

## **TITLE III--INDIAN FOREST AND WOODLANDS**

### **SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.**

This title may be cited as the `National Indian Forest Resources Management Act'.

### **SEC. 302. FINDINGS.**

The Congress finds and declares that--

- (1) the forest lands of Indians are among their most valuable resources and Indian forest lands--
  - (A) encompass more than 15,990,000 acres, including more than 5,700,000 acres of commercial forest land and 8,700,000 acres of woodland,
  - (B) are a perpetually renewable and manageable resource,
  - (C) provide economic benefits, including income, employment, and subsistence, and
  - (D) provide natural benefits, including ecological, cultural, and esthetic values;
- (2) the United States has a trust responsibility toward Indian forest lands;
- (3) existing Federal laws do not sufficiently assure the adequate and necessary trust management of Indian forest lands;
- (4) the Federal investment in, and the management of, Indian forest land is significantly below the level of investment in, and management of, National Forest Service forest land, Bureau of Land Management forest land, or private forest land;
- (5) tribal governments make substantial contributions to the overall management of Indian forest land; and
- (6) there is a serious threat to Indian forest lands arising from trespass and unauthorized harvesting of Indian forest land resources.

### **SEC. 303. PURPOSES.**

The purposes of this title are to--

- (1) allow the Secretary of the Interior to take part in the management of Indian forest lands, with the participation of the lands' beneficial owners, in a manner consistent with the Secretary's trust responsibility and with the objectives of the beneficial owners;
- (2) clarify the authority of the Secretary to make deductions from the proceeds of sale of Indian forest products, assure the use of such deductions on the reservation from which they are derived solely for use in forest land management activities, and assure that no other deductions shall be collected;
- (3) increase the number of professional Indian foresters and related staff in forestry programs on Indian forest land; and

(4) provide for the authorization of necessary appropriations to carry out this title for the protection, conservation, utilization, management, and enhancement of Indian forest lands.

### **SEC. 304. DEFINITIONS.**

For the purposes of this title, the term--

(1) `Alaska Native' means Native as defined in section 3(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of December 18, 1971 (43 U.S.C. 1604);

(2) `forest' means an ecosystem of at least one acre in size, including timberland and woodland, which--

(A) is characterized by a more or less dense and extensive tree cover,

(B) contains, or once contained, at least ten percent tree crown cover, and

(C) is not developed or planned for exclusive nonforest use;

(3) `Indian forest land' means Indian lands, including commercial and non-commercial timberland and woodland, that are considered chiefly valuable for the production of forest products or to maintain watershed or other land values enhanced by a forest cover, regardless whether a formal inspection and land classification action has been taken;

(4) `forest land management activities' means all activities performed in the management of Indian forest lands, including--

(A) all aspects of program administration and executive direction such as--

(i) development and maintenance of policy and operational procedures, program oversight, and evaluation,

(ii) securing of legal assistance and handling of legal matters,

(iii) budget, finance, and personnel management, and

(iv) development and maintenance of necessary data bases and program reports;

(B) all aspects of the development, preparation and revision of forest inventory and management plans, including aerial photography, mapping, field management inventories and re-inventories, inventory analysis, growth studies, allowable annual cut calculations, environmental assessment, and forest history, consistent with and reflective of tribal integrated resource management plans;

(C) forest land development, including forestation, thinning, tree improvement activities, and the use of silvicultural treatments to restore or increase growth and yield to the full productive capacity of the forest environment;

(D) protection against losses from wildfire, including acquisition and maintenance of fire fighting equipment and fire detection systems, construction of firebreaks, hazard reduction, prescribed

burning, and the development of cooperative wildfire management agreements;

(E) protection against insects and disease, including--

- (i) all aspects of detection and evaluation,
- (ii) preparation of project proposals containing project description, environmental assessments and statements, and cost-benefit analyses necessary to secure funding,
- (iii) field suppression operations, and
- (iv) reporting;

(F) assessment of damage caused by forest trespass, infestation or fire, including field examination and survey, damage appraisal, investigation assistance, and report, demand letter, and testimony preparation;

