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Yakima Indian Agency, Toppenish-- Indian land leasing, an \$800,000 a year volume of business in rentals on the million plus acre Yakima Indian Reservation, reached a historic milestone when bids for 58 tracts of land were opened by Harvey Muskrat, real property officer at the agency.

Because of the persistent leasing problem, and in order to aid farmers ~~xxx~~ to meet seasonal crop preparation deadlines, the bidding was speeded up from the customary <sup>30-day</sup> ~~90-day~~ period after announcement to <sup>15</sup> ~~30~~ days. This was possible through regulations promulgated by the Secretary of the Interior through intercession of ~~Rex~~ Congresswoman Catherine May, 4th District, (R-Wash).

There was nothing sensational in the bid calling, involving ~~xxx~~ something less than 4,000 acres. And there were but 17 bids, because most of the land, ~~odd~~ individually and ~~tribally~~ owned, had ~~been~~ was marginal and had been offered ~~for~~ for lease previously. But it was a milestone in efforts to get the land leased, for benefit of farmers, the Reservation area as a whole and the Indian owners. And a solution of the problem still remains to be achieved although it has become evident that much of the trouble centers on the depressed ~~odd~~ over-all farming picture.

Moreover at least one individual ~~odd~~ high in the Bureau of Indian Affairs has a first hand picture. He is John Crow, recently appointed acting commissioner of Indian Affairs. Crow was one of a two-man government team sent to the Yakima Reservation at the request of Rep. May about a year ago to study the situation.

Musktrat considers the ~~odd~~ bid opening, "fairly successful."

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first ad. land leasing

The land department staff is now completing initial successful bids, permitting farmers to begin immediate work on the property. In other instances, bidders are being notified they are high and this enables them to begin negotiations with the Indian land owner.

Land owners ~~addddd~~ have the benefit of a fair rental value figure, based on an impartial appraisal ~~xy~~ under a contract. This was one of the first moves to establish a working relationship between lessors and land owners.

There is some le way, if the amount the lessor is able to pay falls short. But there is also a limit below which a lease would not be approved.

The general policy is to encourage the land owner to take an increasingly active part in carrying out his own management. The land department provides technical knowledge and assistance as required but does not direct the activities other than under regulations in which assistance is sometimes required by both parties.

One acknowledged difficulty is the increasingly narrow "margin of profit" for the farmer, a higher cost of production because of labor, equipment etc., and a lowering return in crop values.

There are other difficulties, which farmers claim should be relaxed because it is driving them out of business. These include bonds, which they assert spell the difference between continuing in operation or moving to other areas. Then too there are more attractive deals in other regions, like the Columbia Basin, made so by the government. This situation, it has been pointed out, follows a historical pattern. A new area is opened, opportunities appear greener. There is a migration from one area to another. Later the migration shifts in the other direction.

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The situation on the Reservation started on a down-trend in 1956 and has progressively worsened. Legislation to correct it is difficult or impossible.

Another handicap is fractionated heirships. It is a problem more far-reaching on the Reservation than leasing.

With each year, the number of heirs to certain property of persons who die increases. There was a time when only one or two heirs. Now heirship in a single piece of property may rest with 79 persons. And 100 per cent consent from each is required to complete a lease. Some of this is facilitated by acceptance forms and the office assists in not only sending out forms but in providing addresses.

The near-million dollar leasing business evolves about 1,900 currently active leases, averaging five years each.

Of the 77,500 acres of irrigated land, there are approximately 185 idle tracts or around 4,000 idle acres from which produce no revenue for farmers, no rental for the owner and consequent loss in potential revenue.

Lease units are limited to 80 acres and unless a consolidation of tracts can be effected, this tends to drive out the large operator

The agency land office does not advertise all land when it comes up for lease. It is not the policy to put it on a highly competitive "shop around" basis. This is in line with an effort to provide stability for the lessor or professional farmer, and encouraging the owner to manage his own affairs.

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Leasing of irrigated land, for run of the mill farming is about completed now, being based on the season. From now through March leasing will continue for grazing and unirrigated land. Leasing is carried on around the year and around the clock, five days a week in the land department.

All leases expire on Feb. 28 some year, just like ~~driver's~~ auto driver licenses expire on birthdays. The setting of a date provides better administration control.

Mental payments are also scheduled, as possible to provide for payments around Dec. 1 for benefit of school children and Christmas.

The \$800,000 returns for leasing is for individually owned tracts only and tribally owned land, of which there are approximately 500,000 acres, including much in timber, provides tribal revenue.

When Muskrat, a Cherokee, came to Yakima nine years ago (it will be 10 next August) individual leases amounted to about \$600,000 annually. He started with the Indian Service in the Klamath about 25 years ago.

It is the Klamath Reservation, rich in timber, that is now undergoing the final process of termination. Come next August and members of the Klamath tribe who voted to "dissolve their tribal partnership," will receive a final payment of some \$44,000 each. This is contingent on a \$65 million appropriation for purchase of the timber by the Forestry Service. Affairs of members of the tribe who elected to remain a tribe are being managed by a Portland financial arrangement. Their per capita payments are running around \$800 twice annually. And their land has been placed under taxation, now that the government is no longer the holder of the trust.

