



## Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

**Media Contact:** Fast - Int. 4306 | Information Service

**For Immediate Release:** June 27, 1957

[Print PDF](#)

To enable the Navajo Tribe to expand its industrial development program, Under Secretary Hatfield Chilson has signed an order transferring 75 acres of the Coconino National Forest, near Flagstaff, Arizona, to the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The withdrawal was arranged by the Department's Bureau of Land Management.

From its income from oil and gas leases the Navajo Tribe has appropriated \$600,000 for industrial development to provide additional employment opportunities for its members. Under this program Lear, Inc., of Santa Monica, California, recently established an electronics assembly plant at Flagstaff. This plant, already in operation, is known as Lear-Navajo and employs Indians in all but supervisory and technical positions. In its agreement with Lear, Inc., the Navajo Tribe is furnishing a building rent free for an initial period, with a stipulation that a new building will be erected according to the needs of Lear-Navajo under a long-term rental arrangement.

The tract acquired lies close to the city of Flagstaff and adjacent to the Santa Fe railroad's main line. It thus provides a splendid site for industrial development either by Lear, Inc., or by other concerns, according to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Glenn L. Emmons, and should materially increase full-time employment for Navajo people living on or near their reservation.

The Secretary of the Interior's approval of the original request by Paul Jones, Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council, makes the land available to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which, in turn, through its area office in Gallup, New Mexico, will make the tract available to the Navajo for development as an industrial site. The exclusion will affect only slightly the area of the Coconino National Forest which consists of 1,802,990 acres.

---

<https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/opa/online-press-release/navajo-get-tract-industrial-development>