1	NEW MEXICO OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION
2	STATE LAND OFFICE BUILDING
3	STATE OF NEW MEXICO
4	CASE NO. 10434
5	
6	IN THE MATTER OF:
7	
8	The Application of Hal J. Rasmussen
9	Operating, Inc., for Pool Reclassification and Special Pool
10	Rules, Lea County, New Mexico.
11	
12	BEFORE: DAVID R. CATANACH
13	Hearing Examiner
14	State Land Office Building February 6, 1992
15	
16	REPORTED BY:
17	CARLA DIANE RODRIGUEZ Certified Shorthand Reporter
18	for the State of New Mexico
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	ORIGINAL

1	APPEARANCES
2	
3	FOR THE NEW MEXICO OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION:
4	ROBERT G. STOVALL, ESQ.
5	General Counsel State Land Office Building
6	Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504
7	
8	FOR THE APPLICANT:
9	CAMPBELL, CARR, BERGE & SHERIDAN, P.C. Post Office Box 2208
10	Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2208 BY: WILLIAM F. CARR, ESQ.
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1	EXAMINER CATANACH: At this time we'll
2	call Case 10434.
3	MR. STOVALL: Application of Hal J.
4	Rasmussen Operating, Inc., for pool
5	reclassification and special pool rules, Lea
6	County, New Mexico.
7	EXAMINER CATANACH: Are there
8	appearances in this case?
9	MR. CARR: May it please the Examiner,
١٥	my name is William F. Carr with the law firm
1 1	Campbell, Carr, Berge & Sheridan, of Santa Fe. I
1 2	represent Hal J. Rasmussen Operating, Inc., and I
1 3	have one witness.
1 4	EXAMINER CATANACH: Any other
1 5	appearances? Will the witness please stand to be
16	sworn in.
17	HAL J. RASMUSSEN
18	Having been first duly sworn upon his oath, was
19	examined and testified as follows:
20	EXAMINATION
2 1	BY MR. CARR:
2 2	Q. Would you state your full name for the
2 3	record, please.
2 4	A. Yes. I'm Hal Rasmussen.
2 5	Q. Where do you reside?

In Midland, Texas. 1 Α. By whom are you employed and in what 2 Q . 3 capacity? Α. I'm self-employed. I'm the president of Hal J. Rasmussen Operating, Inc. 5 Have you previously testified before 6 Q. the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division? 7 Α. Yes, I have. R At the time of that testimony, were 9 Q. 10 your credentials as a petroleum engineer accepted and made a matter of record? 11 Α. Yes, they were. 12 13 Q. Are you familiar with the application filed in this case on behalf of Hal J. Rasmussen 14 Operating, Inc.? 15 16 Α. Yes, I am. And you're familiar with the Wilson 17 18 Yates-Seven Rivers Pool and the surrounding area? Α. Uh-huh. 19 What generally is your ownership in 20 0. 21 this pool? 22 I have partners that -- I operate approximately 80 percent of the existing wells in 23 the field. I have partners, my biggest partner 24 25 being Collins & Ware.

In terms of the area that is defined as 1 Q. 2 the pool, what percent of the acreage within that 3 pool do you--The areas define the field limits, Α. 5 approximately 50 percent. 6 Q. In terms of existing wells in the pool, 7 what is your ownership? Α. In terms of the existing wells that 8 have produced in the field, approximately 65 of 9 10 the 70-plus wells that have produced in this field. 11 12 MR. CARR: Are Mr. Rasmussen's 13 qualifications acceptable? 14 EXAMINER CATANACH: They are. 15 Q. Would you briefly state what you seek with this application? 16 17 Α. Basically, we are trying to get some 18 field rules established for the Yates gas pool that we feel is going to be established. 19 trying to get associated field rules for this 20 21 pool. 22 We're trying to get 160-acre spacing 23 for the gas field, 40-acre spacing proration 24 units for the oil which is already in effect.

We're trying to get a special gas/oil ratio

limitation of 10,000-to-1, which is like they
have in the Jalmat and Eumont field, which is not
far from this formation--from our field.

And we are trying to get special provisions permitting the district office to create and approve nonstandard proration units.

