



NEWS

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NGSA reacts to Sec. Norton's announcement on Lease Sale 181, saying, "We hope to again be offered access to this crucial supply of natural gas."

R. Skip Horvath, President of the Natural Gas Supply Association, today reacted to Interior Secretary Norton's announcement regarding the lease sale of natural gas off several Southeast coast states, saying, "It's like waiting for Christmas all year and being told by the U.S. House of Representatives that Christmas is canceled. What Interior Secretary Norton has done is said that 1 million U.S. families can have natural gas for 15 years. We hope that some day an additional 1.5 million families, or the total 2.5 million families originally expected to be served with natural gas from this area, will enjoy Christmas, too."

Today, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton announced that Lease Sale 181, which contains natural gas and oil off the coast of Florida, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, has been modified from 5.9 million acres to 1.5 million acres. The Lease was to be auctioned in December of 2001. Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to disallow any drilling in the proposed lease sale area.

Horvath continued, "In fact, industry actually believes that the amount of natural gas is closer to 6.5 million families for 15 years. Either way, we appreciate the Administration's desire to work out a compromise with all concerned parties; however, this industry has proved repeatedly that we can supply natural gas while at the same protecting the environment.

"Technology allows us to reach further, drill deeper and leave behind fewer footprints. It can be done while coexisting with the environment. We will continue to work the Administration and Congress to hopefully again be offered access to this crucial supply of natural gas."

NGSA represents integrated and independent companies that produce and market the majority of the natural gas produced in the United States. NGSA is actively involved in pursuing regulatory and legislative issues that affect the association's members. Established in 1965, NGSA encourages expanded use of natural gas and supports regulatory and legislative actions that foster competitive markets.

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