

Andrus acts

Interior secretary delays oil leases. . .

WASHINGTON — Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus Monday delayed federal offshore oil leasing for the second time, allowing coastal states to review proposed lease sales and new environmental safeguards to go into effect. Andrus said even more schedule adjustments may be required under amendments to the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act now pending in Congress.

It was the second time since he took office that Andrus ordered a postponed offshore oil and gas leases. In May he imposed delays of up to eight months in eight lease sales announced by the Ford administration, saying schedules he inherited were unrealistic and could not be met.

The latest round of delays pushed back schedules for six of those sales giving coastal states involved 60 days to review and comment on

each sale. The sales are off the East Coast and in the Gulf of Mexico.

In addition, Andrus set dates Monday ranging from 1979 through 1981 for 15 other sales — five off the East Coast, two off California, five off Alaska and three in the Gulf of Mexico — that the Ford administration had scheduled to take place at an earlier date.

The planned Atlantic, Northern California and Alaskan leases are in

frontier areas which have never been drilled.

An Interior Department spokesman said the latest action by Andrus is "not considered a delay but an opportunity to broaden the input from the states."

Andrus said the new environmental safeguards, including the 60-day state review period, will be put into effect, "shortly" through Interior Department orders if the House fails to approve Senate-passed amendments designed to avoid adverse impacts of offshore drilling.

The amendments require a separate environmental impact statement on how oil companies plan to develop leases if they strike oil or gas and how they plan to get the fuel ashore, process it and store or distribute it.

Past environmental impact statements have been prepared before plans for developing the oil were known and thus considered onshore aspects of leasing only in general terms.

The secretary said he intended the new schedule to prevent coastal states from being involved in a boom and bust cycle and to allow them to maintain a steady level of activity.

Ideally, just as exploratory activities from one lease are beginning to subside, exploratory activity from a second sale would begin to pick up, Andrus said. "Later the same pattern would prevail for development and production phases."

. . .and proposes strip mine law

WASHINGTON — Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus Monday proposed federal regulations to prevent federal state workers enforcing new strip mine controls, or members of their families, from holding even an indirect interest in coal mining operations.

The proposed rules would require annual financial statements from an estimated 1,000 federal workers —

secretaries to scientists — and Andrus moves in strip mine states will be enforcing the new Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Law signed by President Carter Aug. 3.

The federal and state workers would be responsible for operations such as inspecting strip mine lands to determine whether they were restored to prior conditions, and whether mining operations minimized destruction of surface and underground water.

Workers would be required to report their financial interests along with those of spouses, minor children and other relatives living with them. All employment, securities, real property and creditor financial

interests held during the previous year would be required in the annual reports.

"If we are to have an effective program to insure that surface coal mining is conducted in an environmentally sound manner, everyone concerned must have confidence that persons administering this program will do so with vigor and integrity," said Andrus.

The Interior Department published the rules in yesterday's Federal Register and will accept public comment for 30 days.

Luckenbach all set to invite Prince Charles 'to come visit'

LUCKENBACH, Tex. — The residents of this dilapidated town Monday extended an invitation to Great Britain's Prince Charles when he comes to Texas in October.

Harmon, press secretary for numerous beer parties which for the slightest reason in Luckenbach, said a formal invitation is being prepared for Prince Charles who will make a 12-day tour of the United States.

"We naturally assume he is planning to come to Luckenbach since Alamo is on his itinerary and it's San Antonio which is rapidly getting fame as the 'Gateway to Luckenbach,'" Harmon said.

"We just wanted to make sure he's welcome. Everybody's somebody in Luckenbach — even a fish prince."

Harmon, speaking on behalf of Luckenbach First Lady Kathy Moran, said Prince Charles' Texas visit would not conform to the previously scheduled Sept. 4 celebration of the town's One Million Carat Diamond Jubilee Year, but the citizenry was prepared to make him an honorary citizen and throw a big party in his honor, anyway.

"If the Prince decides to come in October, we'll throw a party just as well," Harmon said. "If his

schedule looks a little too crowded, you've seen one big city, you've seen them all and there's only one Luckenbach."

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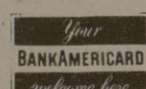
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