Q. Why the district office?

- Well, because we, based on--wellbore wise, we own 80 to 90 percent of this field. We have not had any opposition, and we've been working with the district level as to the best way to create rules for this field. They feel that that would be easier for themselves and us.
- Q. And they have, in fact, requested that you propose that these applications be approved at a district level?
- A. Yes. Mr. Sexton has asked that this be done.
- Q. And that would be easier from just an operational point of view for you?
  - A. Yes, it would be.
- Q. What rules currently govern the Wilson Yates-Seven Rivers pool?
- A. Currently there are statewide rules governing this field. In August of 1952, there

was a rule passed that exempted this pool from the gas/oil ratio test. Basically what that did was establish, there's oil field rules and there's no rule governing the gas.

- Q. And this was Order No. R-199?
- A. Yes, it was.

- Q. Let's move to what has been marked as Rasmussen Exhibit No. 1. I would ask you to identify that and basically just explain what that's designed to show.
- A. Based on the State definition of the Wilson field, the orange line is the limits of the Wilson field. As you can see in yellow is what we own and operate under this field and, I think, by looking at the wells that have been completed in this field, you can see where we own 80 to 90 percent of the actual productive wells, which are formerly productive wells, too.
- Q. Could you briefly provide Mr. Catanach with a summary of the history of the development of this area?
- A. Yes. This field was discovered back in the late thirties by Wilson Oil. It was developed in the late thirties, early forties.

  It's a Seven Rivers reef section with a Yates

section on top of it that they developed in the oil itself. They produced until the late sixties in the existing wellbores, and then in the late sixties they went back in and started deepening the wells into other reef stringers in the same formation.

They have produced that. From that point in time, there has not been much work done in this field. They have produced approximately nine million barrels out of this field. In 1952 they did get an exemption from the gas/oil test.

This field, the oil productive horizon of this field is a strong water drive. We have some wells out there that produce 5,000 barrels of water and 30 barrels a day of oil, and no gas.

When this field was developed, they drilled through what I'll show in a second as the Yates sand sections that were gas productive when they drilled through them, but they were cased off and completed down in the oil horizons.

The gas itself has not been developed very much. It has been developed in some wells and they produce pretty much oil free.

Q. If we look at this field we have some

wells that produce virtually no oil, just gas, is that correct?

A. Yes, we do.

- Q. What part of the formation, generally, are they located in?
  - A. The upper part of the Yates.
- Q. And in the lower portion we find wells that are just basically oil wells with no gas production?
  - A. Yes.
- Q. Why are you here today seeking this particular change?
- A. Basically, at this point, there are no rules governing the gas pay itself because you have oil wells that produce very little gas and gas wells that produce very little oil. We feel that there need to be separate field rules governing each.
- Q. The way to do this is with declaring the pool an associated pool?
- A. Yes. We would like to declare an associated pool in order to cover this.
- Q. Let's go now to what has been marked as Rasmussen Exhibit No. 2. I would ask you to identify that for Mr. Catanach.

A. This is a structure map that has been put together on the top of the Yates formation itself.

- Q. This is in the productive portion of this field?
- A. Yes. This is what we feel is the productive limits of this field based on sample logs, based on logs that we do have, and based on core data of the well. It's at +88 in Section 14. The core data on that well indicates that it is a tight formation over there.
  - Q. Basically what does this show you?
- A. What this is really showing are what we feel are the productive limits of this Yates gas cap.
- Q. On this exhibit, do you have a trace for a subsequent cross-section?
  - A. Yes, I do. I have a line you can see going through there, which is a cross-section that will show a better definition of this field.
- Q. Let's move to that cross-section now.
  That's Rasmussen Exhibit No. 2?
  - A. Exhibit No. 3.
- Q. Exhibit 3, yes. Would you review that for the Examiner?

A. This cross-section, basically what we're trying to show on this cross-section is the top of the Yates formation, which is easily defined by the radioactive sands.

The Yates formation itself consists of approximately three sand bodies, and below that you have the Yates-Seven Rivers transition zone which is basically dolomites and limestones, which is your reef section, that section being the oil productive section in this field and being this strong water-drive reef.

