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Under Secretary of the Interior Hatfield Chilson today announced preliminary results of the Klamath Indian election in which members of the Oregon tribe were given the opportunity to remain in the tribal organization or withdraw and receive cash payment for their pr0portionate share of the tribal assets.

Of 2,133 members who received ballots in March, 1,649 or 77.3 percent have elected to withdraw and 74 or 3.5 percent have elected to remain. Ballots for 405 or 19 percent of the tribal members have not been received. Five ballots still remain to be validated.

Under the election regulations announced to the members in advance, failure to return a ballot by the deadline date of midnight April 21, is considered as a decision to remain in the tribal organization. However, the regulations also provide some leeway for validation of ballots received after the deadline if there are legitimate reasons for delay. A 30-day period after the deadline is provided for this purpose.

At the end of that period the management specialists; T. B. Watters and Dinsmore Taylor, will proceed to develop a plan for dividing the tribal property so that a sufficient portion may be sold to compensate the withdrawing members.

Under existing law, however, no actual sales of the tribal property may be made before the end of the present congressional session.