NEW MEXICO OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION

EXAMINER HEARING

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Hearing Date MARCH 22, 2001 Time 8:15 A.M. **LOCATION NAME** REPRESENTING Midland, TX Lavis & Bedoon In Stuc Burleson Roswell N.M. Primero Operating Inc. 1. Andrew Grooms Phelps White Roswald Nu Parmoro Sporting In midland, t LBBurleson LBB, Inc SOUHALL MILLER LAWFIRM Mike Feldenes+ Holland + Hart and Complet

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. 12,617

APPLICATION OF LEWIS B. BURLESON, INC., TO RESCIND ORDER NO. R-676, FOR A PLUGGING ORDER AND FOR APPROVAL OF A 160-ACRE NONSTANDARD GAS PRORATION AND SPACING UNIT, LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

ORIGINAL

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

EXAMINER HEARING

BEFORE: MICHAEL E. STOGNER, Hearing Examiner

March 22nd, 2001

Santa Fe, New Mexico

This matter came on for hearing before the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division, MICHAEL E. STOGNER, Hearing Examiner, on Thursday, March 22nd, 2001, at the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, 1220 South Saint Francis Drive, Room 102, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Steven T. Brenner, Certified Court Reporter No. 7 for the State of New Mexico.

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPLICANT:

KELLAHIN & KELLAHIN 117 N. Guadalupe P.O. Box 2265 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2265 By: W. THOMAS KELLAHIN

* * *

WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had at 1 2 8:20 a.m.: 3 4 5 EXAMINER STOGNER: This hearing will come to 6 7 Please note today's date, Thursday, March 22nd, 8 This is Docket Number 9-01. I'm Michael Stogner, appointed Hearing Examiner for today's cases. 9 At this time I will call Case Number 12,617, 10 which is the Application of Lewis B. Burleson, Inc., to 11 rescind Division Order Number R-676, and they're requesting 12 a plugging order and for approval of a 160-acre nonstandard 13 gas proration unit in Lea County, New Mexico. 14 15 At this time I'll call for appearances. MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Examiner, I'm Tom Kellahin of 16 17 the Santa Fe law firm of Kellahin and Kellahin, appearing 18 on behalf of the Applicant, and I have one witness to be sworn. 19 20 EXAMINER STOGNER: Any other appearances? Okay, will the witness please stand to be sworn 21 at this time? 22 (Thereupon, the witness was sworn.) 23 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Kellahin? 24 25 MR. KELLAHIN: Thank you, Mr. Examiner.

STEVEN L. BURLESON, 1 2 the witness herein, after having been first duly sworn upon his oath, was examined and testified as follows: 3 DIRECT EXAMINATION 4 BY MR. KELLAHIN: 5 6 Mr. Burleson, for the record, sir, would you 7 please state your name and occupation? Α. My name is Steven L. Burleson, and I am a 8 9 geologist. Mr. Burleson, where do you reside? 10 Q. 11 Α. I reside in Midland, Texas. 12 In addition to your geologic responsibilities, are you one of the principals in what we have identified as 13 the Lewis B. Burleson, Inc.? 14 15 Α. Yes, I'm vice president and chief landman, 16 geologist and engineer. 17 All right, sir. Among all those duties, have you made yourself familiar with the facts and circumstances 18 19 surrounding your company's Application in this case? 20 Α. Yes, I have. 21 In addition to the subject well, you also operate 22 and have other interests in other Jalmat Gas Pool wells, do 23 you not?

The matters at issue here are matters for which

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Α.

Q.