- Q. Have you been able to determine what the gas/oil contact is within this reservoir?
- A. We have not been able to determine what I feel comfortable enough to say is a gas/oil contact. There is not enough data in this field to support that, mainly because there has not been enough work done in the Yates section itself.

The district geologist in Hobbs has--concurs with us, that you cannot define a gas/oil contact.

Q. All right. Mr. Rasmussen, what you're seeking is 160-acre spacing for gas, 40-acre spacing for oil, is that correct?

1 A. Yes, we are.

- Q. And the reason for this is that the pools exhibit a wide variety of producing characteristics?
  - A. Yes.
  - Q. Under existing rules you're unable to simultaneously dedicate oil wells and gas wells on the same spacing unit, is that right?
    - A. Yes, that is right.
  - Q. Now, the pool is developed under 40-acre oil well spacing outcome?
    - A. Right.
  - Q. Will 160-acre spacing, at least initially you believe, be the appropriate spacing for gas wells in this area?
  - A. I think initially it will be. This experience is based on initial development in the Eumont and the Jalmat fields.
  - Now, I don't know if, in the future, it may need to be developed on tighter spacing than that, approximately 80-acre spacing, because I feel that this is possibly a tighter formation than what we see in those other two fields.
- Q. If these rules are adopted and you ultimately need to develop on 80-acre spacing,

you could come back in and seek the creation of nonstandards units? Would that be correct?

A. Yes, we could.

- Q. Now, is production from this pool prorated?
- A. It is not prorated in the sense that you have a prorated field like the Indian Basin or the Jalmat or the Eumont fields. But by asking to have this pool put into an associated pool, there will be allowables assigned to the wells and to the proration units, per say.

The oil allowables are already established under the General Rules 505. The gas allowables will be established by taking the highest, the top unit allowable for the oil, times the gas/oil ratio for the field, times the number of acres dedicated to that well, divided by the number of acres for a standard proration unit.

- Q. So this formula, which is the formula in the associated pool rules--
  - A. Yes.
- Q. --there is a way to regulate the production limits based on the number of acres dedicated to a well?

A. Yes. It will be proportionately reduced by the number of acres you have.

- Q. How exactly do you propose this administrative procedure to work?
- A. We have a proposal, if I can submit it as Exhibit 4.
- Q. All right. Would you review Exhibit
  No. 4 for Mr. Catanach, please.
- A. Basically, Exhibit 4 is an outline of what we've put together that may help govern this field as far as the nonstandard proration units.

Basically, what we're trying to do is have the district supervisor or the Division Director of the Hobbs office, have the authority to approve nonstandard proration units or gas units, if the following provisions are complied with.

First, the nonstandard unit consist of quarter-quarter sections or lots that are contiguous. Basically, they must consist of contiguous quarter-quarter sections within that standard 160-acre quarter, within a normal governmental quarter.

We suggest that applicants submit written consent form waivers to all the offset

operators and the operators owning interest in that quarter section to submit the waivers so that they'll be notified. At this same time, if the applicants do not object to those waivers, the district supervisor will have the ability to approve those on the district level.

- Q. Basically, there would be notice to the offsets?
  - A. Yes.

- Q. They would either be asked to sign a waiver, and failing to do that after a 30-day period of time, the district supervisor could then approve the nonstandard unit?
  - A. Yes.
- Q. Why are you requesting a gas/oil ratio of 10,000-to-1?
- A. For several reasons. One of the reasons is that just basically the oil pool is oil productive and does not produce much gas.

  The gas that would be produced out of this field, we think, would be predominantly oil-free.

The Jalmat and the Eumont fields are fields we feel are very similar to this, and they have a 10,000-to-1 GOR. We're asking for the 10,000-to-1 GOR to enable us to assign allowables

to this field that will make it economically feasible to develop this field.

This field is going to have to be developed by drilling new wells, and because of today's gas prices and the cost of drilling these wells, we need a higher allowable in this field.

- Q. If the application is granted with this higher GOR, that's going to make it economically feasible to go forward with additional development in the field?
  - A. Yes.

- Q. Without that, is it economically feasible for there to be further development in this area?
- A. No, there is not. The existing gas/oil ratio is 2,000-to-1. Based on that, we feel we're looking at 18- to 20-month payouts by producing at full allowable on these wells, and we don't feel that that is, with today's environment, with gas prices doing what they're doing, that that's a wise investment.
- Q. If you're able to go forward with additional development, there will be recovery of additional hydrocarbons, obviously, from the field?

