Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Bureau of Indian Affairs has agreed to provide neutral observers for the May 26 election of officials of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians of Minnesota.

Roy Sampsel, Interior's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, said the four Departmental and BIA observers are being provided at the request of Band officials. "We will make technical assistance available regarding the conduct of balloting to choose three officers and four district representatives to serve four-year terms on the Band's governing body," he added.

The request for the observers came during Sampsel's April 3 visit to the Red Lake Reservation. The first phase of technical assistance was provided on April 21 when two BIA representatives were sent to the reservation to become acquainted with election procedures and make suggestions for their improvement.

In an effort to help assure that all concerned parties are given fair treatment in the May 26 election. Departmental representatives will observe each state in the election. Sampsel said that if the observers are convinced that the election has been properly conducted, the Department will promptly recognize the results.

The four representatives will be named in early May.