

FIRE ISLAND PLAN OPPOSED BY UDALL

He Rebuts Moses' Plan for Road and Boat Channel— Would Keep Open Space

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Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, June 20—Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today challenged Robert Moses' program for protecting Fire Island.

Without mentioning Mr. Moses' name, the Secretary gave a point-by-point rebuttal of the \$50,000,000 beach-erosion program proposed by Mr. Moses last March as president of the Long Island State Park Commission.

Mr. Moses had called for dredging a forty-mile boat channel inside the barrier beaches and using the sand from the dredging to build a huge dike on the ocean side of the beaches. He also proposed the building of an ocean boulevard atop the dike.

Writing to the Fire Island Voters Association, which opposes the Moses plan, Mr. Udall said that in any plan for the development of the area "we need to provide for the preservation of natural open spaces free of automobile traffic, parking lots and hot-dog stands."

Praises Jones Beach

Mr. Udall praised Jones Beach, the neighboring Moses project, but emphasized that Fire Island required "a different kind of planning."

The Secretary also opposed any building on the dunes, to avoid further undermining of the island's shoreline protection, which was weakened by storms last March.

The Fire Island Association responded to Mr. Udall's message with a statement issued in New York City in which the residents' group introduced Mr. Moses' name. The statements said Secretary Udall's proposals were "in clear contrast to Robert Moses' ideas, which would restrict public access to two-thirds of the island."

"Secretary Udall looks to the future," the association declared, "while Robert Moses still thinks back to the Nineteen Thirties."

Mr. Udall, in his letter, addressed to Arthur R. Silsdorf, president of the association, predicted that the Fire Island

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area could obtain assistance by these means:

¶The long-range erosion control and hurricane protection program of the Army Engineers, which was voted by Congress in 1960 and for which appropriations are expected this year.

¶Joint Federal-state acquisition of undeveloped areas, to be preserved in their natural state under the Shoreline Protection Act approved by the Senate and pending in the House. This measure provides \$25,000,000 in matching Federal funds to buy land.

The Secretary said in his letter that he had written to Governor Rockefeller proposing Federal-state cooperation on Fire Island planning. Interior Department officials said today that the Governor's response was not enthusiastic.

Mr. Udall did not propose classifying Fire Island as a national seashore, as Congress has done in the case of Cape Cod. Such action would provide Federal funds for the full cost of preserving wilderness areas and protecting the shoreline.

It was understood that the

Secretary did not want to make such a suggestion when neither of New York's two Republican Senators had sponsored legislation for such a move.

"My recommendation would be that the Federal, state and local authorities proceed now with boldness and imagination to keep as much of Fire Island as is still possible in its natural state, while at the same time preserving and protecting the area for public recreation," Mr. Udall wrote.

When the Secretary toured the Fire Island area earlier this month, some of his remarks were interpreted as indicating a decline in his interest in Federal-state acquisition of available beachfront property for preservation. This was an impression he sought to correct in his letter.

Mr. Udall told the Fire Island residents that he would continue to press for Federal support for the program he had outlined, but that local efforts were also essential.

"As a practical matter," he said, "a sound conservation result will only be achieved on Fire Island with the cooperation of the State of New York and Suffolk County."