1	STATE OF NEW MEXICO
2	ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
3	OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION
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6	EXAMINER HEARING
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9	IN THE MATTER OF:
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11	Application of Yates Case No. 9725
12	Petroleum Corporation for
13	an unorthodox gas well
14	location, Chaves County, New Mexico
15	
16	
17	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
18	
19	
20	BEFORE: MICHAEL E. STOGNER, EXAMINER
21	
22	
23	STATE LAND OFFICE BUILDING
24	SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO
25	October 18, 1989

Ţ	HEARING EXAMINER: On The fifth page, I'll
2	call Case No. 9725, which is the application of Yates
3	Petroleum Corporation for an unorthodox gas well
4	location, Chaves County, New Mexico.
5	At the Applicant's request, this case will
6	be continued to the examiner's hearing scheduled for
7	November 1, 1989.
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1	CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2	
3	STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ) ss.
4	COUNTY OF SANTA FE )
5	
6	I, Deborah O'Bine, Certified Shorthand
7	Reporter and Notary Public, HEREBY CERTIFY that the
8	foregoing transcript of proceedings before the Oil
9	Conservation Division was reported by me; that I
10	caused my notes to be transcribed under my personal
11	supervision; and that the foregoing is a true and
12	accurate record of the proceedings.
13	I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative
14	or employee of any of the parties or attorneys
15	involved in this matter and that I have no personal
16	interest in the final disposition of this matter.
17	WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL November 13, 1989.
18	Deborah USine
19	DEBORAH O'BINE CSR No. 127
20	
21	My commission expires: August 10, 1990
22	I do herous ce ou sin <b>at the foregoing is</b>
23	a complete record of the proceedings in
24	the Exeminer hearing of Case No. 9725, neard by me on 18,016/2 1989.
25	Mahul Hogars, Examiner
	Oil Conservation Division

1	STATE OF NEW MEXICO
2	ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
3	OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION
4	
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7	EXAMINER HEARING
8	
9	IN THE MATTER OF:
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11	
12	Application of Yates Petroleum Case 9725
13	Corporation for an unorthodox gas
14	well location, Chaves County, New Mexico.
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
20	
21	BEFORE: VICTOR T. LYON, EXAMINER
22	
23	STATE LAND OFFICE BUILDING
24	SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO
25	November 1, 1989

## ORIGINAL

## APPEARANCES FOR THE DIVISION: ROBERT G. STOVALL Attorney at Law Legal Counsel to the Division State Land Office Building Santa Fe, New Mexico FISK & VANDIVER FOR THE APPLICANT: Attorneys at Law Seventh & Mahone, Suite E. Artesia, New Mexico 88210 BY: MR. DAVID R. VANDIVER

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1	HEARING EXAMINER: Next we'll call Case
2	9725.
3	Case 9725, application of Yates Petroleum
4	Corporation for an unorthodox well location, Chaves
5	County, New Mexico.
6	Call for appearances.
7	MR. VANDIVER: Mr. Examiner, my name is
8	David Vandiver of the firm of of Fisk & Vandiver of
9	Artesia, appearing on behalf of the Applicant, Yates
10	Petroleum Corporation. And I have two witnesses who
11	have both been previously sworn this morning.
12	HEARING EXAMINER: I guess we won't need to
13	swear them again.
14	You may proceed.
15	Are there other appearances in this case?
16	I guess there are none.
17	MR. VANDIVER: May I proceed, Mr. Examiner?
18	HEARING EXAMINER: Yes.
19	DIRECTION EXAMINATION
20	BY MR. VANDIVER
21	Q. State your name and your occupation and by
22	whom you're employed, please.
23	A. My name is Cy Cowen. I'm a landman for
24	Yates Petroleum Corporation of Artsesia, New Mexico.

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Q. And Mr. Cowen, you have previously been

- sworn, testified as a petroleum landman this morning, and had your qualifications accepted in cases 9794 and and 9795; is that not correct?
  - A. That's correct.