A. Yes. This field or this Yates gas cap has basically been ignored from the very beginning. From the very beginning there was, obviously, no gas market out here.

There has been wells in here that were plugged in the late seventies that were gas productive, but there was not a good enough price for this field. So, by establishing the GOR limits that we want, I think that we can produce these at rates that we can develop this field and recover all the gas that is down there.

- Q. By proving this application, therefore you'll recover reserves that otherwise would not be produced, and that would, therefore, prevent waste?
  - A. Yes.

- Q. In terms of ownership in the productive portion of the reservoir, you virtually own all of the productive area at this time in the gas zone?
  - A. Yes, we do.
- Q. And the core information you referenced earlier, indicates that it's a relatively tight formation?
- A. We think so.

1	Q. Do you see any potential in this area
2	for the impairment of correlative rights?
3	A. I do not.
4	Q. Is Exhibit No. 5 an affidavit with
5	attached schedule and copies of letters, showing
6	that notice of this hearing has been provided as
7	required by OCD rules?
8	A. Yes, it is.
9	Q. Is Exhibit No. 6 copies of letters from
10	the Hobbs District Office supporting this
11	application?
1 2	A. Yes, it is.
13	Q. In you opinion, will approval of this
14	application be in the best interest of
15	conservation, the prevention of waste and the
16	protection of correlative rights?
17	A. Yes, I do.
18	Q. Were Exhibits 1 through 6 either
19	prepared by you or compiled under your direction?
20	A. Yes, they were.
2 1	MR. CARR: At this time, Mr. Catanach,
22	we move the admission of Rasmussen Exhibits 1
23	through 6.
24	EXAMINER CATANACH: Exhibits 1 through
25	6 will be admitted as evidence.

1 MR. CARR: That concludes my direct examination of Mr. Rasmussen. 2 EXAMINATION 3 BY EXAMINER CATANACH: Q. Mr. Rasmussen, the lower portion of the 5 Yates and a portion of the Seven Rivers, is that 6 oil productive, or is it just the Yates? 7 Yes, we believe so. No, the Seven 9 Rivers portion is definitely all oil productive, 10 and the lower part of the Yates, we feel, is 11 partially oil productive, too, but we've not been 12 able to establish a gas/oil contact. But the portion of the Yates that's oil 13 Q. productive is the dolomite section or the 14 transition zone, you stated? 15 Yeah, I think it is the dolomite 16 Α. section. 17 Above that you've got, you said, three 18 Q. distinct sands? 19 20 Α. Uh-huh. Are all of these sands gas productive? 21 Q. The lower sand, we're not sure if it's 22 Α.

gas productive or oil productive. The reason for

drilled on top of the structure, they set casing

the majority of the wells out there that were

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- 1 through that third sand. By doing that, that 2 indicates to us that it was probably not productive. That's what their objection was to shut off the gas. But in some areas of the field, they have set pipe above that and those 5 6 wells did not, from the records that we have, did
- Q. But you definitely know that the upper 8 9 two sands are gas productive?
  - Yes, we definitely feel that they are--Α.
- 11 Q. Okay.

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12 Α. --based on wells that have been 13 produced and recent wells that have been 14 completed in this zone.

not exhibit any high gas/oil ratios.

- 15 Now, to develop this gas section, you would drill some new wells in this field? 16
- 17 Α. Yes, we would.
  - And probably just perforate them in the sand section of the Yates?
- 20 Yes. Α.
- Do you have any oil wells that produce 22 at a high GOR?
- 23 Α. No, we don't. We have, at this time, 24 we have two oil wells and they're both producing 25 out of the reef section. We have them on

submersible pumps and they're making 5,000 barrels a day of water, approximately 30 barrels a day of oil, and no gas.

- Q. Will your 10,000-to-1 GOR in any way affect the oil wells in this field?
  - A. I don't think so, no.

- Q. I believe you stated that you thought the Yates sand was tight in this field?
- A. The reason I think that it may be tight is for a couple of reasons. There are gas wells that have been developed out here that do not exhibit high—have not exhibited high cumulative gas production. When I say "high," I'm saying a hundred million at the most.

