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DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For Release July 14, 1977

INTERIOR MAKING DISTRIBUTION OF DELAWARE FUNDS

The Department of the Interior announced today that it plans to distribute more than \$14 million to the Absentee Delaware Tribe of Western Oklahoma and the Cherokee Delaware Tribe of Oklahoma on July 14, 1977.

The Department announced June 16 that it planned to make the distribution September 15, 1977, but that it would modify its plans for distribution of the funds in accord with any forthcoming court order. Last week the Oklahoma Delawares were given a writ of mandamus requiring the Department to make payment "forthwith."

On February 23, 1977, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Act of October 3, 1972, which provides for the distribution of judgment funds to the Oklahoma Delawares. The Kansas Delawares filed for reconsideration which was denied.

The September 15 award date was set to allow Congress time to act on pending legislation which would give 10 percent of the money to the Kansas Delawares.

The money was awarded to the Delawares by the Indian Claims Commission for land taken by the United States in violation of an 1854 treaty.

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