- Q. Are you familiar with the title to the land surrounding Yates Petroleum Corporation's proposed Red Rock "NB" Federal No. 2 Well?
  - A. Yes, I am.
- Q. Mr. Cowen, briefly summarize the purpose of Yates's application in Case No. 9725.
- A. Yates Petroleum is seeking approval of an unorthodox location for the Red Rock "NB" Federal No. 2 Well, which would be located in Section 28, Township 6 South, Range 25 East, so that we can test the Abo formation.
  - Q. Now, if you would identify the plat that's been marked for identification as Applicant's Exhibit No. 1 and describe for the Examiner the information contained in that exhibit.
- A. Exhibit No. 1 is a land plat. Outlined in yellow is lease acreage owned by Yates Petroleum
  Corporation surrounding the Red Rock "NB" Federal
  No. 2 location.
  - The proposed well is shown by the red dot in Section 28 in the Southwest 1/4. The proposed

location would be 330 feet from the south line and 1980 feet from the west line. And the proration unit of 160 acres is outlined in red.

This plat also shows in the South 1/2 of Section 29 acreage which was owned by Mesa Petroleum, which has been currently purchased by Yates Petroleum Corporation. That is why it is also in yellow.

- Q. So anything shown on this map that says

  Mesa Petroleum is now owned by Yates Petroleum

  Corporation; is that correct?
  - A. That is correct.

- Q. This well, this proposed well, will be an Abo gas well?
  - A. That is correct.
- Q. Now, if I could ask you to refer to

  Applicant Exhibit No. 2 in this case and describe the various instruments contained in that packet.
- A. Exhibit 2, on page 1 is a chronological record of events leading up to and the choosing of this particular location for this well. This record was kept by Mr. Clifton May, which is a permit agent for Yates Petroleum Corporation.

Page 2 of Exhibit 2 is a topographic map of the proposed Red Rock "NB" Federal No. 2 location. In Section 28 -- I'd like to direct your attention to the

South 1/2 of that section -- our first choice for location is labeled as location No. 1. This first location was 1980 from the east, and 660 from the

south line.

This location fell in a major drainage. We moved the location to the Southwest 1/4, and that location was 1980 from the south line, and 660 feet from -- excuse me. That location was 1980 from the west line, 660 feet from the south line.

That location, after it was staked by our surveyor, was also in the drainage, therefore, we chose location No. 3, which is 330 from the south line, and 1980 feet from the west line.

- Q. What else is contained in Exhibit 2, Mr. Cowen?
- A. The next page is a letter, Yates Petroleum, discussing the possibility of rotating the pad for the well due to topography.

Then we have a Cultural Resources Report for the Red Rock "NB" Federal No. 2 and the access road. And this was written by the Agency for Conservation Archaeology at Eastern New Mexico University.

Q. Is there a problem with artifacts in the area?

- A. The archaeologist found an arc site which would have been right on the southeast corner of our location, our drill site location. Therefore, they recommended that we tilt the location to the westerly direction so that we would not interfere would the archeology.
- Q. Have you come up with a plan that is acceptable to the Bureau of Land Management for protecting both the archaeological site and the drainage --
  - A. Yes, we have.

- Q. -- known as Fivemile Draw?
- A. Yes, we have. We're just waiting for official approval from them. But we do have verbal approval.
- Q. If I could refer you to Applicant's Exhibit No. 3 and ask you to describe the documents contained in that exhibit.
- A. Exhibit No. 3 is a letter dated July 18,

  1989, to the Oil Conservation Division, to the

  attention of Mr. William LeMay, concerning a

  non-standard location for the Red Rock "NB" Federal

  No. 2 location in Section 28, Township 6 South, Range

  24 25 East.

This is letter is from Mr. Clifton May,

asking the Oil Conservation Division to allow us to have a non-standard location due to topology, and we are asking for an administrative approval on this.

- Q. What else is contained in that exhibit?
- A. We have some certified return receipt cards, quick letter that notes the offset operators as being Mesa Operating Limited Partnership in Amarillo, and that Yates Petroleum has all the other offsetting leases.