We have core data on a well, granted that it is to the northwest, which could be defined as a productive limit, that shows that it is tight.

My reason for thinking that this possibly could be a tight reservoir is our proximity to the Jalmat and Eumont field is that we're probably 5 to 10 miles away from there, and it's my opinion that if this Yates formation was not tight, it would be highly productive, and they would have developed this earlier in the

life of this field as they did in those other two fields. Therefore, I think it's possible that this is a much tighter reservoir than what we see in these other two fields.

- Q. You're pretty comfortable that these gas wells will drain no more than 160 acres?
- A. Yes, I'm very comfortable on that. I'm not so sure they won't drain more than 80 acres.
- Q. Okay. You discussed the possibility that if they are draining, say, 80 acres, you could establish nonstandard gas proration units. Might it not be a better idea to review or produce some of these gas wells for a while and see exactly what kind of acreage they're draining?
- A. Yes, that would be the case. We would have to go out and drill the wells and complete the wells before we do that. There are no existing wells we could do that with. There are approximately four existing wells out there, two of which were drilled and completed, and I believe they're on the cross-section. They were completed back in the early sixties and, at this time, we've tried to get them going and they won't even hardly produce now, and I don't think

they're even indicative of what we're going to get out here.

There are two wells that were completed by the previous operators when we bought it in here, and there was not a gas pipeline in this field when we took this over back in August. The gas out here off these two wells was being used to supply the gas engines on this property.

There was no electricity at this time; so, we have no idea how much gas has been produced out of those two wells and we cannot, from that, we cannot judge what drainage has been in there.

We have subsequently put a pipeline in there, and so I think we're going to have to start now developing wells and drilling wells in order to get the information we need to determine how much they will drain.

- Q. Would you be willing to or what would you think about promulgating these rules for a temporary period, and then having you come back when you have more data?
- A. We could do that. Is your suggestion--are you leading to possibly making these 80-acre proration units?
- Q. I'm just saying at this point in time

we don't know what these gas wells are going to drain, and it might be better if you went out and gathered up some data and came back in in two years or something to tell us what, exactly, these wells are going to drain. At that time we may downspace it to 80.

A. That could possibly—that might be the way to go. At this time, there are no field rules governing the gas itself, and that's what we're trying to establish is some type of rules that will establish the gas so that we don't get in a situation— I mean, the way the rules are now, we can develop this on 40-acre spacing and we would get in a situation where we get into problems with correlative rights.

We are, at this point, just trying to establish some type of rules for the gas itself, also enabling us to have a gas/oil ratio that enables us economically to go out and develop it. At that point in time, we're not ruling out having to come back in after we've determined what it can drain, coming back in and maybe trying to come back and change the spacing on this field to do that.

Q. Do you think a two-year period might

give you enough time to come up with the data?

A. Yes, I think so. I guess the only thing I ask, I'm not opposed to that, the only thing I ask is that I have some type of rules and some type of allowable that enables me to have the economic assurance to go out and drill these wells.

This is a pretty large project in the sense of what it costs to do the wells, and at this point we've spent a large amount of money electrifying the field and filling the pipeline in here just to get to the point to start developing it. So that is all that I ask, really.

- Q. It's your opinion that a 2,000-to-1 GOR will not be sufficient to economically develop the field?
- A. No, it is not. With today's economics, with the gas prices the way they are, it's just not economical for us to develop it with that 2,000-to-1 GOR.

That's why we asked for the 10,000-to-1 GOR because it is in effect in the Jalmat and the Eumont field, and we feel that those two fields would most closely resemble what we're trying to

do here.

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- Q. You're not asking for simultaneous dedication of acreage, are you?
- A. No, we're not. We're asking that it be placed in an associated pool.
- Q. How would you propose to define the difference between an oil and a gas well in this field?
  - A. I think by its GOR, gas/oil ratio.
- Q. What would you propose? I know the associated pool rules have a 30,000-to-1 separation.
- A. I think that would be appropriate. I feel comfortable enough to say that I think they're either going to produce mostly oil and gas or mostly oil.
- Q. Okay. Is it your opinion that producing the gas won't have any detrimental effect on ultimate oil recovery from the pool?
- A. Yes. Like I say, we have 80 to 90 percent of the wells that have produced in the Wilson field, produced at one time. There are approximately two wells left producing in that field. This field is at its limit. The wells will need to be plugged, worked over, or some

type of additional development needs to be done
to this field.