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4th ad. leasing.

Muskrat came to Yakima Agency from Sacramento and carries the title of supervising real property officer. William (Bill) Helmich is a raiser, Mrs. Ruby K. Ellis is realty officer whose main duties are leasing and use, tenure and management. Clyde Renn, also a Cherokee, is assistant realty officer, like George Barth. Mrs. June E. Pinkham, <sup>a Nez Perce,</sup> is realty clerk and stenographer.

Another and the second section of the department is acquisition and disposal.

Mrs. Margaret Couch is records and controls officer of this section. Harvey Seelatsee, a Yakima, is a assistant realty officer, the same as Robert E. Ward.

The section deals in purchases, sales, and transfer of title.

It handles sales between individual Indians and all fee patent sales are handled in this section. There are about half a dozen fee patent sales, in which Indian owned land passes into non-restricted ownership, each year.

Fee patents are obtained by competent persons through application to the Department of the Interior. They must be approved by the Portland, area office and are processed then through the Washington office of the Bureau of Land Management. The BLM is also in charge of all public domain land.

Most Indians don't wish fee patents on their land.

Basically, the Yakima Tribe has worked to keep the reservation intact and for the past five years has expended approximately \$500,000 a year acquiring property from Indians who wish to sell. Such acquisitions will average \$10,000 a tract.

"Generally speaking," said Muskrat, "our job is to operate and stay in business so we can do business."

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~~TOXXXXXX~~ Yakima Indian Agency, Toppenish--The Yakima Indian Nation's Legislative Committee, headed by Joe Meninick, is anxious to check into the possibility of locating a government surplus food distribution center on the Yakima Indian Reservation, ~~XXXXXX~~ according to Alex Saluskin, chairman of the Yakima Tribal Council.

House Bill 235, now before the ~~addaddaddadd~~ Legislature's Social Security and Public Assistance Committee would provide for establishment of surplus food distribution centers, engaging personnel, facilities and carrying out distribution.

The bill provides sponsorship by certified organizations.

"~~XXXXXX~~ Meninick said the Yakimas want to contact the committee chairman and investigate the possibility that the Yakima Tribe could become a recognized authority for such a warehouse and for distribution of surplus commodities and food if the bill is passed.



3/12/63

A long-range plan for sustained-yield production of timber on the Colville Indian Reservation, similar in expansion to that worked out for the Yakima Indian Reservation, was announced today by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior.

An increase of 50 per cent in the annual timber harvest on the Colville is a major feature. This is expected to provide a substantial ~~100,000~~ aid to the economy of the area which is now classified as one of labor surplus, the Bureau of Indian Affairs announced.

Robert D. Holtz, director of the Bureau's Portland area said the program is expected to be of immediate benefit to the Indians and dependent industries. It can be initiated as soon as funds for administrative costs are made available.

The increase in cutting will create jobs in excess of the number of employable Colville Indians who live in or near the reservation.

In recent years timber sales have been scheduled for an average harvest of 80,000,000 board feet which provides 800 jobs with an annual payroll of \$4 million.

The planned ~~100,000~~ increase will raise the harvest to 120,000,000 board feet, creating 300 new jobs and an added ~~payroll~~ yearly payroll of \$1 1/2 million.

The increase, according to the report, is feasible because a timber inventory in 1958, based on the latest photogrammetric, sampling and statistical techniques, revealed an estimated merchantable timber volume much greater than had been indicated by previous inventories. The volume presently is approximately 5.5 billion board feet.

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Holtz said increasing the harvest cut to 200 million board feet each year will provide in excess of 1,500 jobs with a total annual payroll of 7 1/2 million . Whether this increased cut will become possible depends on what is done in the next 10 to 15 years, he emphasized.

The Colville Reservation's Business Council has adopted a resolution concurring in the plan.

The report points out that time, money and dedicated effort will be needed to carry out the plan, and adequate staffing and financing of the administrative organization must be provided. The present branch of the Colville forestry includes 25 year-long employees, of whom 14 are professional foresters. The staff proposed for intensive management will include 40 year-long employees of whom 22 will be professional foresters.

There are about 835,000 acres of commercial forest land on the reservation with some 5,475,000 board feet of sawlog size timber.

While the program for the Yakima Forest has not yet been announced a Yakima Tribal Council timber committee report has disclosed that the annual cut of timber can be increased, and that the Washington office has approved an annual allowable cut of 135,500,000 feet. This means about 55 million feet more of timber can be sold annually than at present.

Timber sales for 1961 and 1962 from the Yakima Forest amounted to approximately 82,000,000 feet each year. More timber is to be cut from tribal land with an increase in tribal income, the committee has reported.

