Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Department of the Interior today announced cffi1cellation of an April) sale of oil and gas leases on the 27,000-acre Tyonek Reserve (Moquawkie Reservation) near Cook Inlet, Alaska, coupled with the beginning of negotiations for an alternative method of leasing that will be more favorable to the native village of Tyonek.

The Tyonek Reserve was withdrawn from the public domain by executive orders in 1908 and 1915 for the use and benefit of the Alaska natives of Tyonek Village.

The April 3 sale was authorized under a procedure which would have held the proceeds in escrow pending a later determination as to disposition. More recently, however, a reexamination of the purposes for which the Reserve was established under the 1915 executive order has led the Department to conclude that the lands can be leased pursuant to the Act of March 1, 1927 (44 stat. 1347, 25 USC, sec. 398a) under which the proceeds of the sale would accrue to the benefit of the natives.

Robert L. Bennett, Alaska area director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has been instructed to begin consultations with the Tyonek Village Council on leasing of the lands under the 1927 statute.