- Q. Your request for district approval of nonstandard proration units, I suppose you've discussed that with Mr. Sexton down in Hobbs?
  - A. Yes, we have.

Q. I can't see a whole lot of difference. It's just a matter of who does the approving. I mean, we use the same producer in Santa Fe as you've outlined here.

What would be the difference between us doing it or Jerry doing it?

A. I think the main difference would be that most of the paperwork we have to file in this field is filed on a district level.

Therefore, it seems to me it would be easier just to file it all with one office and have it approved at one office.

EXAMINER CATANACH: Okay.

## EXAMINATION

## BY MR. STOVALL:

Q. Mr. Rasmussen, on your notice, you've got the affidavits. I assume you sent each of these. Do you know if, under this particular application, it's required to be certified mail

I don't remember offhand. 1 or not? 2 Α.. I can't answer if it's required or not. 3 MR. CARR: Mr. Stovall, I have the return receipts if you would like them on each of 5 6 those parties. 7 MR. STOVALL: We probably should get them. 8 9 MR. CARR: I can just give them to you 10 or I could also have them marked as an exhibit, 11 Exhibit No. 7. 12 MR. STOVALL: Why don't you just make them part of Exhibit 5. 13 MR. CARR: Okay. And I can deliver 14 15 those to you right now. I have them with me. 16 Q. (BY MR. STOVALL) Did you consult with 17 Mr. Carr before sending notice, to determine to whom notice was required to be given? 18 19 Α. Yes. 20 Q. What type of land is this? Who is the 21 royalty owner on this land? The State. 22 Α. 23 Q. Did you notify the State? 24 Α. Yes.

I didn't notice that as I went through

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Q.

1 here. Are there any other types of land besides 2 State land involved? I believe it's all State land. I would 3 have to go back and look. To be honest with you, I have people that prepare a lot of this stuff 5 6 for me, and I can't answer all the questions, but I believe all the land is State. From looking at the plat, I can't see 8 9 anything that is not State. 10 MR. STOVALL: I don't see State listed 11 on the exhibit. 12 MR. CARR: We'll check that, Mr. Stovall. 13 MR. STOVALL: And confirm that. 14 And 15 recognizing, of course, if there are other royalty owners, they're entitled to notice in 16 17 this proceeding. 18 THE WITNESS: I'm assuming we've 19 notified them properly. 20 MR. STOVALL: I have nothing further. 21 FURTHER EXAMINATION BY MR. CATANACH: 22 23 Mr. Rasmussen, I assume that you Q. 24 notified every operator within the pool. 25 include operators within a mile of the pool?

1	MR. CARR: Yes, we did, Mr. Catanach.
2	I reviewed that with their landman, Scott Ramsey,
3	and they'll all been notified.
4	EXAMINER CATANACH: Okay. I have
5	nothing further. The witness may be excused.
6	Anything further, Mr. Carr?
7	MR. CARR: Nothing further.
8	EXAMINER CATANACH: There being nothing
9	further in this case, Case 10434 will be taken
10	under advisement.
11	Let's take a 10-minute break here.
1 2	(And the proceedings concluded.)
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## 1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER 2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO 3 ) SS. COUNTY OF SANTA FE 5 6 I, Carla Diane Rodriguez, Certified 7 Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public, HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing transcript of 8 proceedings before the Oil Conservation Division 9 10 was reported by me; that I caused my notes to be 11 transcribed under my personal supervision; and 12 that the foregoing is a true and accurate record 13 of the proceedings. I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a 14 relative or employee of any of the parties or 15 16 attorneys involved in this matter and that I have 17 no personal interest in the final disposition of 18 this matter. 19 WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL February 17, 20 1992. 21 22 23 24 CSR No. 25 I do hereby certify that the foregoing 🕏 a complete record of the proceedings in the Examiner hearing of Case No.1043 heard by me on February 6

Examine: