



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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SECRETARY SEATON MODIFIES 20-MILLION-ACRE ALASKA WITHDRAWAL TO PERMIT MINING AND MINERAL LEASING

Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton today announced approval on April 18 of an order permitting future oil and gas leasing and staking of mining claims on approximately 20 million acres of northern Alaska public lands. The lands are in the area known as "PLO 82" (Public Land Order 82) in far northern Alaska above the Arctic Circle.

The action modifies the 1943 order establishing "PLO 82" and will make it possible for the Department's Bureau of Land Management to go ahead with plans to open certain parts of the lands to oil and gas leasing.

The lands affected by the new order will be open to oil and gas leasing as soon as the necessary leasing maps have been prepared and publicized by the Bureau of Land Management. The maps are expected to be ready about May 1.

Under the terms of the Secretary's new order approximately 16,000 acres of the lands in the PLO 82 area are located within the known geologic structure of the Gubik Gas Field and will be offered for leasing in 640-acre blocks through competitive bidding. The Department will also publish a notice opening to oil and gas leasing, in blocks of 2,560 acres each, approximately four million acres outside of the Gubik Gas Field which will be available without competitive bidding.

Notices of the opening of these lands for competitive and noncompetitive oil and gas leasing will be published in the Federal Register by the Bureau of Land Management, at which time the leasing maps will be made available for inspection and sale in designated BIM offices. The maps will be assembled in a portfolio, which will sell for \$1.50.

The area embraced by the Secretary's order will be open to the staking of mining claims on September 1, 1958.

The Bureau of Land Management will publish notices for additional noncompetitive leasing, with a period for the simultaneous filing of applications, when the maps covering such lands are prepared and become available from time to time.

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife has applied for the withdrawal of approximately five million acres of PLO 82 lands. This area, located in far northeastern Alaska is included in a proposed Arctic wildlife range which, along with lands outside PLO 82, would embrace approximately nine million acres.

A copy of the modification order is attached.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS
TITLE 43 - PUBLIC LANDS: INTERIOR

Chapter I - Bureau of Land Management
Appendix - Public Land Orders

Public Land Order 1621

ALASKA

MODIFYING PUBLIC LAND ORDER NO. 82 OF JANUARY 22, 1943,
IN PART TO PERMIT MINING LOCATIONS AND MINERAL
LEASING OF THE LANDS

By virtue of the authority vested in the President and pursuant to Executive Order No. 10355 of May 26, 1952, it is ordered as follows:

1. Public Land Order No. 82 of January 22, 1943, reserving lands under jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior for use in connection with the prosecution of the war, which was modified by Public Land Orders Nos. 250, 254, and 299 of November 20, 1944, December 15, 1944, and October 9, 1945, respectively, and partially revoked by Public Land Order No. 323 of August 14, 1946, is hereby modified, subject to the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of this order, to the extent necessary to permit locations and entries under the mining laws and the issuance of mineral leases pursuant to the Mineral Leasing Act of February 25, 1920 (41 Stat. 437; 30 U.S.C., sec. 181 et seq.), as amended and supplemented, for the following described lands (exclusive of those described in paragraph 2 of this order).

Northern Alaska

All that part of Alaska lying north of a line beginning at a point on the boundary between the United States and Canada, on the divide between the north and south forks of Firth River, approximate latitude 68° 52' N., longitude 141° 00' W., thence westerly, along the this divide, and the periphery of the watershed northward to the Arctic Ocean, along the crest of portions of the Brooks Range and the De Long Mountains, to Cape Lisburne.

Approximately 16,000 acres of this land is located within the known geologic structure of the Gubik gas field and will be offered for oil and gas leasing through competitive bidding.

2. This order shall not affect the following-described lands reserved by executive Order No. 3797-A of February 27, 1923, as amended by Public Land Order No. 289 of July 20, 1945, for oil and gas, which lands comprise Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4:

Commencing at the most northwestern extremity of the point of land shown on the maps of Alaska as Icy Cape, approximately lat. $70^{\circ} 21'$, long. $161^{\circ} 46'$; thence extending in a true south course to the crest of the range of mountains forming the watershed between the Noatak River and its northern tributaries and the streams flowing into the Arctic Ocean; thence eastward along the crest of this range of mountains to a peak at the head of the northernmost of the two eastern forks of Midas Creek (Pl. 1, U.S.G.S., Bull. 536), at approximately lat. $67^{\circ} 50'$, long. $156^{\circ} 08'$; thence in a true north course to a point at the highest high water on the western or left bank of the Colville River; thence following said highest highwater mark downstream along said Colville River and the western bank of the most western slough at its mouth to the highest highwater mark on the Arctic coast. From here, following the highest highwater mark westward to the point of beginning.

The coast line to be followed shall be that of the ocean side of the sandspits and islands forming the barrier reefs and extending across small lagoons from point to point, where such barrier reefs are not over three miles off shore, except in the case of Plover Islands, from Point Tangent to Point Barrow (Pl. 3, U.S.G.S., P.P. (109), long. approximately $154^{\circ} 50'$, where it shall be the highest highwater mark on the outer shore of the islands forming the groups and extending between the most adjacent points of these islands and the sandspits at either end. In cases where the barrier reef is over three miles off shore the boundary shall be the highest highwater mark of the coast of the mainland.

3. An area included within the area described in paragraph one of this order, and which may be described briefly as "all lands lying east of Canning River, extending from its mouth on the Arctic Ocean at Flaxman Island in approximate longitude $146^{\circ} W.$, to its source in the Brooks Range in approximate longitude $145^{\circ} 13' W.$, latitude $68^{\circ} 53'$, and containing approximately 5 million acres," is included in an application for withdrawal, Fairbanks 017050, filed by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife for use as the Arctic Wildlife Range. As provided by the regulations in 43 CFR 295.11, the lands shall remain segregated from leasing under the mineral-leasing laws, and from location under the mining laws, to the extent that the withdrawal applied for, if effected would prevent such leasing or locations, until action on the application for withdrawal has been taken.

4. None of the released lands shall become subject to oil and gas leasing until approved leasing maps for such lands, or portions thereof, are from time to time prepared, and notices of the time and place of filing thereof and of the availability of the lands for leasing have been published in the Federal Register by the Bureau of Land Management. These notices will describe the lands subject to noncompetitive lease and will provide for a simultaneous filing period of offers to lease. The leasing maps will not describe any lands within two miles of Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4.

5. Leases will be issued pursuant to the provisions of the 1920 Mineral Leasing Act in accordance with the regulations in 43 CFR, Part 192, and the provisions of this Order and of the published notices of the availability of the lands for leasing.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 192.42(d), all offers to lease must describe the lands applied for according to the leasing blocks in the specified townships as shown on the approved leasing maps. Each of such leasing blocks will be deemed to be a legal subdivision, subject to the restriction on assignments of a part of a legal subdivision as set forth in 43 CFR, 192.140.

7. All offers to lease any portion of the released lands filed prior to the publication of the notices above referred to will be rejected.

8. The released lands shall become open to locations under the United States Mining Laws at 10:00 A.M. on September 1, 1958.

9. All inquiries concerning the released lands should be addressed to the Manager, Land Office, Bureau of Land Management, Fairbanks, Alaska. Inquiries relating to the land within the Gubik gas field which will be offered for competitive oil and gas leasing should be addressed to the Director, Bureau of Land Management, Washington 25, D. C.

(Sgd) Fred A. Seaton
Secretary of the Interior

April 18, 1958