

REFER IN REPLY TO THE FOLLOWING:

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ADDRESS ONLY THE  
COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Forestry  
Extension

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON

Mr. Ernest R. McCray,  
Supt., Northern Navajo Agency.

Dear Mr. McCray:

Reference is made to the action taken by the Navajo Tribal Council at its meeting at Tuba City, Arizona, on October 30 and 31, and November 1, 1933, approving the plan of reducing the number of sheep on the various Navajo jurisdictions for the purpose of assisting in the control of soil erosion.

The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation has agreed to purchase 100,000 Navajo sheep for the dual purpose of reducing a surplus of stock on the range and for obtaining the meat for relief purposes. The proposed plan for handling the purchase is as follows:

The agreement with the above corporation provides for the taking over of 75,000 ewes and 25,000 wethers at an average cost of \$1.50 and \$2.75 respectively, net to the Indians. These prices are fully comparable with those obtaining in the commercial markets today for a like or better class of stock, and the responsibility rests with us to deliver to the purchaser the class of stock that is being paid for.

The following grades and prices are suggested for your guidance, and they will be adhered to as closely as possible in order that consistency may result among the several jurisdictions:

Ewes,	any age,	in good flesh	--	\$1.25	to	\$1.75
"	"	" fair	"	1.00	"	1.25
Wethers,	"	" good	"	2.25	"	3.00
"	"	" fair	"	1.50	"	2.25

The above maximum prices will be paid only in the case of exceptionally good animals. The greater bulk of the stock will fall well within the lower brackets, as it is appreciated that very few animals in the Navajo herds could be classed as "fat" and that the best that could be expected is that they be carrying a sufficient amount of flesh to be acceptable for slaughter.

Old, thin ewes, that would grade as "culls" or "canners" cannot be accepted, and it would be well to make this point clear to the Indians at the outset in order to avoid future misunderstanding. Goats cannot be purchased from these funds.

WR 11275

The number of sheep that each jurisdiction will be expected to furnish has been determined on the basis of its present sheep and goat population, and is indicated below:

Northern Navajo	--	20,000	head
Southern Navajo	--	32,000	"
Eastern Navajo	---	15,000	"
Western Navajo	---	15,000	"
Hopi	-----	10,000	"
Leupp	-----	8,000	"

The above reservation numbers will be divided roughly into 75% ewes and 25% wethers, and because of the variance in values between the two classes of stock it will be necessary to stay within these limits in order that the amount appropriated for purchase be not exceeded.

Funds will be set up at your agency in the amount of \$58,000 to provide for the purchase and incidental expense of your quota of 20,000 sheep, and care should be exercised to keep within this amount.

Range Supervisor Frank B. Lenzie will be in general charge of the work, in which he will be assisted by Farm Agent Hugh Harvey, who has been temporarily assigned to the work. Mr. Lenzie will make his temporary headquarters at Winslow, and he may be reached there through the La Pasada Hotel at anytime.

As the period within which the job must be completed is necessarily limited by climatic and other conditions over which we have no control, it is essential that this project be given precedence over other field activities by as much of the reservation field force as may be required. The work in the several districts of your jurisdiction must of necessity be under the guidance of the Extension personnel with such other assistance as is available. The most logical setup for handling the job will be to have the reservation stockman or those assisting him grade, and accept or reject the sheep that are offered for purchase, and arrange for the delivery of the sheep accepted at specified assembling points, where delivery receipts and values of the animals that have been turned over, and they will be recognized by the Superintendent as orders for the amounts shown, which sums will be placed to the Indians' accounts, or paid to them by checks drawn against the purchase funds.

The logical points for gathering the purchased stock into bands to trail to railroad shipping points will be at the corrals of the various reservation traders, which are well located and equipped for the purpose. It will be desirable to arrange with the traders to take charge of the stuff as it is delivered at their corrals, and to hold and properly care for it until a sufficient number is assembled for trailing out. Payment for this service can be arranged on the basis of a per-head per-day fee, which should be approximately 1/2¢ where sheep are grazed and a larger amount where feeding

is necessary. You will of course be guided by local circumstances in determining such matters. The trader is usually well equipped for this responsibility by reason of his yearly lamb buying operations, and he will in all probability be in a position to suggest the names of suitable Indians that may be hired for trailing, etc., which his past experience has shown can be trusted to do the work. A supply of delivery receipts for use in accepting stock from the Indians and in turning it over to the traders, is being sent to you. If more are required they can be prepared at your agency.

Indians who have been enrolled for the E.C.W. program will be used for trailing, feeding when necessary, and loading, and they can be paid the regular rates from your E.C.W. funds. In each case where a group of these men is furnished they should be under the supervision of one or more of their leaders, who will have direct charge of them, keep their time, etc.

There will be cages where trucks can be used to good advantage, particularly for hauling to concentration points. You may use E.C.W., Forestry, Road, or Agency equipment for this temporary purpose when the work will be expedited by so doing.

Several experienced men will be employed by Mr. Lenzie whose job it will be to keep the bands located along the trails, to see that the men with them are supplied with food and other necessities, and to keep a check on the movements of the bands so that they will reach their destination on time and mixing and confusion be avoided. In order that the records of this entire transaction may be accurately kept, it will probably be necessary to employ one special clerk to devote his entire time to this work. This clerk should be hired under the title of "Assistant" and services reported on Standard Form 4-a marked "Surplus Stock Purchase." The salary rate should conform to that of other Public Works projects, namely, \$76 to \$127 a month net.

It is suggested that you immediately get in touch with the chapter heads, delegates, and other influential Indians of your jurisdiction, and advise them of the opportunity that this program affords for reducing their herds at a good market price for cash, and that you solicit their active assistance in securing the number of stock you desire from their respective localities. Every effort should be made to purchase stock from the Indians owning large herds rather than from the small owners.

This job is a new departure from the usual reservation routine, and therefore certain situations will probably arise that cannot be anticipated at the present time. For this reason and because of the limited time that is available, the close and helpful cooperation of the Agency personnel is essential.

Sincerely yours,

*John Collins*  
Commissioner.