Media Contact: Tozier - Int. 4306 | Information Service
For Immediate Release: March 1, 1957
Print PDF

Four small bands of Paiute Indians in Utah, comprising 232 members, will take over full responsibility for management of their own affairs under a proclamation approved by Acting Secretary of the Interior Fred G. Aandahl in fulfillment of a 1954 congressional enactment.

The bands affected are Shivwits with 130 enrolled members and 27,520 acres of tribal property, Kanosh with 42 members and about 6,000 acres of tribal land, Koosharem with 34 members and 440 acres, and Indian Peaks with 26 members and approximately 9,000 acres. In addition to the tribal holdings, individual members of the Kanosh band own a total of 1,840 acres and members of the Koosharem group 240 acres which have been up to now in Federal trusteeship.

In accordance with the 1954 enactment, Public Law 762 of the 83rd Congress, subsurface or mineral rights to all of the lands still owned by the Indians have been transferred to a private trustee to be held for at least 10 years. The Walker Bank and Trust Company of Salt Lake City has been selected for this purpose.

In the case of the surface rights, the decision on disposition was left up to the Indian owners. The great bulk of the lands involved have not been used by the Indians in recent years and most are scheduled for sale. Those not already sold have been transferred to the Walker Bank and Trust under a liquidation trust agreement.

One major exception is on the Shivwits Reservation where two tracts of irrigated land and a homestead tract, comprising 840 acres altogether, will be held by the Walker Bank for the use and benefit of the tribal members. In addition, an 80-acre tract on the Kanosh Reservation has been divided among four tribal members and a 40-acre parcel at Koosharem has been conveyed to two individuals. In each of these latter cases, other members of the band will have a lifetime right of access and use to the particular tract.

Over 100 members of the four bands have taken advantage of the Indian Bureau's voluntary relocation program and have moved to cities such as Los Angeles, Denver, or San Francisco. A substantial number of the adults have taken vocational training or adult education courses which were made possible by Public Law 762 and provided by the University of Utah under a contract with the Indian Bureau.

The Utah bands are the second group of Indians to move away from Federal trusteeship in the past six months. A similar step was taken by the Indians of western Oregon under a proclamation signed by Secretary Fred A. Seaton last August 13.