Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Interior Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs James Canan announced today that 150,000 acres of timberland was purchased April 23 for the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indian tribes of Maine under the terms of the Maine Indian Settlement Act passed last October.

The purchase involved 38 separate tracts of land in East-Central Maine, ranging in size from 30,000 acres to 40 acres. The total cost was $29.6 million. The land was bought from the Dead River Land Company of Maine.

The settlement act extinguished the Indians' claim to some 12 million acres of land and gave them a $27 million trust fund plus $54.5 million for the purchase of land. The April 23 purchases were the first acquisition by the two tribes which are to share equally in the award.

The Penobscot Tribe selected and purchased 120,205 acres, of which 41,486 acres were immediately put into trust with the United States. The remaining 78,719 acres were bought in fee, with the United States not having a trust responsibility.

The Passamaquoddy Tribe selected and purchased 30,082 acres, all held in trust by the United States for the tribe.

BIA Eastern Area Director Harry Rainbolt represented the Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs in carrying out the functions of the trustee.