On the next page is an Exhibit A showing -it's a land plat showing Exhibit A, and outlining in
dotted lines Section 28, showing the proposed
non-standard location.

- Q. That plat was submitted along with the application for administrative approval of the unorthodox location?
- A. That is correct. All these pages have been submitted under the same letterhead.

On the next page is a topo map showing -on the far right-hand side of the page it shows the
actual topography in where the new well -- the
proposed unorthodox well is located there in the
Southwest 1/4, and also to the right of that it shows
where the original location was proposed in
relationship to the Fivemile Draw area.

- Q. What else is contained in that packet that's marked as Exhibit 1?
- A. On the next page is a well location and acreage dedication plat for this well. And it shows in the Southwest 1/4 that lease number NM-11593 is dedicated to this particular well, the 160 acres. And it shows the well location as 330 from the south line and 1980 feet from the west line. And this was turned in by Mr. Clifton May.
  - O. What else?

A. I believe the last page is a letter dated
July 18, 1989, from Yates Petroleum Corporation to
Mesa Operating Limited Partnership in Amarillo, Texas,
regarding a non-standard location for the Red Rock
"NB" Federal No. 2 well.

This letter is asking Mesa if they do not have any problems with this unorthodox location. This is actually a letter of waiver to Mesa. And this waiver was sign by Mr. Richard W. Petrie, the land manager at Mesa Operating, and it was dated July 21st, 1989.

- Q. And that's no longer pertinent because Yates has acquired Mesa's interest?
  - A. That's correct.
  - Q. But that was the only offsetting operator

other than Yates?

- A. At the time it was; that is correct.
- Q. Mr. Cowen, were Exhibits 1 through 3 either prepared by you or under your direction or supervision, or are they taken from records kept in the ordinary course of business by Yates Petroleum Corporation?
  - A. Yes, they were.

MR. VANDIVER: Mr. Examiner, I would move the admission of Applicant's Exhibits 1, 2, and 3 in this case, and I have no further questions of this witness.

HEARING EXAMINER: Is there objection?

They will be admitted.

MR. STOVALL: Mr. Cowen, excuse me. I would like to ask you a few questions with respect to this application.

## EXAMINATION

- 19 BY MR. STOVALL:
  - Q. If I'm not mistaken, you're looking at a Southwest 1/4 dedication; is that correct?
  - A. That's correct.
  - Q. It is a 160-acre proration unit?
- A. That is correct. For the Abo in Chaves
  County.

- Q. And what are the distance requirements? Is it 660 from the quarter section lines?
  - A. That's correct.

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- Q. When I look at location No. 1 on your

  Exhibit No. 1 -- excuse me -- Exhibit No. 2, the

  second page of Exhibit No. 2, that was in Southeast

  1/4; is that correct?
- A. Yes, sir, that is correct. That was the initial location, was in the Southeast 1/4.
  - Q. So that was would have been a Southeast 1/4 unit rather than a Southwest 1/4 unit?
    - A. That is correct.
  - Q. Now, looking at your application in your request, you based your request upon topographic reasons is that -- your original administrative approval you based on topgraphic reasons; is that correct?
    - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Is there any place else, any other standard location, which based upon surface considerations, could be drilled by Yates? Are you aware? Did you check all of the legal locations within that Southwest 1/4?
  - A. In the Southwest or the Southeast?
  - Q. You are now dedicating the Southwest 1/4 to

- the well. So we're only now concerned with the Southwest 1/4. If you want to go back to the Southeast, we have look at a different application.
  - A. Would you mind asking the question again, please.
  - Q. My question is, the spacing requirements for the well are that the well be located at least 660 feet from the quarter section boundaries; is that not correct?
    - A. That's correct.
  - Q. Which leaves a square, in effect, within the quarter section, a square window in which you could drill a well in a legal location; correct?
    - A. Yes, sir.

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Q. Did Yates survey the entire area in that square and condemn all of the locations possible within that drilling window, based upon topographic conditions, or was it -- let me state it in the alternative. Was it Yates' desire to stay in the Southeast 1/4 of the Southwest for geological reasons?

