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STATEMENT OF IRRIGATION AND WAT[illegible] [illegible]PMENTS

ON THE NAVAJO R[illegible]

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file 905.4

Irrigation

Subsistence irrigation farming m[illegible] second only to range resources in importance on the l[illegible]. It has a four-fold purpose in terms of the econ[illegible]. Production would provide supplementary income to [illegible] arising from livestock reduction, provide additiona[illegible] resources for present subsistence population, reduce the need for present food imports, and care for a portion of expected population increase. The results from the accomplishments of these objectives, include relief from present overstocking, the partial or complete elimination of relief issues, and the stabilization of Navajo economy on a basis commensurate with their needs and the environment.

The Navajos are not naturally agriculturists, and irrigation on the reservation dates back only to 1885 when some ditches were constructed by the Indians. Government surveys and investigations started in 1904 and construction work of varying magnitude has followed since then. At this writing 70 separate irrigation units ranging in size from a few rows of corn to projects of 2,500 acres have been developed at widely separated places on the reservation. The aggregate area of these units now total approximately 15,000 acres and is being farmed by 1,800 Navajo families. There is an additional area of land amounting to 40,000 acres under the projects already started which can be irrigated when further funds are made available. In addition to these relatively small projects, there is now being studied a plan for the development of a major irrigation project on the San Juan River, which if found feasible would irrigate an area of as much as 100,000 acres on the reservation in the Concho River basin. This proposal consists of a large storage dam and other substantial works, all of which would form an integral part of the Colorado River development. The entire San Juan basin is now being surveyed and investigated for irrigation possibilities by the Reclamation Service.

The Interior Department Appropriation Bill for the 1942 fiscal year carries an item of $255,000 for the continuation of irrigation construction on the Navajo Reservation. Of this amount $230,000 is set apart for the MANY FARMS Project. This comparatively large irrigation development is located near the central part of the reservation and will provide an area of 4,000 acres, which is intended for subsistence farming, to at

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File 9051

STATEMENT OF IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY DEVELOPMENTS

ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION

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Irrigation

Subsistence irrigation farming must be considered second only to range resources in importance on the Navajo Reservation. It has a four-fold purpose in terms of the economy of the Navajo. Production would provide supplementary income to counteract losses arising from livestock reduction, provide additional resources for present subsistence population, reduce the need for present food imports, and care for a portion of expected population increase. The results from the accomplishments of these objectives, include relief from present overstocking, the partial or complete elimination of relief issues, and the stabilization of Navajo economy on a basis commensurate with their needs and the environment.

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The Interior Department Appropriation Bill for the 1942 fiscal year carries an item of $265,000 for the continuation of irrigation construction on the Navajo Reservation. Of this amount $230,000 is set apart for the MANY FARMS Project. This comparatively large irrigation development is located near the central part of the reservation and will provide an area of 4,000 acres, which is intended for subsistence farming, to at

least 400 families. This project when completed will bring the total number of families having subsistence farms up to 2,200. With the full development of the known irrigable area of 57,000 acres, approximately 5,000 families would receive subsistence farming benefits.

The cost to the Government of constructing these various irrigation projects on this reservation has amounted to $2,943,426 as of July 1, 1940. To bring the full 57,000 acres under irrigation will cost an additional amount of $3,542,000. No estimate of costs have as yet been made on the prospective San Juan Project.

Stock and Domestic Water Developments

It was early realized that surface and underground water developments in the Navajo country were essentially necessary, not only for domestic water supplies, but also for stock water purposes. The construction work in this connection which had been carried along with the purely irrigation activities consists of the drilling of deep wells, the digging of shallow wells and charcos (small ponds), the installation of windmills, troughs and metal and concrete tanks. A large number of small retention reservoirs have also been constructed which are designed to fit into the broad program looking to the conservation of natrual resources. The Civilian Conservation Corps of the Indian Service and the Soil Conservation Service have cooperated in this extensive water supply development and jointly have constructed some 2,575 separate water units. This total is made up of some 227 deep wells, 579 shallow wells, over a thousand small reservoirs, nearly 180 windmills and 200 metal and concrete troughs. Irrigation funds amounting to $1,108,631, as of July 1, 1940, have been expended on these developments. It is estimated that an additional amount of $1,110,000 of irrigation funds must be expended to complete the program.

Current Appropriations

The Irrigation Division activities during the 1941 fiscal year resulted in an expenditure of $159,000 of appropriated funds. Of this amount approximately $72,000 is being expended in the employment of Indian labor at the prevailing wage rate of from $2.40 to $3.00 per day of 8 hours. The balance of this fund is expended in materials, supplies and supervision. For the 1942 fiscal year, just ahead, Congress is expected to provide $375,000 for further irrigation developments and of this sum it is estimated that $168,000 will be expended for Indian labor.

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