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Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Public Land Management Harrison Loesch today called for accelerated road construction on Indian reservations; stepped-up assistance to improve public land development roads and trails, improvement of national park roads, roadways, and trails; and highway development in the Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa. He testified before the Senate Public Works Subcommittee on Roads.

Pointing out that the Federal Government was obligated by treaties and agreements to construct and maintain roads on Indian lands, Loesch said it failed to do so between 1900 to 1935. Since that time, he failed, construction of roads 0n Indian lands has fallen far short of construction of roads in the rest of the United States.

He asked for contract authority for Indian road construction of $75 million the United States in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1974 and $100 million ending June 30, 1975.

"Public use and demands each year continue to outstrip the installation of vitally needed resource management facilities on public lands," Loesch said. He asked for authorization of $10 million in fiscal years 1973l and 1974 for construction and improvement of public land development roads and trails.

These authorizations, he said, will allow completion of approximately 950 miles of road work and about 180 miles of trail work, plus some survey and design of roads and acquisition of easements for existing roads.

The National Park Service currently has a backlog of developments estimated at $2 billion, of which approximately $1 billion represents roads and trails funding, Loesch said. He asked for authorizations of $40 million for park roads and trails in fiscal years ending June 30, 1974 and 1975 and $20 million for parkways in the same periods.

To provide for the territorial highway development program, Loesch asked for $2 million each for the Virgin Islands and Guam and $500,000 for American Samoa in fiscal years ending June 30, 1974 and 1975.