MR. VANDIVER: Mr. Examiner, I have a geologist to testify in this case that might be better suited to answer that question than Mr. Cowen.

HEARING EXAMINER: The witness has testified as to the survey which was made for the

1	location. I think that if he knows, he should answer.
2	MR. VANDIVER: All right.
3	THE WITNESS: I am not sure if they looked
4	for any other locations in that Southwest 1/4. I
5	believe they had their sights set in that Southeast
6	part.
7	Q. (BY MR. STOVALL) It's your understanding
8	and I understand you're not a geologist and you're not
9	testifying as to the geology but it is your
10	understanding that the exploration people at Yates did
11	not express any interest in going to any of the other
12	areas in that quarter section; is that correct?
13	A. That is correct. That interest was not
14	indicated to me.
15	MR. STOVALL: I have no further questions
16	of this witness on that subject matter, but I will
17	want to talk to the geologist about that.
18	HEARING EXAMINER: That is all your
19	questions?
20	MR. STOVALL: That's all my questions.
21	EXAMINATION
22	BY HEARING EXAMINER:
23	Q. Mr. Cowen, on your location No. 1 this
24	is referring to your section sheet in Exhibit 2 it
25	does not appear that that location is down into that

draw.

- A. Mr. Examiner, this is a xerox of a xerox of a xerox, and, therefore, it didn't come out really clear on what the actual topography looked like. Our permit agent was out on location and after the original location was staked there in the Southeast 1/4 and it was his impression that this would not be approved by the BLM, because it was so close to or in the Fivemile Draw area. Because Fivemile Draw is a major drainage through there.
  - Q. And the location in the Southwest of the Southwest appears to be well outside the draw; would you agree to that?
    - A. Yes, sir, there would -- yes, sir.
  - Q. And it also looks like the Northwest of the -the Northeast of the Southwest would be outside the
    draw. Would you agree to that?
    - A. Yes, sir.
- HEARING EXAMINER: Anybody else have any questions?
- MR. STOVALL: Let me ask one more just to follow up and close on this issue.
- 23 FURTHER EXAMINATION
- 24 BY MR. STOVALL:
  - Q. Mr. Cowen, do you know whether Yates on a

- surface matters only, surveyed either the Southwest of 1 2 the Southwest or the Northeast of the Southwest? 3 I do not believe those were surveyed. HEARING EXAMINER: The witness may be 4 5 excused. THE WITNESS: Thank you. HEARING EXAMINER: Call your next witness. 7 DIRECT EXAMINATION 8 9 BY MR. VANDIVER: 10 Q. Ms. Bentz, state your name, your occupation, and by whom you're employed, please. 11 12 My name is Leslie Bentz. I'm employed as a petroleum geologist by Yates Petroleum Corporation, 13 14 Artesia, New Mexico. 15 Q. And you were previously sworn and testified 16 in Cases Nos. 9794 and 9795 this morning and had your 17 qualifications as a petroleum geologist were accepted, 18 were they not? Yes, they were. 19 Α. 20 Have you made a study of the available Q. 21 geological data in the area surrounding the proposed Red Rock "NB" Federal No. 2 Well? 22
- A. Yes, I have.
- Q. Did you pick the location for the Red Rock
  "NB" Federal No. 2 Well?

A. Yes, I did. All three of them.

2 MR. VANDIVER: Is the witness qualified,

Mr. Examiner?

HEARING EXAMINER: Yes.

- Q. (BY MR. VANDIVER) Would you refer back to Exhibit 3 that's been admitted into evidence in this case and review the circumstances surrounding the changes of the location?
- A. Okay. As you would notice the date on the first page, we started trying to get a well drilled in area back in July of this year. We did choose an orthodox location in the Southeast. The BLM will not permit us to drill that because of drainage problems, so we picked an alternative location in the Southwest 1/4 of that section.

Again, we fell into Fivemile Draw, so we had to choose another location because of topography. To stay as close as we could to our original location, which is already our second choice to begin with, we moved 330 feet from the line. As you notice, there is an arc site. We're putting up a berm to protect that arc site and also for drainage purpose.

