Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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New regulations governing retail business and credit transactions at trading posts on the Navajo, Hopi and Zuni Reservations have been published in the Federal Register, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson announced today.

The purpose of the new regulations is to protect Indian consumers against excessive interest rates, high prices and other abuses.

The regulations establish licensing requirements for doing business on the reservations, impose a 24 percent limit on interest for pawn loans and retail credit, forbid the use of trade scrip or similar substitutes for money, restrict contributions from traders to Navajo Tribal political candidates and provide for monitoring and control of prices charged, especially for basic commodities.

The three reservations are located in close proximity in the Southwest. The Navajo, the largest of all reservations, includes a large area in Arizona and portions of New Mexico and Utah. The Hopi Reservation is entirely surrounded by Navajo land in Arizona and the Zuni Reservation is at the southeast corner of the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico.