Federal officials to make OCS decision soon

By MARY DOWNES

The go-ahead on the con-troversial offshore drilling pro-gram on Alaska's Outer Con-tinental Shelf (OCS) will be made by federal officials in Washington, D.C. according to an official from the federal OCS office in Alaska.

Don Hinninger, chief of the Environmental Analysis Division Environmental Analysis Division of the Bureau of Land Manage-ment, said last week that Alaska's OCS office does not always have sufficient data to give a go-ahead on offshore drilling. The Department of Interior has the authority to decide whether the data pro-vided from the local OCS offices is sufficient in making any decisions. any decisions.

Impact studies concerning the OCS are currently being pre-pared in sequence of the sales time schedule. According to Hinninger, the final draft for the Gulf of Alaska has been completed along with the ori completed, along with the ori-ginal draft for the Cook Inlet area. The OCS office is curarea. The OCS office is cur-rently working on the primary draft for the proposed Kodiak sale, and they are in the process of gearing up for the tract selection process for the Beau-fort Sea.

Because two-thirds of the entire OCS program centers around Alaska's coastline, it is mental damage. receiving the highest priority here despite the fact that it runs the highest environmental risks.

Last week, Gov. Hammond sent a letter to the secretary the Interior which outlined the state's position on the drilling program and included what can be considered the state's compromise to the existing sales schedule. This compromise will be reviewed by the secretary before he formulates the new schedule, said Hinninger.

The compromise basically restated the state's opposition to restated the state's opposition to the hasty scheduling of the sales that would affect Alaska. There are eight sales which involve almost the entire Alaskan coast-line, including the Cook Inlet, Gulf of Alaska and Beaufort Sea areas. According to Hinnin-ger, the State's long-held posi-tion is that the Department of Interior scheduled the sales too hastily without adequate State hastily without adequate State input.

Governor Hammond submitted his own proposal to the Dept. of Interior, stating the State's compromise position, accepting the need for Alaskan mental damage.

The first sale proposed by Hammond was that oil explo-ration proceed in the Cook Inlet in February of 1977. "The State has acknowledged the rationale of going with Cook Inlet pretty much as scheduled by the department," said Hinninger;

The governor then proposed joint sale with the Bureau Land Management in the of Beaufort Sea in September of 1977. About 180,000 acres of near-shore land in the Beau-fort Sea would be involved in

this sale. About one-third of that land, however, is presently being contested between the federal and state governments. When there is a contesting over a certain offshore area, said Hinninger, the provision is that both governments enter in an interim agreement which would state which agency would be

state which agency would be responsible for certain areas. "I honestly cannot tell you the status of the nogotiations on that," said Hinninger, "and if they are going on, they are certainly not on the field level, they would be done at the highest levels within the depart-ment and within the State." ment and within the State.

Most OCS off-shore personnel would come from outside Alaska, but Hinninger does not anticipate a major influx of people to Alaska as a direct result of the OCS exploration process. Relatively few people would be involved in the local communi-ties on-shore, even though there will be administrative and other will be administrative and other personnel coming to Alaska. "But even if something were discovered tomorrow, the delay factor between that and really large influxes of the population either to the state or the local communities would still be a number of years off," said Hinninger.

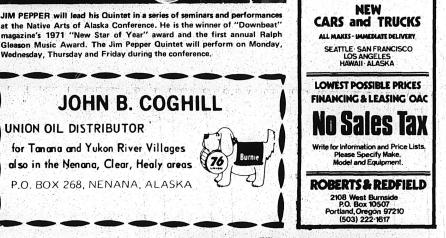
Native Arts Conference begins August 16

The Native Arts of Alaska Conference begins this coming Monday, Aug. 16, and con-tinues through the week at the Anchorage Consortium Library (mornings) and AMU (evenings).

Special features of the week will be a Native Arts Show, Auction and Sale with auctioneer Auction and Sale with auctioneer Willie Hensley on Monday even-ing, Aug. 16 at 8:00, perfor-mances by the Point Hope and King Island Dancers, poetry readings by Robert Callahan, seminars on native visual arts from prehistoric carvings to con-temporary and religious art, and much more and much more.

There is no admission charge for the conference or the auction and evening perfor-mances. The public is welcome. Contact Andrew Hope, c/o 360 K St., Suite 240, Anchorage 99501, Phone 279-3824 or (avaping) 270 1044 (evenings) 279-1944

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ALEUT DANCER and actress. Jane Lind, currently lives in New York City and the Walk City and has worked with the New York University Theatre, Carter Baron, the Walker Arts Group, and the LaMama Experimental Theatre Club. Jane will speak at the Native Arts of Alaska Conference Wednesday and Friday mornings, and will perform Friday evening.

Letters to this offer will be prompt.

plished.

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