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The committee, consisting of Martin Hannigan, chairman, Wapt Bassett , Louis Schappy, Antoine Skahan and Henry Beavert, reported to Alex Saluskin, Tribal Council chairman, that a forest inventory on which management planning is based found a total of 8 1/2 billion feet of sawtimber. This is the largest volume on any reservation in the United States.

Tribal Revenue for the Yakima Tribe, lower than in some recent years, despite the nation-wide trend of low prices throughout the industry, amounted to \$819,192 in 1962.

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Indian fishermen

Wo/A

Yakima Indians, registered with the Yakima Tribe, were fishing for salmon, commercially in the Columbia River today, and it was reported by the Associated Press at The Dalles, Ore. there was no threat of arrest for those who followed Yakima tribal regulations.

But how long the immunity would last was uncertain.

Court decisions, favorable to Indians who fished in accordance with tribal regulations have changed the situation from a year ago,

Oregon and Washington regulations prohibit all commercial fishing above Bonneville Dam.

The states of Oregon and Washington sought to require that Indians observe state regulations as a means of conserving salmon runs above Bonneville Dam.

But last fall ~~Superior Court~~ Judge George Juba held in a Multnomah County Circuit Court trial that the state had failed to make a case. He said in effect, the Associated Press announced, that the Indians are entitled to some fishing.

Law enforcement representatives, the Associated Press reported, said that district attorneys appear to have decided informally to



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follow this point of view.

Capt. Irving Larson of the Oregon State Police said at Salem today he hoped that a guideline would be given at an afternoon meeting of Oregon and Washington fisheries groups. They are meeting in Portland to consider dates for the commercial season in the Columbia below Bonneville Dam.

Whether they would do ~~xxx~~ only that or whether they would ~~tackle~~ also tackle the question of Indians fishing upstream from the dam was uncertain, the Associated Press announced.

Attending the Portland hearing ~~wadd~~ were members of the Yakima Tribe's Fish and Wildlife Committee, headed by Robert Jim.

The Yakimas, by tribal regulations, are fishing only four days a week, and permitting the salmon escapement to proceed <sup>upstream</sup>, unmolested <sup>b</sup> by the Indians, for the other three days.

And the Yakimas, to show their good faith at helping maintain their salmon resources which they reserved at the Treaty Council of 1855 are putting their own ~~Navyx~~ navy into the Columbia, an 18-foot patrol boat ~~oddd~~ and Yakima tribal wardens.

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Indian fishermen

There are, however, more Indians than Yakimas fishing commercially for salmon, and by sanction of their tribal governing bodies.

These are the Nez Perce and the Umatillas.

This is a new ~~problem~~ situation confronting the fish commissions of the two states.



## Indian fishermen

W O/A

As Oregon officers moved against Indians fishing in violation for salmon along the Columbia River, registered Yakima Indians, fishing under tribal regulations went unmolested.

Friday at noon the Yakimas will hang up their nets for the

their voluntary weekend closure on the Columbia and Klickitat rivers and continue inactive until noon Monday in their efforts to cooperate with Washington and Oregon fisheries departments to conserve salmon and the salmon resources the Yakima as reserved at the Treaty of 1855.

They began fishing Monday noon and are to continue until May 26 for the f00 spring chinook run, the first of four runs each season in the Columbia.

Yakima Registered Yakima Indian fishermen , on the Yakima River, where gillnetting is banned by tribal regulations, will quit fishing at midnight this Saturday and stay off the fishing platforms along the Yakima, until midnight Tuesday. The season on the Yakima River continues until July 1.

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## Indian fishing

Robert Jim, chairman of the Yakima Tribal Council's Fish and Wild Life Committee; Louis Cloud and Tom Albert, councilmen and members, attended a meeting of the Oregon and Washington state fish commissions and presented copies of the Yakima Tribal regulations.

They also explained that the Yakima fishermen have been assigned to specific sections, and fishing areas along the Columbia. Their nets and other gear is also tagged according to regulation instructions.

Oregon state police have taken action against 100 Indians fishing without tribal sanction. .

Don Turner, of the Wasco County, Ore., district attorney's office said he will continue to prosecute any Indians found in violation of their tribal council regulations as he did last year "when I got 12 convictions and one bail forfeiture, and have one case still pending. "

Yakimas, fishing according to tribal regulations won their cases in Oregon and Washington courts and one case is before the Washington State Supreme Court. Thor Tollefson, Washington director said the state will resume prosecution if it wins the case now before the state high court.



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## Indian fishing

In a new development , from Oregon, the state police announced that Jesse Green, a Nez Perce of Lapwai, Idaho, was found with a net in the columbia just below John Day Dam. He , it w s announced, will be taken into court in Sherman County, Ore., because the Nez -Perce tribe has not had its fishing ordinance approved by the United States Department of Interior .

Green is one of several Nez Perce fishermen who are seeking to establish fishing rights along the Columbia under the Treaty of 1855.

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Tollefson also told the commissions at Oregon that the Klickitat and Skamania counties courts will take no Yakima Indian fishing cases until the state Supreme Court issues a ruling.