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The Department of the Interior announced today that a contract for sawmill equipment for the Red Lake Indian Mills, Redby, Minnesota will be awarded to the Mater Division of the Appleton Machine Company, Appleton, Wisconsin.

The decision to award the contract on the basis of installation of the equipment by the manufacturer was determined to be in the best interest of the Federal Government and the Red Lake Indians. The contractor becomes responsible for correcting any operating difficulties resulting from improper installation.

The new equipment, which will be of the most modern and efficient type, will replace an obsolete tribal sawmill that has been operating on the reservation almost continuously since 1925. Over the period of 37 years it provided the Red Lake Tribe with a total operating profit and stumpage value of about $3.3 million. The average annual employment was 283, mainly Indian employees, and the average annual wage was $136,000.

Only two bids were received for furnishing and installing the equipment on which bids had been solicited. The Meter Division of the Appleton Machine Company was low bidder with a bid of $147,315. The other bid in the amount of $148,339 was submitted by the Northeast Ohio Machine Builders, Inc. of Columbiana, Ohio.