Yes, we do.

you have personal knowledge and experience? 1 Α. That is correct. 2 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Examiner, we tender Mr. 3 Burleson as an expert witness. 4 EXAMINER STOGNER: Mr. Burleson is so qualified. 5 (By Mr. Kellahin) Let's take a moment, Mr. 6 Q. 7 Burleson, and if you'll turn to the exhibit package, let's start with Exhibit 1 and identify what you have indicated 8 9 by the red arrow. What is that? That arrow is pointing to our Cooper G Number 1 Α. 10 Well in the southwest quarter of that section, which is 660 11 from the south and 1980 from the west. 12 13 Q. All right. That's the well that you're seeking 14 to have dedicated to it the southwest quarter of Section 15 11? That is correct. 16 Α. And that would be a 160-acre nonstandard 17 proration unit in the Jalmat Gas Pool? 18 That is correct. Α. 19 Within that 160 acres, is there another well also 20 Q. called the Cooper G well? 21 Yes, the green dot represents the David Arrington 22 Cooper G Number 1 well, which is a shut-in Jalmat gas well. 23 All right. In order to have control and approval 24 Q. 25 of the Jalmat in the southwest quarter of Section 11, is it

necessary for some action to be taken concerning the Arrington well?

- A. Yes, we feel that just to clear up everything, we'd like to have the well plugged, just because it's on our lease and it's in our productive zone, and we've been able to make no kind of deal with him to take over the well.
- Q. All right, let's look at the chronology and the facts and circumstances surrounding the current Application, Mr. Burleson. If you'll further look at the Exhibit 1, it is color-coded. Describe the color-coding for me.
- A. Yes, the colors -- As on the key, the different colors are the ownership, outlining the different ownership of different offset operators, each one having a different color. Our acreage that we own in this area is colored in yellow. And then the active Jalmat proration units are then further highlighted in red with the wells that are dedicated to them also circled in red.
- Q. If we turn to the second page of Exhibit 1, there is a list of the offsetting active Jalmat gas wells that have been circled in red?
 - A. That is correct.
- Q. All right. As part of the Application, have you caused notice to be sent of this Application to the offset

operators, as indicated in the color code on Exhibit 1? 1 Yes, we have. 2 Have you received any objection from any of those 3 0. offset operators concerning your Application? 4 No, we received no objection. In fact, we Α. 5 received two approvals of our waiver from O.H. Berry, which 6 7 is in the green, and MNA Operating, which is in the pink. All right. Have you examined the Oil 8 Conservation Division files on what is now known as the 9 Arrington Cooper G Well Number 1? 10 11 Α. Yes, we have. As part of that examination, do you have attached 12 to your exhibit package an Exhibit Number 2 that refers to 13 the Arrington well. 14 Q. And what does this describe? 15 16 Α. It is the completion report. The well was drilled originally by R. Olsen Company and completed open 17 hole in the Yates, and this is the original completion 18 report on that well. 19 20 Q. The Yates interval is the upper portion of the Jalmat Gas Pool, is it not? 21 That is correct. Α. 22 And to the best of your knowledge, then, this 23 Q.

wellbore is open hole in the Jalmat Gas Pool?

That is correct.

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Α.

- Q. To the best of your knowledge, are there any plugs or other devices in the wellbore that isolate and separate out the Jalmat from any other formation?
- A. No, as far as my examination of the well file in Hobbs and also driving by and going to this well personally, it still has a pumping unit and rods and tubing in the hole. So it does not look like any temporary abandonment has taken place or any other actions.
 - Q. It's simply an inactive well?
 - A. Right.

- Q. Let's turn to Exhibit Number 3. Identify and describe what this is.
- A. This is a copy of the C-104, showing that David
 H. Arrington is the operator of his said Cooper G Number 1
 well.
- Q. Do you have a tabulation of data to show the Examiner as to when this well last produced?
- A. Yes, on the next exhibit is a report from IHS

 Energy, which is online production data, showing that the

 last -- on page 2 -- Go through production. On the second

 page of that it shows that in -- I believe that would be

 July of 1996, that well last produced 42 MCF. And it also

 on the front pages shows that production was under

 Burlington Resources, who was the owner of the well at the

 time.

So to my knowledge, no gas has ever been produced 1 2 by David Arrington out of that well. The last production, then, is July of 1996. 3 Q. That is correct. Α. 4 And your search of the OCD records as shown on 5 Q. Exhibit 3 reflects that Arrington filed a request for an 6 allowable for the well in October of 1996? 7 Α. That is correct. 8 Let's look at some further documentation 9 Q. concerning the well and the spacing unit. If you'll turn 10 to Exhibit 5, it's a copy of Division Order R-368, dealing 11 with the Jalco Gas Pool, correct? 12 Α. Yes. 13 This well would have been managed initially under Ο. 14 that set of rules, would it not? 15 That is my understanding. Α. 16 Let's turn through that order and find subsequent 17 ο. orders. If you'll look at what is marked Exhibit Number 6, 18 it's Order R-676. Do you find that, Mr. Burleson? 19 Α. Yes. 20 This is the Division order that deals All right. 21 directly with what is now the Arrington Cooper G Well 22 Number 1? 23 That is correct. 24 Α.

And back in 1995 it established a west-half

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Q.

spacing unit for the well in Section 11?

- A. Yes, 1955.
- Q. Yeah. You're seeking to have this order vacated so that you can then dedicate the southwest quarter of Section 11 to your well?
 - A. That is correct.
- Q. Let's turn past that order, and let's leave the Arrington Cooper G Well Number 1 and talk about the Burleson well.
- 10 | A. Okay.

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- 11 Q. Did you obtain appropriate leases for the west12 southwest quarter of Section 11?
- 13 A. Yes, we did.
- Q. What is Exhibit 7?
 - A. Exhibit 7 is the breakdown of the mineral owners in the southwest quarter of Section 11, showing their net mineral acre participation and showing the date of the leases we obtained from them.
 - Q. What are the statuses of the old leases by which the Arrington Cooper G Well Number 1 was allowed to be in the southwest quarter of 11?
 - A. The old leases expired after 90 days past the last date of production, which would be October.
- Q. So by the end of October of 1997, the Arrington leases, if you will, in the Jalmat, would have expired?

A. That is correct.

Q. So to the best of y

- Q. So to the best of your knowledge and understanding, there is no opportunity or right afforded to Arrington to produce his well in the Jalmat?
 - A. That is correct.
 - Q. Those interests are now controlled by Burleson?
 - A. That is correct.
- Q. All right, sir. Let's turn to the permitting and processing of the Burleson well. If you'll look at Exhibit 8, what is this?
- A. This is a copy of application to plug back. Our Cooper G Number 1 was originally drilled as a Langlie-Mattix test, and we tested the Langlie-Mattix as being noncommercial. So then we came back and applied for a permit and plugged back to the Jalmat with this southwest quarter spacing unit.
- Q. All right, so Exhibit 8 is your signature of Division Form C-101 --
- A. That is correct.
- Q. -- to put the wellbore in the Jalmat, and then attached to that is the C-102 that shows the spacing units you propose to dedicate?
 - A. That is correct.
- Q. Following that, let's talk about your contacts
 and efforts to have Arrington take some action with regards

to plugging or abandoning their wellbore.

A. Yes.

- Q. If you'll look at Exhibit 9, identify and describe what this is.
- A. This is a letter that we wrote -- After several phone calls we decided to just write a letter to Mr. Arrington. This is a letter we wrote to him kind of detailing the history of our well, that we had gone in there and leased all these open leases, that we would be willing to take over this well for its plugging liability. And he actually wanted to take an interest in our deal, and we said we'd already placed all our interest, and just get back to me with what he wanted to do.
 - Q. This is in November of last year?
 - A. That is correct, November of 2000.
- Q. What, if anything, happened following your letter?
- A. Well, they called us back a couple times and we tried to get him, and we never could -- We had a hard time getting in touch with him or getting the calls back.

And finally, as the next exhibit shows, in February his engineer -- we finally got with his engineer, Mr. Jeff Bane. And he said, Send us a letter by e-mail that we can print on our letterhead to the Commission, and we'll sign it, stating that we would be willing to -- you

know, that we in fact -- these leases have expired, we would transfer the Jalmat rights to you. And they wanted to retain this well in temporarily abandonment status. So that's what that letter indicates.

- Q. As part of Mr. Bane's representations to you, did he agree that they would place a bridge plug above the Jalmat interval so that this wellbore would be isolated --
- A. Well, his indication to me was, that was the problem that -- why Mr. Arrington didn't want to sign this letter was, he didn't like the language in there about placing a bridge plug above the Jalmat interval. And we have not had any other correspondence with him since then, except by phone.
- Q. What's the potential risk to Burleson of having this wellbore in its current status?
- A. Well, when we first started doing our due diligence on this deal we went by this well, and the back side valve was open to the atmosphere. And you know, it wasn't leaking a lot of gas but it was venting some gas.

So we'd just like to have control of our leasehold where, you know, we get this well taken care of where, one, it can't vent gas or, number two, if something happens to the surface pipe, we can put water down in our very low pressure gas zone, we don't want that to happen either. So that's why we want to get this taken care of.

- Q. This wellbore, then, represents, in your opinion, an active risk to you and your operations with regards to your well?
 - A. Yes, it does.

- Q. Describe for me what Exhibit 11 is, Mr. Burleson.
- A. Exhibit 11 is a copy of our e-mail from Mr. Bane showing that they receive this letter.
- Q. Following 11, Exhibit 12, identify and describe what this is.
- A. About this same period when we started firing off these letters, we decided we -- after discussions with Mr. Stogner, we decided we would file for administrative approval for this proration unit. That's when we sent out all the waivers to all the offset operators, which we have received two back in.
- Q. In order to have the Division address your concerns about the Arrington well, you've had this matter docketed for hearing this morning?
- A. Yes, we decided that since -- the availability of frac crews being what they are, for CO₂ frac, we'd better get this settled. So that's why we wanted to get on the docket, so someone wouldn't put us off till next month, and then that just puts another delay on it.
- Q. All right. Following Exhibit 12, then, is certification from my office, Exhibit 13, of notice of

hearing, which includes all the offsetting operators and 1 includes Arrington Oil and Gas, correct? 2 3 Α. That is correct. Summarize for us what you would like Mr. Stogner 0. 4 5 to do with this order, Mr. Burleson. Well, we just want to be able to get out there 6 and complete that well in the Jalmat and either have Mr. 7 Arrington plug that well or temporary abandonment to the 8 satisfaction of the state just to protect ourselves. 9 He has indicated he wants to keep that wellbore 10 for some reason, I don't know why. But we just want to get 11 out there and get our well on production and would like to 12 be protected. And like I said, either plugging would be 13 14 the ultimate protection, or temporary abandonment where we can go witness the test would be another alternative. 15 MR. KELLAHIN: Mr. Examiner, that concludes my 16 17 examination of Mr. Burleson. We move the introduction of his Exhibits 1 18 through 13. 19 EXAMINER STOGNER: Exhibits 1 through 13 will be 20 admitted into evidence. 21 22 EXAMINATION BY EXAMINER STOGNER: 23 Let's see, part of this is to rescind Order 24

Number -- what is that, -676?

MR. KELLAHIN: 676, Mr. Stogner.

- Q. (By Examiner Stogner) Mr. Burleson, what is Order R-676? What did that allow?
- A. That, I believe, was the order that created a Jalmat Gas Proration Unit, which consisted of the west half of this Section 11, which is the current -- under the files in Hobbs, is the current order that this well is under.

But having said that, even in the interim, this Myers Number 5 well, which is up here in the purple box there -- it would be unit F -- Sun completed that well in the 1980s as a Jalmat oil well in the middle of this proration unit. So I don't know, that, I guess, just slipped through there.

But since this lease expired and we came in there and leased it, we don't have any common interest. I believe back then they did it for an allowable purpose so they could produce enough gas in there. But since that's no longer a problem, we'd like to just keep this proration unit to our leasehold.

- Q. Okay, in referring to Exhibit Number 1, you show the north half belonging to Gruy. Now, is that north half, is that currently under a nonstandard Jalmat proration unit?
- A. The current -- Yes, it is, the northeast quarter is currently -- under where the red box is, that is the

current active unit, and it is simultaneously dedicated to the two wells also circled in red, which are the Number 4 and 6 Myers B.

- Q. Okay. Now, what about the northwest quarter?

 Does it currently have any Jalmat assignment to any of its properties?
 - A. No.

- Q. That's considered open acreage?
- A. Well, I think it's part of this -- My understanding is that this -- that Gruy has subsequently become the owner in there also, of that 40-acre tract.

But like I said, the west half was dedicated to the well on the green dot.

- Q. Okay. When I look at just the northwest quarter, it appears to be two leases involved. The northwest-northwest appears to be a different lease than the remaining acreage in that northwest quarter. Is that what you're seeing?
- A. Yes. Well, it's part -- yeah, it's -- I think the distinction is, they -- back in federal permits they had an A portion of the lease and a B portion of the same lease that had different sliding-scale royalties, but that's my understanding of why that's a different distinction.
 - Q. Okay. Now, is it my understanding that those two

19 leases involving the northwest quarter, that's 100-percent 1 2 working interest Gruy? That's my understanding. 3 Α. And Gruy was notified? Q. 4 Α. Yes. 5 Okay. Now, what can you tell me about the 6 Q. southeast quarter of this section? 7 Okay, we are the operator of the southeast Α. 8 quarter of the section, and the prior operator had formed 9 this 120-acre -- which is outlined in red -- Jalmat gas 10 unit, which is dedicated to our Eunice Cooper Number 1 11 well, which is also circled in red --12 Okay --13 Q. -- in Unit P. 14 Α. -- what about the southwest quarter of the 15 Q. southeast quarter? 16 The southwest quarter of the southeast quarter is 17 -- They originally re-entered that well, they were going to 18 try to make a Jalmat oil well out of it, so that's my 19 understanding of why that's not included in any other 20 proration units in here, and they couldn't get past the 21

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Well, it was our prior successor. We own that acreage, it's just not included in the proration unit.

surface pipe on their attempted re-entry, so --

It's the same base lease, but it just never was included in 1 this Jalmat gas proration unit. 2 Okay. Now, how many leases are in the south half 3 ο. of the section? 4 The -- kind of the northeast 120 acres there that Α. 5 has a separate box around it, that acreage is acreage we 6 7 are currently leasing and have some commitments to lease 8 from various operators. 9 And you'll see kind of in light dotted -- There was a 160-acre proration unit in here at one time. That 10 was communitized between -- back then it was Conoco and 11 But that well, the Number 2 Cooper B, which has kind 12 of a light, faint red circle around it, that was plugged. 13 So that proration unit is inactive. 14 But we own the leases colored in yellow. 15 MNA owns the leases colored in pink. 16 17 Q. Okay. That was a com unit, but it's been plugged out. Α. 18 Okay, I'm just referring to the south half of Q. Section 11.

- 19 20
 - Oh, I'm sorry --Α.

- Okay, south half of Section 11 --22 Q.
- -- I skipped down to 14 --23 Α.
- -- as I understand from your testimony, that's 24 100 percent working interest in two or three leases? 25

1	A. That's correct, the southeast quarter are
2	separate leases operated by us. The southwest quarter are
3	separate leases operated by us.
4	Q. Okay, "that is correct" is not an answer for an
5	"or" question.
6	A. Okay.
7	Q. Let me rephrase it. I'm looking at just the
8	south half of Section 11. How many leases are involved in
9	just the south half of Section 11? Two or three leases?
10	A. Two.
11	Q. Two, okay. And so they are split up, 160 being
12	the southeast, 160 being the southwest?
13	A. That is correct.
14	Q. Okay. And of these two leases, Burleson is the
15	working interest 100-percent working interest in both
16	leases?
17	A. Yes, we are the operator of record for the
18	entities that comprise the south half.
19	Q. Okay. So for the southwest quarter, for
20	prorationing unit purposes, it's got a 120-acre allowable
21	assigned to it under the current rules?
22	A. Yes, the southeast quarter, that is correct, to
23	the Lewis Burleson Eunice Cooper Number 1 well.
24	Q. But the whole southwest quarter is one lease,
25	therefore everything shares within the southwest only for

prorationing purposes?

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- A. That is correct.
- Q. Okay. Now, does Arrington -- Are they a working interest, override royalty interest or anything such as that in the southwest quarter of Section 11?
 - A. No, they are an owner of a wellbore.
- Q. They're owner of a wellbore. Now, does Burleson have only working interest from the surface down or just --
 - A. Surface to 4000 feet.
 - Q. Surface to 4000 feet is what Burleson owns?
- 11 A. That is correct.
 - Q. And the Jalmat is found at what depth?
- A. Between 3000 and 3400, approximately. And the Langlie-Mattix is about 3400 to 3800.
 - Q. Okay. Now, how about the interest under the 4000-foot interval? Is that David Arrington?
 - A. My understanding is, he had one lease from Exxon Mobil that has now expired. So the deep rights are open, is my understanding, to these various mineral owners that...
- Q. And what was the depth of the old Arrington well?
- A. It is TD'd at thirty-one fifty -- No, excuse me, 3207.
- Q. Okay. I'm looking at your Exhibit Number 3. Is this the last document that you have found in the well

files of he Division, either in Hobbs or here in Santa Fe?

- A. Yes, this came from the Hobbs, and to my recollection that was the last file in the file in Hobbs.
 - Q. Okay, let's talk about your well. How old is it?
- A. We drilled that well in January of this year, 2001.
 - Q. And that was a Langlie --

- A. Yeah, we -- well, because of this -- We filed that as a Langlie-Mattix well to test Langlie-Mattix. We knew we had a Jalmat well. We weren't certain that the Langlie-Mattix would be commercial at that location, and it turned out it wasn't. So then subsequent to our testing of the Langlie-Mattix portion, we applied for this approval to plug that well back to the Jalmat.
 - Q. What's the total depth of that well?
 - A. 3852, I believe, plus or minus.
- Q. Now, when was your last conversation with the Arrington Oil and Gas people?
 - A. About two weeks ago I ran into -- he and his engineer were coming out of the building and I said, We're having a hearing on that, you'll be getting a notice.

 Well, probably three weeks ago.
 - Anyway, and he said, Well, we won't stand in your way on whatever you want to do.
- I said okay. But I said, If you sign that letter

1	than, you know, that gets you and us out of any contention
2	we have in there.
3	He said he would look at it.
4	Q. But to date you haven't received
5	A. To date we have received no other correspondence
6	from them.
7	Q. Now, if that well was turned over to Burleson,
8	what would you do with it?
9	A. We would plug it.
10	Q. Okay.
11	A. At this point there's We don't feel it has any
12	commercial value, since we have that other wellbore right
13	in there, in the same area.
14	EXAMINER STOGNER: Okay. Any other questions of
15	this witness?
16	MR. KELLAHIN: No, sir.
17	EXAMINER STOGNER: Okay, Mr. Burleson, you may be
18	excused.
19	Anything further?
20	MR. KELLAHIN: No, sir.
21	EXAMINER STOGNER: With that, Case Number 12,617
22	will be taken under advisement. Thank you, sir.
23	(Thereupon, these proceedings were concluded at hereby certify that the fore and the fore the state of the st
24	8:55 a.m.) a complete record of the proceeding the Examiner bearing of Scap vin 2617
25	* * * pears by rdg of 22 March 200
	Mulust the Exercise

STEVEN T. BRENNER, Cernservation Division (505) 989-9317

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 March 23rd, 2001.

STEVEN T. BRENNER

CCR No. 7

My commission expires: October 14, 2002