

Billions of Barrels Beneath Susan's Feet

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Interested in making a trip to Prudhoe Bay?

If so, you can now depart from Fairbanks in a Boeing 737 jet, cross the Arctic Circle and the beautiful Brooks Range, roughly parallel the proposed route of the Trans Alaska Pipeline and, 30 minutes after take-off, land in Deadhorse on the Prudhoe Bay.

At Deadhorse, the North Slope stretches before the eyes like an endless desert of snow—flat, des-

olate, and still.

A road winds from the airport terminal past the camps of the various oil companies which leased land on the slope last fall and past a small blue building marking the site of the first discovery well on the North Slope in 1966.

The camps are now still except for small patches of activity. A new facility built by one of the companies stands empty along with a TAPS storage area for pipe. And billions of barrels of

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oil rest silently underground—all waiting for the magic words—a construction permit for the pipeline.

The road continues out onto the Arctic Ocean now frozen solid and covered with snow. Out on the ocean, one can look back toward the dock and the huge cranes that will be used during the summer to load and unload supplies from barges. The ice breaks up in July for about six weeks.

The tour of Deadhorse ends, as it began, at the only airline terminal there—that of Wien Consolidated. Wien has invested approximately \$150,000 in the installation of a full service station at the public airport on the North Slope and is serving it daily with Boeing 737 flights.

The facility is complete with ticket office, waiting room, cargo building, warm storage, manager's quarters, radio, power and electrical plants, sanitary and fueling facilities. The station is tem-

porarily staffed by Eph Wheeler, a native, and Dan Mack.

Mike Daniels, area manager for Fairbanks, said that no definite plans have been made for staffing the facility because Wien is uncertain just what the demands will be in the future since plans for the pipeline project are up in the air.

Wien last week took about 20 persons connected with the news media to Deadhorse for a first-hand look at the new terminal and the area.

Presently, there are no overnight and public eating facilities in the area. The tour group was fed by Standard Oil of California in their camp next to the terminal. British Petroleum sponsored a bus tour.

Wien presently takes about 50 people to Deadhorse daily along with cargo consisting mostly of groceries, miscellaneous supplies and parts for emergency repairs for the oil companies and their sub contractors.