Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Secretary of Agriculture Orville L, Freeman and Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today announced adoption of 8 study and recommendations made by the two Departments to bring timber sale practices by the two agencies into closer uniformity.

The two Secretaries noted that 13 specific recommendations are being adopted. The changes apply to timber management in Western Oregon by the Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Land Management in the Department of the Interior. Several of the recommendations are of wider geographic application. Four of these also apply to certain practices by Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs on Indian Timberlands in the Pacific Northwest.

Both Secretaries noted that the steps being taken to reconcile and standardize timber sale and management practices within the two Departments were in keeping with President Kennedy's Special Message to the Congress on Natural Resources in which he stressed the necessity for bringing together IIwide1y scattered resource policies of the Federal Government." Adoption of the study and recommendations follows a special study by the two Departments.

Among the study recommendations being adopted are orders to the agencies involved to standardize management plan inventory procedures, reconcile differences in determining allowable timber cut, and detailed field studies looking to possible uniform adoption of the International one-quarter inch rule and/or cubic foot measurement as substitute for the Scribner Decimal C rule. The latter recommendation deals with the way in which the board-foot volume of timber is measured for management inventories of standing timber and for timber sales.

Other recommendations include possible adoption of a joint nursery program, and action to meet land jurisdictional problems in the complicated checkerboard ownership areas of Western Oregon.

Secretary of Agriculture Freeman noted that the six Western Oregon embrace approximately 6.3 million acres. 1.8 billion board feet of timber are harvested each year management. national forests in From these lands some under sustained yield.

Secretary of the Interior Udall noted that his Department's Bureau of Land Management manages about 2.5 million acres of Federal lands in 18 Western Oregon counties. From these lands BLM harvests more than 1 billion board feet of timber each year under sustained yield program.

The Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for some 2.1 million acres of commercially valuable Indian-owned forest lands in the Pacific Northwest. Timber sales from these lands amounted to 370 million board feet in fiscal year 1960.

Other efforts toward uniform practices would include action to resolve legal differences now existing in the transfer of contracts, and maintenance of close liaison on set-aside timber sales for small businesses. In addition, existing interagency committees in Washington, D. C. and in Portland, Oregon are to be strengthened and given specific responsibilities for further recommendations on uniform

timber management practices.

The complete text of the 13 summary recommendations is attached.

Summary of Recommendations

1. The agencies will continue adherence to the established management objective of producing saw timber as the main product of timber harvest cutting.

2. The agencies are to obtain standardization of management plan inventory procedures.

3. The agencies are to reconcile significant procedural differences in determining allowable cut.

4. The Interagency Timber Appraisal Committee is to be continued as a means of progressing towards elimination of timber appraisal differences.

5. The agencies will consider the need for acting in unison when making any changes in bidding methods.

6. The General Counsel for the Department of Agriculture and the Solicitor for the Department of the Interior will confer with respect to the resolution of the legal differences now existing in the transfer of contracts.

7. Both agencies will maintain close liaison with respect to the set-aside sale program of the Small Business Administration and carefully considered common policies will be followed.

8. The agencies will explore the need for a joint nursery program.

9. The Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Indian Affairs will institute jointly a program aimed at providing for the uniform measurement of timber for management inventory and for sales.

10. The two Departments will collaborate on development of a uniform timber trespass bill and regulations.

11. Both agencies are to consider and recommend action to meet certain land jurisdictional problems.

12. The existing interagency committees in Washington, D. C., and in Portland, Oregon, are to be strengthened and given specific responsibilities for recommending uniformity of timber management practices.

13. The offices of both agencies in Portland, Oregon, will establish the same arrangement for exchanging manual and handbook material and all amendments thereto as is presently in effect between both agencies in Washington, D. C