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Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton announced today that the Bureau of Indian Affairs will make a payment at the earliest possible date to persons who are entitled to share in the western Creg0n Judgment Fund. The checks should be in the mail during the next few weeks.

The Western Oregon Judgment Fund was set up as a result of two claims cases against the United States which were decided by the Court of Claims in 1950 and 1951. Seven groups of Western Oregon Indians were entitled to share in the fund which originally totaled over $2,600,000. Since it was originally established the fund has been reduced by attorneys' fees and increased by accrual of interest. It now amounts to approximately $3,000,000.

The payment which is being made at this time; Secretary Seaton explained, will be only partial since the rolls of those entitled to share in the Fund have not yet been finally determined. At present there are approximately 2,000 persons named on the rolls of the various groups. Almost 1,000 other individuals have appealed from their exclusion from the rolls. Their appeals are being processed.

In determining the amount which should be paid at this time, the Bureau of Indian Affairs made the hypothetical assumption that each appeal would be decided in favor of the appellant. Thus the amount to be paid now represents a minimum entitlement and may be supplemented by a later payment if any number of the pending appeals are subsequently rejected.

Payments will be made first to competent living adults whose names, are on the rolls. Because the 1954 congressional law governing distribution of the fund requires special action by the Secretary to protect the interests of minors and mental incompetents, the payments on behalf of such individuals will require additional time. In the case of deceased persons whose names are on the rolls, probating of the estates will be necessary.

The following tabulation show the number of individuals now on the rolls of each group and the payment which will be made at this time to each eligible individual.

Name of Group	Number now on Roll	Payment
Alca Band of Tillamooks	183	$3,200
Coquille	263	$2,100
Chetco	670	$520
Confederated Bands of Umpqua and Calappoias Tribes	410	$520
Tootootoney	471	$425

In addition to the six groups sharing in the five funds, a judgment has been awarded to the Molallala or Molel Band. No names are on the roll of this group at the present time although a number of appeals for inclusion on the roll are pending for determination.