If it was up to BLM, they want us to go further unorthodox. Yes, there are other locations that could be drilled surfacely, in there, but I don't

see much point in drilling a well if it's probably going to be a dry hole.

1.3

We have gone out of our way to try to drill an orthodox location, and this is a 4,000 foot Abo well. The economics are already marginal at best, and this is three months and we still can't drill the well. If we can't get this unorthodox location, we just won't drill it.

- Q. If I could refer you to what's been marked for identification as Applicant's Exhibit 4 in this case and ask you to identify that and describe the information contained in that exhibit.
- A. Exhibit No. 4 is a map of the net sand, Abo Sands. Abo was deposited in fluvial channels. The channels are very narrow. They meander. The typical channel there is a half mile wide. It meanders up to a half a mile, so it's very easy to miss your primary objectives.

It shows probably the best location we could drill is back in the Southeast 1/4. We cannot drill that because of the draw. So we moved over to an orthodox location in the Southwest. The location is nearly as good but probably not quite as good. And then we were forced to move 330 from the south, because of the draw.

If we have to move this -- if you move it over in the western part of that proration unit, there is a good chance you're going to drill a dry hole or a noncommercial well. We're increasing the risk to a point if we have to -- because we have very little well control up to the north -- that if we have to move it up to the Northeast of that Southwest 1/4, we probably will not drill the well from some period of time.

I think we can -- if I could move on to the next exhibit.

- Q. Identify Applicant's Exhibit 5.
- A. Exhibit No. 5 shows one particular channel that we are trying to penetrate. And if you will notice, the well in the Northeast 1/4 of Section 33 penetrated 18 feet of that. The next real good control that we have that penetrated that channel is up in Section 20, up in the Northwest 1/4 of Section 20. So we're pretty much -- if you look at the dry hole in Section 28 and also the gas well in the Northwest 1/4 of Section 33, we're basically trying to thread a needle through there.
  - Q. All right.

A. If you could refer to cross-section A-A', which is Exhibit No. 7. It points out the Finley

Channel Sand, which is our primarily target. Shows
the well up in the Northwest 1/4 of Section 20. The
Geneva comes down through the Finley, which is in the
Northeast 1/4 of Section 33, on down to the Powers,

Now, if you refer to section cross-section B-B'.

Q. Which is marked as Exhibit 8?

which is in the Southeast 1/4 of Section 33.

A. Exhibit 8. This cross-section illustrates the two wells that this well will be located. The Powers 10-Y, which is located in the Northwest 1/4 of Section 33, is a poor noncommercial producer. There are hints of the Finley Channel in that well bore, but it does not produce.

If you move on to the Red Rock Federal No. 1, which is located in the Southeast 1/4 of Section 28, you will notice that the well was plugged and abandoned. Again, you see what may be a channel edge there, but it is nonproductive in that well. So we have probably less than a half-mile window to locate that sand. And I feel like that we're probably getting a little close to the edge of it as it is.

- Q. You haven't identified Applicant's Exhibit No. 6. what is that exhibit?
  - A. Yes. If we could go back to Exhibit No. 6.

It shows the estimated ultimate recovery of the wells in that area. It shows that in the western part of Section 33, which would be equivalent location in the western part of 28, that the wells are noncommercial wells. The ultimate recovery is the number on the top. And if you look at the bottom, in parentheses, that is what the cumulative production is through 1988.

- Q. Anything else with regard to the exhibits?
- A. No.

- Q. Ms. Bentz, in your opinion, is your proposed location, 330 feet from the south line, and 1980 feet from the west line of the Section 28, the best available location for an Abo gas well in this particular spacing unit, Southwest 1/4 of Section 28?
  - A. Yes, it is.
- Q. And in your opinion, what's the probable result if the well should be moved to the west into the Southwest 1/4 Southwest 1/4 or to the north, into the Northeast 1/4 Southwest 1/4 Section 28?
- A. Well, if you move to the west of Section 28, you're likely to drill a well that is either a dry hole or noncommercial. If we must move this location to the north, we're increasing our risk to the point this we won't drill the well right now.