(G) all aspects of the preparation, administration, and supervision of timber sale contracts, paid and free use permits, and other Indian forest product harvest sale documents including--

- (i) cruising, product marking, silvicultural prescription, appraisal and harvest supervision,
- (ii) forest product marketing assistance, including evaluation of marketing and development opportunities related to Indian forest products and consultation and advice to tribes, tribal and Indian enterprises on maximization of return on forest products,
- (iii) archeological, historical, environmental and other land management reviews, clearances, and analyses,
- (iv) advertising, executing, and supervising contracts,
- (v) marking and scaling of timber, and
- (vi) collecting, recording and distributing receipts from sales;

(H) provision of financial assistance for the education of Indians enrolled in accredited programs of postsecondary and postgraduate forestry and forestry-related fields of study, including the provision of scholarships, internships, relocation assistance, and other forms of assistance to cover educational expenses;

(I) participation in the development and implementation of tribal integrated resource management plans, including activities to coordinate current and future multiple uses of Indian forest lands;

(J) improvement and maintenance of extended season primary and secondary Indian forest land road systems; and

(K) research activities to improve the basis for determining appropriate management measures to apply to Indian forest lands;

(5) 'forest management plan' means the principal document, approved by the Secretary, reflecting and consistent with a tribal integrated resource management plan, which provides for the regulation of the detailed, multiple-use operation of Indian forest land by methods assuring that such

lands remain in a continuously productive state while meeting the objectives of the tribe and which shall include--

(A) standards setting forth the funding and staffing requirements necessary to carry out each management plan, with a report of current forestry funding and staffing levels; and

(B) standards providing quantitative criteria to evaluate performance against the objectives set forth in the plan;

(6) `forest product' means--

(A) timber,

(B) a timber product, including lumber, lath, crating, ties, bolts, logs, pulpwood, fuelwood, posts, poles and split products,

(C) bark,

(D) Christmas trees, stays, branches, firewood, berries, mosses, pinyon nuts, roots, acorns, syrups, wild rice, and herbs,

(E) other marketable material, and

(F) gravel which is extracted from, and utilized on, Indian forest lands;

(7) `forest resources' means all the benefits derived from Indian forest lands, including forest products, soil productivity, water, fisheries, wildlife, recreation, and aesthetic or other traditional values of Indian forest lands;

(8) `forest trespass' means the act of illegally removing forest products from, or illegally damaging forest products on, forest lands;

(9) `Indian' means a member of an Indian tribe;

(10) `Indian land' means land title to which is held by--

(A) the United States in trust for an Indian, an individual of Indian or Alaska Native ancestry who is not a member of a federally-recognized Indian tribe, or an Indian tribe, or

(B) an Indian, an individual of Indian or Alaska Native ancestry who is not a member of a federally recognized tribe, or an Indian tribe subject to a restriction by the United States against alienation;

(11) `Indian tribe' or `tribe' means any Indian tribe, band, nation, Pueblo or other organized group or community which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and shall mean, where appropriate, the recognized tribal government of such tribe's reservation;

(12) `reservation' includes Indian reservations established pursuant to treaties, Acts of Congress or Executive orders, public domain Indian allotments, and former Indian reservations in Oklahoma;

(13) `Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior;

(14) `sustained yield' means the yield of forest products that a forest can produce continuously at a given intensity of management; and

(15) `tribal integrated resource management plan' means a document, approved by an Indian tribe and the Secretary, which provides coordination for the comprehensive management of such tribe's natural resources.

## **SEC. 305. MANAGEMENT OF INDIAN FOREST LAND.**

(a) **MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES-** The Secretary shall undertake forest land management activities on Indian forest land, either directly or through contracts, cooperative agreements, or grants under the Indian Self-Determination Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

(b) **MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES-** Indian forest land management activities undertaken by the Secretary shall be designed to achieve the following objectives-

(1) the development, maintenance, and enhancement of Indian forest land in a perpetually productive state in accordance with the principles of sustained yield and with the standards and objectives set forth in forest management plans by providing effective management and protection through the application of sound silvicultural and economic principles to--

- (A) the harvesting of forest products,
- (B) forestation,
- (C) timber stand improvement, and
- (D) other forestry practices;

(2) the regulation of Indian forest lands through the development and implementation, with the full and active consultation and participation of the appropriate Indian tribe, of forest management plans which are supported by written tribal objectives and forest marketing programs;

(3) the regulation of Indian forest lands in a manner that will ensure the use of good method and order in harvesting so as to make possible, on a sustained yield basis, continuous productivity and a perpetual forest business;

(4) the development of Indian forest lands and associated value-added industries by Indians and Indian tribes to promote self-sustaining communities, so that Indians may receive from their Indian forest land not only stumpage value, but also the benefit of all the labor and profit that such Indian forest land is capable of yielding;

(5) the retention of Indian forest land in its natural state when an Indian tribe determines that the recreational, cultural, aesthetic, or traditional values of the Indian forest land represents the highest and best use of the land;

(6) the management and protection of forest resources to retain the beneficial effects to Indian forest lands of regulating water run-off and minimizing soil erosion; and

(7) the maintenance and improvement of timber productivity, grazing, wildlife, fisheries, recreation, aesthetic, cultural and other traditional values.

## **SEC. 306. FOREST MANAGEMENT DEDUCTION.**

(a) **WITHHOLDING OF DEDUCTION-** Pursuant to the authority of section 1 of the Act of February 14, 1920 (41 Stat. 415; 25 U.S.C. 413), the Secretary shall

withhold a reasonable deduction from the gross proceeds of sales of forest products harvested from Indian forest land under a timber sale contract, permit, or other harvest sale document, which has been approved by the Secretary, to cover in whole or part the cost of managing and protecting such Indian forest land.

(b) AMOUNT OF DEDUCTION- Deductions made pursuant to subsection (a) shall not exceed the lesser amount of--

(1) 10 percent of gross proceeds, or

(2) the percentage of gross proceeds collected on the date of enactment of this title as forest management deductions by the Secretary on such sales of Indian forest products,

unless the appropriate Indian tribe consents to an increase in the deductions.

(c) USE OF DEDUCTION- The full amount of any deduction collected by the Secretary shall be expended according to an approved expenditure plan, approved by the Secretary and the appropriate Indian tribe, for the performance of forest land management activities on the reservation from which such deductions are collected and shall be made available to the tribe, upon its request, by contract or agreement for the performance of such activities.

(d) LIMITATIONS- (1) Forest management deductions withheld pursuant to this section shall not be available to--

(A) cover the costs that are paid from funds appropriated specifically for fire suppression or pest control, or

(B) otherwise offset Federal appropriations for meeting the Federal trust responsibility for management of Indian forest lands.

(2) No other forest management deductions derived from Indian forest lands shall be collected to be covered into the general funds of the United States Treasury.

## **SEC. 307. FOREST TRESPASS.**

(a) CIVIL PENALTIES; REGULATIONS- Not later than 18 months from the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall issue regulations that--

(1) establish civil penalties for the commission of forest trespass which provide for--

(A) collection of the value of the products illegally removed plus a penalty of double their value,

(B) collection of the costs associated with damage to the Indian forest land caused by the act of trespass, and

(C) collection of the costs associated with enforcement of the regulations, including field examination and survey, damage appraisal, investigation assistance and reports, witness expenses, demand letters, court costs, and attorney fees;

(2) designate responsibility with the Department of the Interior for the detection and investigation of forest trespass; and

(3) set forth responsibilities and procedures for the assessment and collection of civil penalties.

(b) TREATMENT OF PROCEEDS- The proceeds of civil penalties collected under this section shall be treated as proceeds from the sale of forest products from the Indian forest lands upon which such trespass occurred.

(c) CONCURRENT JURISDICTION- Indian tribes which adopt the regulations promulgated by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a) shall have concurrent civil jurisdiction to enforce the provisions of this section and the regulation promulgated thereunder. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and other agencies of the Federal Government shall, at the request of the tribe, defer to tribal prosecutions of forest trespass cases. Tribal court judgments regarding forest trespass shall be entitled to full faith and credit in Federal and State courts to the same extent as a Federal court judgment obtained under this section.

### **SEC. 308. DIRECT PAYMENT OF FOREST PRODUCTS RECEIPTS.**

(a) REGULATIONS- Notwithstanding any other law, the Secretary shall, within 1 year from the date of enactment of this title, promulgate regulations providing for the payment of the receipts from the sale of Indian forest products as provided in this section.

(b) PAYMENT INTO A BANK DEPOSITORY- Upon the request of an Indian tribe, the Secretary shall provide that the purchaser of the forest products of such tribe, which are harvested under a timber sale contract, permit or other harvest sale document which has been approved by the Secretary, shall make prompt direct payments of the gross proceeds of sales of such forest products, less any amounts segregated as forest management deductions pursuant to section 306, into a bank depository account designated by such Indian tribe.

### **SEC. 309. SECRETARIAL RECOGNITION OF TRIBAL LAWS.**

Subject to the Secretary's responsibilities as reflected in sections 302(2) and 303(1) and unless otherwise prohibited by Federal statutory law, the Secretary shall comply with tribal laws pertaining to Indian forest lands, including laws regulating the environment or historic or cultural preservation, and shall cooperate with the enforcement of such laws on Indian forest lands. Such cooperation shall include--

- (1) assistance in the enforcement of such laws;
- (2) provision of notice of such laws to persons or entities undertaking activities on Indian forest lands; and
- (3) upon the request of an Indian tribe, the appearance in tribal forums.

### **SEC. 310. INDIAN FOREST LAND ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT- At the request of an Indian tribe, the Secretary may establish a special Indian forest land assistance account within the tribe's trust fund account to fund the Indian forest land management activities of such tribe.

(b) DEPOSITS AND EXPENDITURES- (1) The Secretary may deposit into the Indian forest land assistance account established pursuant to subsection (a) any funds received by the Secretary or in the Secretary's possession from--

- (A) non-Federal sources, if such funds are related to activities on or for the Indian forest lands of such tribe's reservation,
- (B) donations and contributions,
- (C) unobligated forestry appropriations for the benefit of such Indian tribe, and
- (D) user fees or other funds transferred under Federal interagency agreements if otherwise authorized by Federal law and, if such funds are related to activities on or for the Indian forest lands of such tribe's reservation.

Funds deposited in such account shall be for the purpose of conducting forest land management activities on the Indian forest lands of such tribe.

(2) Funds in the Indian forest land assistance account and any interest or other income earned thereon shall remain available until expended and shall not be available to otherwise offset Federal appropriations for meeting the Federal responsibility for management of Indian forest lands.

(c) AUDITS- At the request of an Indian tribe or upon the Secretary's own volition, the Secretary may conduct audits of the Indian forest land assistance account and shall publish the results of such audit.

## **SEC. 311. TRIBAL FORESTRY PROGRAMS.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT- The Secretary shall establish within the Bureau of Indian Affairs a program to provide financial support to forestry programs established by an Indian tribe.

(b) SUPPORT ALLOCATION FORMULA; CRITERIA- (1) The Secretary, with the participation of Indian tribes with Indian forest lands, shall establish, and promulgate by regulations, a formula--

- (A) for the determination of Indian tribes eligible for such support,
- (B) for the provision of levels of assistance for the forestry programs of such tribes, and
- (C) the allocation of base support funds to such tribes under the program established pursuant to subsection (a).

(2) The formula established pursuant to this subsection shall provide funding necessary to support--

- (A) one professional forester, including fringe benefits and support costs, for each eligible tribe, and
- (B) one additional professional forester or forest technician, including fringe benefits and support costs, for each level of assistance for which an eligible Indian tribe qualifies.

(3) In any fiscal year that appropriations are not sufficient to fully fund tribal forestry programs at each level of assistance under the formula required to be established in this section, available funds for each level of assistance shall be evenly divided among the tribes qualifying for that level of assistance.



## **SEC. 312. ASSESSMENT OF INDIAN FOREST LAND AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.**

(a) INITIAL ASSESSMENT- (1) Within 1 year after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary, in consultation with affected Indian tribes, shall enter into a contract with a non-Federal entity knowledgeable in forest management practices on Federal and private lands to conduct an independent assessment of Indian forest lands and Indian forest land management practices.

(2) Such assessment shall be national in scope and shall include--

- (A) an in-depth analysis of management practices on, and the level of funding for, specific Indian forest land compared with similar Federal and private forest lands,
- (B) a survey of the condition of Indian forest lands, including health and productivity levels,
- (C) an evaluation of the staffing patterns of forestry organizations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and of Indian tribes,
- (D) an evaluation of procedures employed in timber sales administration, including preparation, field supervision, and accountability for proceeds,
- (E) an analysis of the potential for reducing or eliminating relevant administrative procedures, rules and policies of the Bureau of Indian Affairs consistent with the Federal trust responsibility,
- (F) a comprehensive review of the adequacy of Indian forest land management plans, including their compatibility with applicable tribal integrated resource management plans and their ability to meet tribal needs and priorities,
- (G) an evaluation of the feasibility and desirability of establishing minimum standards against which the adequacy of the forestry programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in fulfilling its trust responsibility to Indian tribes can be measured, and
- (H) a recommendation of any reforms and increased funding levels necessary to bring Indian forest land management programs to a state-of-the-art condition.

(3) Such assessment shall include specific examples and comparisons from each of the regions of the United States where Indian forest lands are located.

(4) The initial assessment required by this subsection shall be completed no later than 36 months following the date of enactment of this title. Upon completion, the assessment shall be submitted to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and the Select Committee on Indian Affairs of the United States Senate and shall be made available to Indian tribes.

(b) PERIODIC ASSESSMENTS- On each 10-year anniversary of the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall provide for an independent assessment of Indian forest lands and Indian forest land management practices under the criteria established in subsection (a) which shall include analyses measured against findings in previous assessments.

(c) STATUS REPORT TO CONGRESS- The Secretary shall submit, within 1 year of the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment of this title and within 6 months of the end of each succeeding fiscal year, a report to Committee on

Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives, the Select Committee on Indian Affairs of the United States Senate, and to the affected Indian tribes a report on the status of Indian forest lands with respect to standards, goals and objectives set forth in approved forest management plans for each Indian tribe with Indian forest lands. The report shall identify the amount of Indian forest land in need of forestation or other silviculture treatment and the quantity of timber available for sale, offered for sale, and sold for each Indian tribe.

(d) ASSISTANCE FROM SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE- The Secretary of Agriculture, through the Forest Service, is authorized to provide, upon the request of the Secretary of the Interior, on a nonreimbursable basis, technical assistance in the conduct of such research and evaluation activities as may be necessary for the completion of any reports or assessments required by this title.

### **SEC. 313. ALASKA NATIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT- The Secretary, in consultation with the village and regional corporations established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), shall establish a program of technical assistance for such corporations to promote the sustained yield management of their forest resources. Such technical assistance shall also be available to promote local processing and other value-added activities with such forest resources.

(b) INDIAN SELF-DETERMINATION ACT- The technical assistance to be provided by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a) shall be made available through contracts, grants or agreements entered into in accordance with, and made available to entities eligible for, such contracts, grants, or agreements under the Indian Self-Determination Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

### **SEC. 314. ESTABLISHMENT OF INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE FORESTRY EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.**

(a) FORESTER INTERN PROGRAM- (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of title 5 of the United States Code governing appointments in the competitive service, the Secretary shall establish and maintain in the Bureau of Indian Affairs at least 20 forester intern positions for Indian and Alaska Native students.

(2) For purposes of this subsection, the term 'forester intern' means an Indian or Alaska Native who--

(A) is acquiring necessary academic qualifications to become a forester or a professional trained in forestry-related fields, and

(B) is appointed to one of the positions established under paragraph (1).

(3) The Secretary shall pay all costs for tuition, books, fees and living expenses incurred by a forester intern while attending an approved post-secondary or graduate school in a full-time forestry-related curriculum.

(4) A forester intern shall be required to enter into an obligated service agreement to serve as a professional forester or other forestry-related professional with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an Indian tribe, or a tribal forest-related enterprise for 2 years for each year of education for which the Secretary pays the intern's educational costs under paragraph (3) of this subsection.

(5) A forester intern shall be required to report for service with the Bureau of Indian Affairs during any break in attendance at school of more than 3 weeks duration. Time spent in such service shall be counted toward satisfaction of the intern's obligated service agreement.

(b) COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM- (1) The Secretary shall maintain, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a cooperative education program for the purpose of recruiting promising Indian and Alaska Native students who are enrolled in secondary schools, tribally-controlled community colleges, and other post-secondary or graduate schools for employment as a professional forester or other forestry-related professional with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an Indian tribe, or a tribal forest-related enterprise.

(2) The cooperative educational program that is to be maintained under paragraph (1) shall be modeled on and shall have essentially the same features of the program operated on the date of enactment of this title pursuant to chapter 308 of the Federal Personnel Manual of the Office of Personnel Management.

(3) Under the cooperative agreement program that is to be maintained under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall pay all costs for tuition, books, and fees of an Indian or Alaska Native student who--

(A) is enrolled in a course of study at an education institution with which the Secretary has entered into a cooperative agreement, and

(B) is interested in a career with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an Indian tribe or a tribal enterprise in the management of Indian forest land.

(4) Financial need shall not be a requirement to receive assistance under the cooperative agreement program that is to be maintained under this subsection.

(5) A recipient of assistance under the cooperative education program that is to be maintained under this subsection shall be required to enter into an obligated service agreement to serve as a professional forester or other forestry-related professional with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an Indian tribe, or a tribal forest-related enterprise for one year for each year for which the Secretary pays the recipient's educational costs pursuant to paragraph (3).

(c) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM- (1) The Secretary is authorized to grant forestry scholarships to Indians and Alaska Natives enrolled in accredited programs for post-secondary and graduate forestry and forestry-related programs of study as full-time students.

(2) A recipient of a scholarship under paragraph (1) shall be required to enter into an obligated service agreement with the Secretary in which the recipient agrees to accept employment for one year for each year the recipient received a scholarship, following completion of the recipient's forestry or forestry-related course of study, with

(A) the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

(B) a forestry program conducted under a contract, grant, or cooperative agreement entered into under the Indian Self-Determination Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.);

(C) an Indian enterprise engaged in a forestry or forestry-related business;

or

(D) an Indian tribe's forestry-related program.

(3) The Secretary shall not deny scholarship assistance under this subsection solely on the basis of an applicant's scholastic achievement if the applicant has been admitted to and remains in good standing in an accredited postsecondary or graduate institution.

(d) FORESTRY EDUCATION OUTREACH- The Secretary shall conduct, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and in consultation with other appropriate local, State and Federal agencies, and in consultation and coordination with Indian tribes, a forestry education outreach program for Indian and Alaska Native youth to explain and stimulate interest in all aspects of Indian forest land management and careers in forestry.

(e) ADEQUACY OF PROGRAMS- The Secretary shall administer the programs described in this section until a sufficient number of Indians and Alaska Natives are trained to ensure that there is an adequate number of qualified, professional Indian foresters to manage the Bureau of Indian Affairs forestry programs and forestry programs maintained by or for Indian tribes.

### **SEC. 315. POSTGRADUATION RECRUITMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS.**

(a) POSTGRADUATION RECRUITMENT- The Secretary shall establish and maintain a program to attract Indian and Alaska Native professional foresters and forester technicians who have already graduated from their course of postsecondary or graduate education for employment in either the Bureau of Indian Affairs forestry programs or, subject to the approval of the tribe, in tribal forestry programs. According to such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, such program shall provide for the employment of Indian and Alaska Native professional foresters or forestry technicians in exchange for the Secretary's assumption of the employee's outstanding student loans. The period of employment shall be determined by the amount of the loan that is assumed.

