Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

**Media Contact:** Lovett 202 343-7445
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Regulations governing BIA responsibilities in the former Navajo-Hopi Joint Use Area were published in the Federal Register April 26, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs Raymond V. Butler announced today.

Though the area has now been partitioned by court order and the lands placed under the respective jurisdictions of the Navajo or Hopi Tribes, the Secretary of the Interior, according to the Settlement Act and the United States District Courts, retains exclusive authority and jurisdiction over all activities that are connected with livestock reduction, range restoration and surveying, monumenting and fencing the boundaries. These responsibilities include related law enforcement activities.

While the involvement of the Bureau of Indian Affairs is lessened by the partitioning, the jurisdiction of the Bureau for the activities mentioned above is expanded to include all persons, Indian and non-Indian. The assertion of this jurisdiction will continue as long as it takes to complete the Settlement Act mandated tasks.

Because there is immediate need for maintaining the Bureau of Indian Affairs activities without interruption and because these revisions in the regulations are made necessary by court order and statute, there will not be the customary period of review and comment. These regulations will therefore become effective upon publication.