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Income received by Indian tribes and individual Indians from oil and gas leasing of their lands reached the record total of more than $41,000,000 in the fiscal year that ended June 30, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton reported today.

This compares with an income of about $28,000,000 in 1955 and approximately $13,000,000 in 1951.

Nearly $36,000,900 of the 1956 total was accounted for by ten tribal groups. The great majority of tribes, as usual, received little or no oil and gas income.

Three factors are chiefly responsible for the 1956 upsurge: (1) the intense renewal of interest in leasing on the Osage Reservation in Oklahoma; (2) the stepped-up search for oil and gas on Navajo lands around the ‘four corners" area of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado; and (3) the potential expansion of gas development on Indian lands in the San Juan Basin of the Southwest.

In addition to the Navajo and Osage Tribes, the other eight groups receiving substantial oil and gas income in 1956 included those on the Jicarilla Reservation, New Mexico; the Ute Mountain and Southern Ute Reservations, Colorado; the Fort Peck, Blackfeet, and Crow Reservation, Montana; the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming; and the Uintah-Ouray Reservation, Utah.

About $33,600,000 of the total Indian oil and gas income was received by tribal organizations and the balance of approximately $7,300,000 by individual Indian landowners. Nearly $21,000,000 of the total income was in the form of bonuses paid for leases. Over $15,400,000 represented royalties on production and about $4,000,000 was annual rental from the leaseholders.

Bonuses on the Osage Reservation alone amounted to about $9,700,000 in comparison with approximately $6,600,000 in the preceding five years combined. The increase was principally due to the discovery of new pay formations in the old partially developed areas, shallow-depth drilling to production, and favorable results from water-flood projects.

Nearly 4,000 oil and gas leases on Indian lands were approved during the year bringing the total in force on June 30 up to 17,627 embracing a total area of roughly 5,400,000 acres. On June 30 there were nearly 13,000 producing oil wells and 555 producing gas wells on these lands.

Income received by Indians from other minerals in fiscal 1956 amounted to nearly $2,900,000. Mu.ch of this was a result of interest in uranium leasing on the Navajo Reservation and the Spokane Reservation of Washington. In addition there was a small but steady production from lead and zinc mining leases on the Quapaw Reservation, Oklahoma, and from phosphate leases on the Fort Hall Reservation, Idaho.