

BY WILLIAM HOFFMAN

Reclamation regs imperiled

James Watt, Secretary of the Interior, was particularly upset when the Supreme Court upheld the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act which gave the Federal Government control over strip mining of coal. Now, almost a year later, the Interior Department of the Interior is weakening the Office of Surface Mining that is responsible for managing the Act.

Stringent regulations are being rewritten, including the construction of sedimentation ponds, impoundment of overburden and spoil, and the reclamation of the strip mining with topsoil and grass plantings.

Laws in the 24 coal states must now only be as "effective" and not as "stringent" as the Federal law. This change will result in an earlier transfer of strip mining enforcement to state authorities. Environmental groups fear that these authorities, though backed by tough state laws, will face political pressure from coal mining interests and the old abuses will return.

In the meantime, the Office of Surface Mining size is decreasing with the shift of responsibility to the state and the Federal budget cutting. If states abuse their authority, the Federal Government might not be able to take back the enforcement responsibilities. The people who live in the mining areas will be the ones affected the most.

Windmills: to fund or not to fund

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) issued final rules for seeking Federal money for purchasing and installing windmills (wind energy systems) with more than 100 kilowatt-rated capacity. Then in a surprise action, DOE announced opposition to funding any requests because the market conditions and tax credits provide sufficient incentives for the private sector to finance their own windmills. However, appropriate legislation must be passed to ensure that Federal money not be spent.

Friends of Earth turned down

Both the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) denied the Friends of the Earth petition requesting changes in the federal government's management of aerial application of pesticides. EPA received over 3000 letters in response to the May, 1979 petition, which called for written permission to spray pesticides within 1000 feet of a person or another person's property, levying penalty points against a pilot's certification for incidences of spray drift, label instructions for integrated pest management techniques, creation of a citizen enforcement and monitoring system, and various other positions.

EPA in denying the request stated that because of the differences across the country in land use, weather, crops grown and local opinion regarding pesticide spraying, decisions concerning regulation of spray drift should be made by state governments and not at the federal level.

NEWS from page 16

be sold directly to the consumer through members, such as grass seed and various gardening tools.

John Linkhart, former vice president of operations for Perf-A-Lawn, and McGary formed the group. McGary told *Weeds, Trees & Turf* that unlike other associations in the industry, ILBA will not be non-profit.

SEED

Jacklin appoints Brilman to research

Jacklin Seed Co., Post Falls, ID, has named Dr. Leah Brilman research director. According to Duane Jacklin, general manager, Brilman's research and publications in plant genetics have gained her recognition among agronomists and plant geneticists in both the academic and private business sectors.



She received her B.S. and M.S. degrees from California State College in Bakersfield and a Ph.D in agronomy and plant genetics from the University of Arizona in Tucson. Before joining Jacklin, she was assistant professor and plant breeder at the University of Arizona.

PESTICIDES

Scientists follow pesticides in soil

Scientists at the University of Illinois have developed a technique using microecosystems to study the behavior of pesticides in the environment. The new method, refined by graduate assistant Bruce Banham, enables scientists to tag the pesticides with radioactive materials to determine the persistence of the pesticides in various soil types,

Continued on page 64