Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Timber sales on Indian owned land reached a record high of $26.7 million in calendar year 1968, topping a stumpage receipts of the previous year by almost $8.8 million, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs announced.

Although the amount of timber harvested also reached a record 998 million board feet -- 98 million board feet over 1967 Bureau officials said rapidly rising timber prices were largely responsible for the income increase.

In addition to cash receipts, Indians cut more than 92 million board feet of timber for home and farm use and for fuel.

The increased level of Indian timber harvest provided about 7,000 year-long jobs in logging and milling and more than 4,700 jobs in supporting and service employment, with combined wages of about $50 million annually.

Plans are now under way to increase Indian timber sales, Bureau officials said, to help ease the present log shortage and to further increase Indian stumpage income and employment.

Several Indian tribes are taking an increased role in developing the industrial and business opportunities supported by their timber harvests. Wood processing plants have been installed by the Navajo and Jicarilla Apache Tribes in New Mexico, the White Mountain Apache in Arizona, Warm Springs in Oregon, and Red Lake Chippewas in Minnesota, with small mills located on a number of other reservations. Individual Indians are also controlling an increasing number of logging enterprises.

Indian forests are managed on a sustained-yield basis, so that the resource will be continually productive.