(b) POSTGRADUATE INTERGOVERNMENTAL INTERNSHIPS- For the purposes of training, skill development and orientation of Indian, Alaska native, and Federal forestry personnel, and the enhancement of tribal and Bureau of Indian Affairs forestry programs, the Secretary shall establish and actively conduct a program for the cooperative internship of Federal, Indian, and Alaska Native forestry personnel. Such program shall--

(1) for agencies within the Department of the Interior--

(A) provide for the internship of Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Native, and Indian forestry employees in the forestry-related programs of other agencies of the Department of the Interior, and

(B) provide for the internship of forestry personnel from other Department of the Interior agencies within the Bureau of Indian Affairs and, with the consent of the tribe, within tribal forestry programs;

(2) for agencies not within the Department of the Interior, provide, pursuant to an interagency agreement, internships within the Bureau of Indian Affairs and, with the consent of the tribe, within a tribal forestry program of other forestry personnel of such agencies who are above their sixth year of Federal service;

- (3) provide for the continuation of salary and benefits for participating Federal employees by their originating agency;
- (4) provide for salaries and benefits of participating Indian and Alaska Native forestry employees by the host agency; and
- (5) provide for a bonus pay incentive at the conclusion of the internship for any participant.

(c) CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING- The Secretary shall maintain a program within the Division of Forestry of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the ongoing education and training of Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Native, and Indian forestry personnel. Such program shall provide for--

- (1) orientation training for Bureau of Indian Affairs forestry personnel in tribal-Federal relations and responsibilities;
- (2) continuing technical forestry education for Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Native, and tribal forestry personnel; and
- (3) developmental training of Indian and Alaska Native personnel in forest land based enterprises and marketing.

#### **SEC. 316. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND INDIAN TRIBES.**

(a) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS- (1) To facilitate the administration of the programs and activities of the Department of the Interior, the Secretary is authorized to negotiate and enter into cooperative agreements with Indian tribes to--

- (A) engage in cooperative manpower and job training and development programs,
- (B) to develop and publish cooperative environmental education and natural resource planning materials, and
- (C) to perform land and facility improvements, including forestry and other natural resources protection, fire protection, reforestation, timber stand improvement, debris removal, and other activities related to land and natural resource management.

The Secretary may enter into such agreements when the Secretary determines the public interest will be benefited.

(2) In such cooperative agreements, the Secretary is authorized to advance or reimburse funds to contractors from any appropriated funds available for similar kinds of work or by furnishing or sharing materials, supplies, facilities or equipment without regard to the provisions of section 3324, title 31, United States Code, relating to the advance of public moneys.

(b) SUPERVISION- In any agreement authorized by this section, Indian tribes and their employees may perform cooperative work under the supervision of the Department of the Interior in emergencies or otherwise as mutually agreed to, but shall not be deemed to be Federal employees other than for purposes of section 2671 through 2680 of title 28, United States Code, and section 8101 through 8193 of title 5, United States Code.

(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE- Nothing in this title shall be construed to limit the authority of the Secretary to enter into cooperative agreements otherwise authorized by law.

## **SEC. 317. OBLIGATED SERVICE; BREACH OF CONTRACT.**

(a) OBLIGATED SERVICE- Where an individual enters into an agreement for obligated service in return for financial assistance under any provision of this title, the Secretary shall adopt such regulations as are necessary to provide for the offer of employment to the recipient of such assistance as required by such provision. Where an offer of employment is not reasonably made, the regulations shall provide that such service shall no longer be required.

(b) BREACH OF CONTRACT; REPAYMENT- Where an individual fails to accept a reasonable offer of employment in fulfillment of such obligated service or unreasonably terminates or fails to perform the duties of such employment, the Secretary shall require a repayment of the financial assistance provided, prorated for the amount of time of obligated service performed, together with interest on such amount which would be payable if at the time the amounts were paid they were loans bearing interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States.

## **SEC. 318. AUTHORIZATIONS.**

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this title.

## **SEC. 319. REGULATIONS.**

Except as otherwise provided by this title, the Secretary is directed to promulgate final regulations for the implementation of the title within eighteen months from the date of its enactment. All regulations promulgated pursuant to this title shall be developed by the Secretary with the participation of the affected Indian tribes.

## **SEC. 320. SEVERABILITY.**

If any provision of this title, or the application of any provision of this title to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the application of such provision or circumstance and the remainder of this title shall not be affected thereby.

## **SEC. 321. TRUST RESPONSIBILITY.**

Nothing in this title shall be construed to diminish or expand the trust responsibility of the United States toward Indian forest lands, or any legal obligation or remedy resulting therefrom.