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Competitive bidding for oil and gas leases on Indian lands in the "four corners" area of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Colorado has resulted in bonuses for the Indian owners totaling over $45,000,000 in the past six months, the Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton announced today.

By comparison, the combined income realized by all Indian tribal groups and individual Indian landowners from bonuses, rents and royalties on oil and gas leases in the l2-month period which ended last June 30 was approximately $41,000,000.

The latest opening of bids on Indian lands in the four corners area, which boosted the six-month total over $45,000,000, was held at Ignacio, Colorado, March 25 and produced total high bonus offerings of $4,358,040 on 45 tracts comprising 56,336 acres. Of this amount, $4,284,269 was bid for tribal and allotted lands on the Ute Mountain Reservation and the balance for lands on the adjoining Southern Ute Reservation.

The highest bid per acre was $262.77 offered by Superior Oil Company for one tract which brought a total bonus offering of $537,890.

A similar sale of oil and gas leases on the Ute lands of Colorado last October brought high bonus bids totaling $7,600,891. In November three bid openings on Navajo Reservation lands in New Mexico and Utah near the "four corners" area produced $33,686,362.