and we expect to have that agreement signed in the next two weeks.

- Q. And are you experiencing any problems at all in negotiating this agreement with the surface owner?
  - A. None whatsoever.

- Q. What is the status of the acreage we're seeking to pool?
- A. The acreage that we're seeking to pool, the 40-acre tract, Mr. Arrington has the lease hold ownership under 68 -- a little over 68 percent of that tract. There are some unleased mineral owners which own 2-1/2 percent, or 2-1/2 percent of the acreage, and then there are some uncommitted leasehold owners who have not committed to participate in the well, nor have we reached an agreement with them.
  - Q. What is the primary objective in the well?
  - A. The Wolfcamp formation.
  - Q. Would you identify Exhibit Number 2?
- A. Exhibit Number 2 is a listing of the specific parties and their ownership that I just mentioned, the unleased mineral owners, the uncommitted leasehold owners, that will be under this tract that we are attempting to pool.
- Q. Have you been able to locate all individuals who own an interest in the property?
  - A. Yes, sir, we have.
  - Q. Now, Mr. Arrington has 68 percent of the working

interest in this tract?

- A. That's correct.
- Q. You have been in communication with Bahlburg Exploration concerning this matter, have you not?
  - A. That's correct.
  - Q. What is the status of those negotiations?
- A. When we originally proposed this well, we had talked about taking 20 acres out of the current 40-acre tract that the well is located on and including 20 acres from the 40-acre tract to the north to make our 40-acre unit.

Mr. Bahlburg objected to that and had basically said that since the original well was 200 feet off his leaseline, he felt like that we should move the bottomhole location -- or include the 40-acre tract under which he owns the leases as the 40-acre unit for the well.

We agreed to do that.

- Q. At this time, Mr. Bahlburg has, or in the last week, contacted Arrington, and I believe the Division, indicating that he believes an agreement is about to be reached; is that correct?
- A. Yes, he has mailed a letter to us stating that he does not want to participate in the well but that he would want to farm out his interest.
  - Q. At this point in time, has an agreement been

finalized with Mr. Bahlburg?

- A. No, it has not.
- Q. What about the status of negotiations with Anson Energy Corporation?
- A. We have spoken on a couple of different occasions with Anson, as well as the letters that we have sent them. Their position is basically to wait and see what kind of penalty they will be faced with, the cost associated with that, and make their decision once they receive notice from the Division.
- Q. At this time, no agreement has been reached with Anson?
  - A. No agreement has been reached.
- Q. If agreements are reached with any of the parties subject to the pooling, will Arrington advise the Division as soon as that agreement is reached so they -- on the record, or there will be records that reflect they're not subject to the pooling application?
- A. Yes, sir, we will.
- Q. Generally summarize the efforts you have made to reach voluntary agreement with each of the individuals shown on Exhibit 2.
- A. We mailed the original offer letters to all the parties, the unleased mineral owners and the leasehold owners with whom we didn't have an agreement, asking that

they either participate in the drilling of this well or reach an agreement with us on some sort -- to allow us to drill the well as to their mineral interest or their leasehold ownership.

We sent those letters out September the 8th. We sent a follow-up letter on October the 11th, which basically reflected the acquiescence to Mr. Bahlburg's request that we include the 40 acres to the north as the unit and have made a couple of phone calls and talked to some of these folks on the phone to reach an agreement.

- Q. In your opinion, have you made a good-faith effort to locate each individual affected by this Application and obtain their voluntary participation in the well?
  - A. Yes, we have.

- Q. Is Exhibit Number 3 copies of the letters that have been sent to these individuals which reflect your efforts to reach a voluntary agreement?
  - A. Yes, sir, they are.
  - Q. Could you identify Arrington Exhibit Number 4?
- A. Exhibit Number 4 is a copy of the AFE that has been prepared for the re-entry of this wellbore and the directional drilling associated -- and the costs associated with that. This is the AFE that we had attached and included with each of these letters that we sent to the

13 parties asking for their participation. 1 And what are the costs as reflected on this 2 Q. 3 exhibit? In utilizing the existing wellbore, we think that 4 5 -- our estimate is that to get to the bottomhole location 6 will cost \$283,500. I think if you look at Exhibit 4, is this for the 7 original Prince Nymph Number 1? Is that the AFE that you 8 9 have, or is it for the re-entry? Α. This is for the re-entry. 10 MR. CARR: Okay, in my set -- Do you have one 11 that shows the re-entry costs, Mr. Catanach? 12 EXAMINER CATANACH: Yes, I do. 13 MR. CARR: Okay. Mine reflects the original 14 15 costs. (By Mr. Carr) What are the re-entry costs? 16 Q. The re-entry costs are \$283,500. 17 Α. The original costs for the well were \$596,000; is 18 Q. 19 that not correct? 20 I don't have that AFE with me. I believe this AFE that we have here is still -- is for the re-entry. 21 22 Q. All right.

Α. Yes, sir.

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24 Q. In fact, what we are going to be able to do is 25 effect a very substantial savings by using the existing

wellbore and directionally drilling as you are proposing; is that not correct?

A. That is correct.

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- Q. And we will be calling another witness to review the risk associated with this effort, which, when compared to the cost, will show why Mr. Arrington is proposing to go -- take this route?
- A. That is correct. We expect to have substantial savings in utilizing existing wellbore.
- Q. Is Exhibit Number 5 a copy of an affidavit confirming that notice of this Application has been provided in accordance with Oil Conservation Division Rules?
- A. Yes, sir, it is.
- Q. Was notice provided to all those who are subject to pooling?
- 17 A. Yes, sir.
- 18 Q. And was notice provided to affected offsets?
- 19 A. Yes, sir, it was.
  - Q. Have you made an estimate of the overhead and administrative costs to be incurred while drilling this well and also while producing it, if it is successful?
- A. Yes, sir, we have. The rates would be \$6000 a
  month for the drilling rate and \$600 a month for the
  producing well rate.

- Q. What is the basis for these figures?
- A. These are the figures that were utilized in a recent Division Order Number R-11,178, in April of 1999, for a similar well in the southwest quarter of Section 35 of 15 South, 35 East, which is in this general area where this well is located, in which Arrington was a nonoperating working interest owner.
- Q. That's the Beadle well that was drilled by Energen in the West Lovington-Strawn Unit?
  - A. That's correct.
- Q. And you recommend that these figures be incorporated into the order that results from today's hearing?
- A. Yes, sir.

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- Q. Does David H. Arrington seek to be designated operator of the well?
- 17 A. Yes, sir, he does.
  - Q. Were Exhibits 1 through 5 either prepared by you or compiled under your direction and supervision?
    - A. Yes, they were.
    - MR. CARR: May it please the Examiner, at this time we would move the admission into evidence of Arrington Exhibits 1 through 5.
- 24 EXAMINER CATANACH: Exhibits 1 through 5 will be 25 admitted as evidence.

MR. CARR: And that concludes my direction 1 examination of Mr. Douglas. 2 **EXAMINATION** 3 BY EXAMINER CATANACH: 4 Mr. Douglas, I'm a little unclear on the drilling 5 Q. costs. Are you seeking recover only the directional 6 7 drilling and re-entry costs and not any of the original drilling costs? 8 9 Α. That is correct. Okay. And let me ask you, there's reference made 10 Q. in a Bahlburg letter that was sent to us about a letter he 11 sent to you offering to farm out his interest. 12 That is correct. 13 Is that the last letter -- Is that the October 14 0. 19th letter that he's talking about? 15 That's probably correct. We've had it about a 16 Α. week to ten days. 17 18 Do you know at this point whether or not his Q. terms are going to be acceptable to your company? 19 No, I do not. I can speculate that -- right now 20 Α. that they're not acceptable, based upon the risk associated 21 22 with the drilling of the well. 23 Okay. For the record, we've also received a Q. letter from Gary Lamb, Incorporated, which essentially 24

states that the interests of Gary Lamb, the interests of

Magnolia Royalty Company and the interest of J.M. Mineral and Land Company -- they seek to be excluded from the force pooling on the basis that they will also seek to have the same agreement, seek to make an agreement with your company on the same terms that Bahlburg has proposed. Is that your understanding of the current situation with those parties?

A. We have not received any word from Lamb, J.M. Mineral or Magnolia. We have received two letters, one from Mr. Bahlburg and one from DALCO Petroleum, which basically are identical letters. It's our understanding from knowing these guys that they are basically -- generally operate as one group.

But the only letters that we had received was Mr. Bahlburg's, and then I'd say a week later we received one from DALCO. I was not aware of the letter from Mr. Lamb.

Q. Okay.

- A. We'll continue to try to negotiate an acceptable agreement. What that will be, I'm not sure.
  - Q. With all of these parties?
- A. Yes. I guess the issue would be what will be deemed acceptable to both parties.
- Q. Do you anticipate reaching an agreement with these parties?
- A. We anticipate reaching an agreement with Anson.

  The other six, I would say that there's a small chance.

1	Q.	And do you guys believe you've given them
2	sufficien	t time to negotiate an agreement with you?
3	Α.	Yes.
4	Q.	When did these negotiations actually start?
5	Α.	September, early September.
6		EXAMINER CATANACH: Okay, that's all I have of
7	this witne	ess. You may be excused.
8		MR. CARR: At this time we call Bill Baker.
9		BILL D. BAKER, JR.,
10	the witnes	ss herein, after having been first duly sworn upon
11	his oath,	was examined and testified as follows:
12		DIRECT EXAMINATION
13	BY MR. CA	RR:
14	Q.	Would you state your name for the record?
15	А.	Bill Baker.
16	Q.	Where do you reside?
17	А.	Midland, Texas.
18	Q.	By whom are you employed?
19	А.	David H. Arrington Oil and Gas.
20	Q.	And what is your position with Mr. Arrington?
21	А.	His exploration manager.
22	Q.	Have you previously testified before this
23	Division?	
24	Α.	Yes, sir, I have.
25	Q.	And were you qualified as an expert witness at

that time? 1 Yes, sir, I was. 2 Α. Q. Were you qualified as an expert in petroleum 3 4 geology? 5 Α. Yes, sir, I have been. 6 Q. Are you familiar with the Application filed in 7 this case? Yes, sir, I am. 8 Α. 9 Q. Have you made a technical study of the area which is the subject of the Application? 10 11 Α. Yes, sir, I have. 12 Q. And are you prepared to share the results of that work with Mr. Catanach? 13 Yes, sir, I am. Α. 14 15 MR. CARR: Are the witness's qualifications acceptable? 16 17 EXAMINER CATANACH: Yes, sir. (By Mr. Carr) I think it would be helpful, Mr. Q. 18 Baker, if you initially review for Mr. Catanach Arrington's 19 20 efforts to develop the reserves in the east half of this section. 21 Okay. Mr. Catanach, if you would look at Exhibit 22 Α.

This is the well that is the key well that set the

right-hand side you will see a well called the Trice Fisher

6, this is basically a two-well cross-section.

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1 A.

original prospect up last November or December. This well was drilled by Trice Exploration back in 1959 as a Strawn test.

If you'll look on the right-hand side over there in red, you will see some drill stem tests and some completion information in what we call the Lower Wolfcamp Second Brother "A". You can see that this Trice well drill-stem tested this Upper Wolfcamp, tested oil to the pits at a rate of 40 to 50 barrels of oil per hour, had excellent shut-in pressures. They did attempt a completion in this and they swabbed water and oil, and it's believed that through a channel system -- in which they didn't help with their acid job in here, they never could make a commercial well.

So based on this, what we had hoped to do with our original geology and our original prospect was just simply gain some structure to this well in moving to the south and hope to encounter this same porosity in an updip location and be able to make a commercial well and recover the hydrocarbons that we believed to be in this particular formation.

Down at the bottom of my cross-section, I put a little inset right there, which is actually an isopach on the Second Brother 2 "A" Lime, and you can see where my cross-section B-B' runs up there with relationship to the

Trice well and where our original Prince Nymph well was drilled.

We drilled our Prince Nymph well back in January of this year as a Strawn test but with the principal objective being this Wolfcamp.

As you can see, basically the pinchout occurred right at our wellbore. We encountered the carbonate section but what appears to be only two to four feet of the A Lime up in there, we drill stem tested it, recovered a little bit of slightly gas-cut mud, we did recover 500 cc's of oil, 1000 cc's of mud and 200 cc's of water in the sample chamber.

If you'll look at the initial shut-in pressures and finals, you'll note those pressures are relatively low. That's indicative of a tight reservoir. We felt at this particular time here, that to make a completion attempt here you would end up with a noncommercial well. So the well was subsequently plugged and abandoned.

It is our attempt to simply re-enter this wellbore, kick off at a depth of 10,350 feet, and directionally kick the well about 400 feet to the north in an attempt to pick up these two porosity lobes again in a very slightly updip location to where the original wellbore is, and out far enough from the wellbore that we would not see any type of old wellbore damage or anything that may

have transpired from the old completion attempt.

- Q. Your objective in this well is the Second Brother
  - A. Yes, sir.

- Q. When the original well was drilled, were there additional zones that were considered or at least hoped to be prospective?
- A. Yes, sir, if you'll notice on here, and at that particular time we had broke out these lobes as an "A" and a "B", and over in the Trice Fisher well, about where the oil-water contact is, you'll see a second kind of carbonate that occurs in there. We call that the Second Brother "B".