1	Q. All of acreage surrounding the proposed
2	well within a mile is owned by Yates Petroleum
3	Corporation, so you're not harming anyone's
4	correlative rights?
5	A. No, we're not.
6	Q. In the your opinion, will the granting of
7	Yates's application in this case be in the interest of
8	conservation of oil and gas, the prevention of waste
9	and the protection of correlative rights?
10	A. Yes, it is.
11	Q. Were Exhibits 4 through 8 prepared by you
12	or under your direction or supervision?
13	A. Yes, they were.
14	MR. VANDIVER: Mr. Examiner, I would move
15	admission of Applicant's Exhibits 4 through 8 in this
16	case, and that concludes my examination of this
17	witness.
18	HEARING EXAMINER: Is there objection?
19	Exhibits 4 through 8 will be admitted.
20	EXAMINATION
21	BY HEARING EXAMINER:
22	Q. Ms. Bentz, on your Exhibits 7 and 8, have

you shown all of the prospective sands or identified

highlighting the one channel sand that you're --

sands in this pool on those exhibits, or were you just

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24

- A. We were just highlighting the one channel sand. There are some additional sands in the well bore, but they are of extremely poor quality, and we feel like if we don't penetrate the Finley Sand, we probably will have a noncommercial well.
- Q. I understand these sands come and go, and that they are quite erratic.

It would appear, particularly from your Exhibit 4, that conditions north of your location No. 1 might be prospective. Have you given consideration to moving north from that location?

- A. If you notice, we don't have any control to the north. We've postulated, and it's easy to draw a straight line through there at the moment, but these channels are known to meander. And we feel like that if we have to jump up there and, basically, wildcat in Section 28, we won't drill that well right now. The economics are such in the Abo, that, you know, your risk, if we get up there, we feel like it would be prohibitive.
- Q. I see. This location is in the Pecos Slope Abo Pool.
- 23 A. Yes, it is.

Q. And that pool is not a prorated gas pool, is it?

A. No, it's not.

- Q. When an operator crowds a line and does not look at alternative locations that are standard locations, it says to me that he considers all of his his acreage not to be productive, and --
- A. Well, in this case that's not the case. If you're familiar with the Pecos Slope, you will know it's very rugged terrain. We commonly have many topographic problems out there. There are many archaeological sites. By the time you through this in considerations, unorthodox locations 330 off the line are common. They have always been administratively approved in the past, and I think if you will go back and look, that it's a rather routine thing in the Pecos Slope.
  - Q. Well, isn't as routine as it used to be.
- A. Well, I realize that, and it's getting to be a point when it takes three months to get a well that barely, you know, justifies, economically, to drill that, we probably are not going to be able to devote the manpower and the kind of hours that it takes to prepare these. We have been to nearly every governmental agency in southeast New Mexico to get the well drilled.

HEARING EXAMINER: I understand your

1	problem.
2	I believe that's all I have. Is there
3	anything else to go onto the record?
4	MR. VANDIVER: No, sir.
5	HEARING EXAMINER: The witness may be
6	excused. We'll take the case under advisement.
7	MR. STOVALL: Mr. Examiner, I think
8	probably this would be an appropriate time to take a
9	break, but before we do, I would like to have a brief
10	discussion off the record with the Yates people and
11	whoever else is in the room to let you the know where
12	we are on this.
13	HEARING EXAMINER: We'll take a 15-minute
14	break.
15	
16	
17	I do hereby certify that the foregoing in
18	the Examiner hogels
19	
20	Oll Conservation Division
21	A CANON DIVISION
22	
23	
24	

## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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

I, Diana Abeyta, Certified Shorthand
Reporter and Notary Public, HEREBY CERTIFY that the
foregoing transcript of proceedings before the Oil
Conservation Division was reported by me; that I
caused my notes to be transcribed under my personal
supervision; 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 January 3, 1990.

CSR No. 267

My commission expires: May 7, 1993