

Pacific Mineral Resources

We assume, and we hope that Guam scientists will be represented at a conference, scheduled for August 26-30, in Honolulu, which will advance exploration and development of the total energy and mineral resources of one-half the earth centered on the Pacific Ocean.

The U.S. Department of Interior's Geological Survey said that the meeting, entitled "The Circum-Pacific Energy and Resources Conference," will be "the most comprehensive yet undertaken."

The area of the earth involved extends from Malaysia and Thailand on one side of the Pacific to the Andes Mountains and the Lesser Antilles on the other, and from the Arctic Circle to Antarctica.

There will be scientists from the People's Republic of China, and the Soviet Union attending, along with those representing Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the United States and Venezuela.

Others will come from Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, the Khmer Republic, the Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, New Guinea, the Philippines, Thailand and South Vietnam.

Also represented will be American Samoa, British Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, New Zealand, Papua, Tonga, Micronesia and Western Samoa. Guam wasn't included on the list, but we suspect that we'll have a delegate or two.

The conference objectives are important to the entire Pacific, and include:

- * Focusing attention on present and future availability of energy and mineral resources both on land and offshore areas bordering the Pacific Ocean.

- * Considering where and how exploration would be most effective.

- * Enlisting the experience, skill and know-how of specialists in the region.

- * Encouraging the free exchange of ideas and information among the Pacific region countries for solving common energy and mineral resources problems.

Also involved will be a "Circum-Pacific Map Project" which will bring together geologic, mineral and energy (both hydrocarbon and geothermal) resources maps of the entire area. The cooperative map project will extend over several years.

During the conference there will be prepared discussion of energy and mineral resources presented by geographic regions or by selected topics including oil and gas, oil shale, tar sands, coal, geothermal and solar energy, nuclear energy, metallic minerals, non-metallic minerals and ground-water.

The conference is being sponsored by the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the UN-funded Committee for Coordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in Asian Offshore Areas, and the Pacific Science Association.

We're not sure why Guam wasn't included on the list of invited participants. It's probably an oversight, predicated on the belief often expressed, "oh, Guam, they are Americans there, and part of the U.S., so the U.S. will represent them." This is the same sort of thinking when it comes to Political Status Discussions of the Marianas Islands — Guam is represented by the U.S. — or the South Pacific Conference, or the Ocean Law International Conference, or the Asian Development Bank.

More and more the Micronesians are being invited to these Conferences, but Guam is excluded. Maybe we're being overly sensitive, but it seems that Guam, as an island in the Pacific, should be concerned about the political, social, and economic happenings of the ocean around us. Riding the coattails of the U.S. has been fine, but we're beginning to see that Guam's goals and needs don't necessarily follow hand-in-glove with all of the needs and goals of the U.S. It's time that we started to take a more active part in the events of the Pacific basin, and in the Asian area. JCM.