Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Approval of a reorganization under which the United Pueblos Agency with headquarters in Albuquerque, N.M., has been divided into two smaller agencies was announced by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Robert L. Bennett.

The new Northern Pueblos Agency, with headquarters, in Santa Fe, N.M., will serve the eight northern pueblos -- Nambe, Picurt, Pojoaque, San Ildefonso, San Juan, Santa Clara, Taos and Tesuque.

The new Southern Pueblos Agency, with headquarters in Albuquerque, will serve the southern and central pueblos -- Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Sandia, San Felipe, Santa Ana,.Santa Domingo and Zia.

Commissioner Bennett said the reorganization will open the way for increased participation by the Indian people in the management of their affairs by making Bureau specialists and officials more geographically accessible for consultation and cooperation with Indian leadership.

He said the reorganization will provide more effective services to Indian people through the increased contact by Agency personnel with the individual pueblos and more efficient use of Bureau manpower through reduction of time lost in travel.

The eight northern pueblos some time ago requested the establishment of an agency at Santa Fe. The reorganization was also supported by the All-Indian Pueblos Council by a 17 to 0 vote on December 14, with two Pueblos absent.

Of the 333 positions involved the Northern Pueblos Agency will have 87 positions and the Southern Pueblos Agency 246. Of the 87 positions being assigned to the Northern Pueblos Agency, only about 25 will be physically moved from Albuquerque to Santa Fe, as the others are already in the Northern area. These transfers will be accomplished over a period of time to avoid severe impacts on individuals and to conform to budget stringencies, Bennett said.

The establishment of the two new agencies is being programmed so that there will be no overall increase in costs from those already estimated for the existing United Pueblos Agency, plus five positions which are being transferred from the area office.

A new superintendent will be appointed for the Northern Pueblos Agency. Kenneth L. Payton, superintendent of the United Pueblo Agency will remain as superintendent of the new Southern Pueblos Agency.