Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Sidney L. Mills, Acting Deputy Commissioner, announced today the appointment of three new Assistant Area Directors for the Bureau of Indian Affairs' office in Aberdeen, S. Dak.

Richard D. Drapeaux, formerly Deputy Area Director in Aberdeen will be the Assistant Area Director for Human Resources. This office will supervise the office of Employment Assistance, Social Services, Tribal Government, Law Enforcement, Housing and Indian Business Development.

Drapeaux, 50, a member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe, is a graduate of South Dakota State University and entered Federal service in 1952 as a teacher on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. He subsequently served at the Turtle Mountain, Fort Totten, Fort Berthold agencies in education, employment assistance and housing positions. In 1975, he was appointed Deputy Area Director, a position he held until the reorganization of the Aberdeen Area Office in May which established Assistant Area Directors for Administration, Education, Human Resources and Natural Resources in lieu of the Deputy and Division Chief's positions.

Dennis L. Petersen, 53, enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe will be the Assistant Area Director for Natural Resources. His office will supervise the overall responsibility for roads, rights protection, real estate services, forestry, range management, environmental quality and energy resources. Petersen is a graduate of South Dakota State University and did post graduate work at Colorado State and the University of Arizona. He served with the U. S. Infantry in WWII and again during the Korean conflict. He was with the South Dakota State University Extension Service for many years and then was a project officer, planning officer and assistant to the area director for the Economic Development Administration at Duluth, Minn. He was an Indian Community Action Program economic development specialist at the University of South Dakota before his 1971 appointment as Superintendent of the BIA agency at Pierre, S. Dak. Peterson was also Superintendent at Sisseton prior to his present assignment in 1976 as Chief of Tribal Government Services at the BIA Central Office in Washington, D.C.

Loren J. Farmer, 41, will be the Assistant Area Director for Administration and will supervise general areas of financial management, budget, personnel services, real property management, procurement and contracting, and safety and planning.

Farmer, an enrolled member of the Blackfeet feet of Montana, is a graduate of Haskell Institute and joined the BIA in 1959. He has served in administrative and management positions in Western Washington, Portland and the Cheyenne River office anal was Superintendent of the Yankton and Fort Belknap Agencies.

The Aberdeen Area Office administers programs arid services for 15 Indian tribes with a service population of 61,300 in the States of North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska.