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BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS Hart - 343-4306

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT REPORTS RECORD SALES OF INDIAN TIMBER IN FISCAL YEAR 1964

Timber cuts and sales reached an all-time high resulting in increased employment for several thousand Indians during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1964, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs announced today.

The total volume cut under contract and paid permit was nearly 741 million board feet, an increase of 200 million board feet over the previous 12 months. Cash receipts rose $3 million during the same period, to a new high of $11.5 million.

Timber resources remain one of the greatest of the income-producing potentials on Indian reservations. During the past four years, the Bureau has concentrated its efforts upon more effective management and use of Indian forest holdings as one phase of the overall effort to improve the economy of reservations.

Contributing recently to the success of the effort has been legislation endorsed by the Department of the Interior and enacted in April 1964 (P.L. 88-301) which facilitates Bureau management of Indian timber resources by amending a 1910 Act under which the Bureau's staff has been operating.

Increased sales during fiscal year 1964 were noted in all parts of the country where Indian-held timber stands exist, with the exception of the Sacramento, California area. In the Sacramento area, the sales volume in recent years has remained consistently close to the maximum allowable annual cut.

The 1964 record is attributed to a planned increase in timber sale offerings combined with more favorable market conditions in the wood-using industries; large-scale inventories of standing timber financed through the Area Redevelopment Administration; and the start of production at three new tribally-owned sawmills on the Jicarilla-Apache Reservations in New Mexico, Fort Apache Reservation in Arizona, and the Red Lake Reservation in Minnesota.

It has been estimated that the fiscal 1964 cut created year-long jobs for between 5,000 and 7,000 men, most of them Indians, in various phases of the wood-using industries located on or near reservations. Most of the jobs were in areas of chronic underemployment. The stepped-up pace of cutting and sales has continued since July 1 of this year.

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