And what we had hoped to do was gain enough structure to the south that maybe that "B" would also be productive. Well, we didn't gain enough structure. So in coming back to you now, we have precluded that the "B" zone is no longer a prospective target for us. It's simply not going to have enough structural advantage to have commercial hydrocarbons. So we're strictly going after the Second Brother "A" carbonate.

- Q. You only have one zone that you're --
- A. Yes, sir, we've got one zone.
- Q. -- interested in?

Are you prepared to make a recommendation to the Examiner concerning the risk penalty that should be

assessed against those who do not voluntarily participate 1 in the well? 2 3 Α. Yes, sir, based on the stratigraphic risk here, we feel it ought to be the maximum, 200 percent. 4 Do you believe there's a chance with this re-5 Q. entry you could drill a well that would be noncommercial? 6 7 Α. Yes, sir, I do. If you were not able to use the existing wellbore 8 Q. 9 you be able to economically drill to test this horizon? 10

- and directionally drill to this bottomhole location, would Α. No, sir, we believe that the reserves here have
- now shrunk to a small enough number that it would not justify drilling a brand-new vertical wellbore.
- Q. In your opinion, will approval of this Application and the re-entry and drilling of this directional wellbore be in the best interest of conservation, the prevention of waste and the protection of correlative rights?
  - Yes, sir, I believe so. Α.
    - Was Exhibit prepared by you? Q.
    - Α. Yes, sir, it was.

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- MR. CARR: Mr. Catanach, at this time we would move the admission into evidence of Arrington Exhibit 6.
- EXAMINER CATANACH: Exhibit Number 6 will be 24 admitted as evidence. 25

MR. CARR: And that concludes my direct examination of Mr. Baker.

EXAMINATION

#### BY EXAMINER CATANACH:

- Q. Mr. Baker, what is the danger of directionally drilling to a standard bottomhole location?
- A. Well, a standard bottomhole location would be basically 330 off of this, and as we move back towards that wellbore we run the risk of getting into any type of communication with this old wellbore.

Plus we feel like you're moving continually downdip. And I did not show you a structure map on this, but as you move towards that old wellbore you are losing structure. So we feel like the further back this way that we can kind of split the difference -- in other words, keeping what we consider to be a reasonable stratigraphic risk and the most structural, is the best place for us to maximize hydrocarbon potential.

- Q. Other than the Wolfcamp, are there any other prospects within this wellbore?
- A. No, sir, there is not. No other prospective zones.
- Q. Is this "A" section productive in this area at all?
- 25 A. Yes, sir, it's probably not the predominant zone.

The predominant zone throughout this area is the "B", but
oh, probably six or seven miles to the south I drilled some
wells with the Manzano Oil Corporation down there in this
"A" zone, we found it in the stratigraphic position, and
it's very prolific. So while it is not regionally
extensive, when you do find it, it can have some prolific
reserves to it.

Q. So in this immediate area there isn't any Wolfcamp production?

A. Well, the Read Alexander well there, which is right off to the south of mine, drill-stem tested this very interval right here, and they perforated it, and I think they made about 1100 barrels out of it.

EXAMINER CATANACH: Okay, I have no further questions of this witness.

MR. CARR: That concludes our presentation of this case.

EXAMINER CATANACH: Mr. Carr, notice for this hearing was provided to interest owners?

MR. CARR: Yes, sir.

EXAMINER CATANACH: How about --

MR. CARR: And the offsets.

EXAMINER CATANACH: -- with regards to the unorthodox location, to the offset operator to the south, who would be the Applicant?

1 MR. CARR: Arrington is the operator. south -- Just a minute here. Anson, and Arrington is the 2 operator to the south, also Anson. They were notified. 3 mean, they have an interest in the well. 4 And the other interest owner is E.L. Brahaney, 5 6 and they were also notified. So it covers all of the owners of the interest, 7 as well as Mr. Arrington, the operator in the tract to the 8 south. 9 EXAMINER CATANACH: Okay, that's what I needed to 10 know. 11 Is there anything further? 12 MR. CARR: That concludes our presentation. 13 EXAMINER CATANACH: There being nothing further, 14 Case 12,274 will be taken under advisement. 15 (Thereupon, these proceedings were concluded at 16 9:35 a.m.) 17 \* \* \* 18 19 2.0 21 22 23 Of Conservation Divis 24 25

## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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

I, Steven T. Brenner, Certified Court Reporter and Notary Public, HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing transcript of proceedings before the Oil Conservation Division was reported by me; that I transcribed my notes; 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 4th, 1999.

STEVEN T. BRENNER

CCR No. 7

My commission expires: October 14, 2002