

Mr. POWER. That is correct.

Senator CHURCH. And even after you have drilled the initial holes you don't have sufficient information at that point to plot out and plan for a general mining operation until you have gone ahead and drilled the other holes that confirm the location of the balance of the ore that will be involved in the total operation?

Mr. POWER. That is correct.

Senator CHURCH. Thank you.

Mr. POWER. Therefore, exploration is difficult and requires freedom of movement with each day's work dictating the next day's work. The first drill hole dictates the location of the second and so on.

The next step after exploration is development of the ore body—providing you have found ore. We now settle down to determine the number of tons of ore, the tons of overburden and the mining cost estimates.

Grade of ore is most important as this affects our plant operations. Mining methods and equipment are studied and alternate plans are prepared. But we still have, even at this point, unknown mining factors.

Mining is the next step. It is impossible to drill the entire property enough to set up a complete mining plan. So we take a panel—a small area usually less than 10 acres. We drill again in more detail, then remove the overburden and extract the ore. It is only at this point and in this panel within the mine that we know fairly well what is going to happen. Even then unexpected faults or folds can make us alter our plans.

Because of the geology I have just described the Phosphate Lands Conference contends that mining regulations must take into consideration the complexities of our mining conditions.

PAST ACTIVITIES OF THE PHOSPHATE LANDS CONFERENCE RELATIVE TO MINED LAND RECLAMATION

Let us now turn our attention to the past activities of the Phosphate Lands Conference relative to mined land reclamation. As has been mentioned, most of the western phosphate is on the public domain administered by the Department of the Interior.

On May 7, 1966, the western phosphate industry was shocked to see the Department of the Interior publish proposed regulations for the reclamation of federally owned phosphate lands which ignored the unique geologic conditions I have just described. It appeared that the authors had never been west and certainly were not skilled in mining.

These regulations were impractical and in the final analysis could have put the western phosphate industry out of business.

The western phosphate producers immediately banded together for the purpose of forming the Phosphate Lands Conference and to jointly ask for time to comment on the proposed regulations.

Within 6 months we prepared and submitted to the Department of the Interior comments illustrating the problems and failings of the proposed regulations together with proposed regulations which we felt achieved the desired results of mined land reclamation without the unnecessary interference of the Federal Government in our methods of prospecting and mining.