Bureau of Indian Affairs, a tribe, tribal forest enterprise or ANCSA Corporation.

(2) The Secretary, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Forestry, subject to the availability of personnel resource levels established in agency budgets, shall establish and maintain in the Bureau of Indian Affairs at least 20 positions for the forester intern program. All Indians and Alaska Natives who satisfy the qualification criteria in § 163.40(b)(3) of this part may compete for such positions.

(3) To be considered for selection, applicants for forester intern positions must meet the following criteria:

(i) Be eligible for Indian preference as defined in 25 CFR, part 5 subchapter A; (ii) Possess a high school diploma or

its recognized equivalent;

(iii) Be able to successfully complete the intern program within a three year maximum time period; and

- (iv) Possess a letter of acceptance to an accredited post-secondary school or demonstrate that such a letter of acceptance will be acquired within 90 days
- (4) The Bureau of Indian Affairs shall advertise vacancies for forester intern positions semiannually, no later than the first day of April and October, to accommodate entry into school.

(5) Selection of forester interns will be based on the following guidelines:

(i) Selection will be on a competitive basis selecting applicants who have the greatest potential for success in the program;

(ii) Selection will take into consideration the amount of time which will be required for individual applicants to complete the intern

program

(iii) Priority in selection will be given to candidates currently employed with and recommended for participation by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a tribe, a tribal forest enterprise or ANCSA Corporation; and

- (iv) Selection of individuals to the program awaiting the letter of acceptance required by § 163.40(b)(3)(iv) of this part may be canceled if such letter of acceptance is not secured and provided to the education committee in a timely manner.
- (6) Forester interns shall comply with each of the following program requirements:
- (i) Maintain full-time status in a forestry related curriculum at an accredited post-secondary school having an agreement which assures the transferability of a minimum of 55 semester hours from the post-secondary institution which meet the program requirements for a forestry related program at a bachelor degree granting

institution accredited by the American Association of Universities;

- (ii) Maintain good academic standing; (iii) Enter into an obligated service agreement to serve as a professional forester or forestry-related professional with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the recommending tribe, tribal forest enterprise or ANCSA Corporation for two years for each year in the program; and
- (iv) Report for service with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a tribe, tribal forest enterprise or ANCSA Corporation during any break in attendance at school of more than three weeks duration. Time spent in such service shall be counted toward satisfaction of the intern's obligated service.
- (7) The education committee established pursuant to § 163.40(a)(1) of this part will evaluate annually the performance of forester intern program participants against requirements enumerated in § 163.40(b)(6) of this part to ensure that they are satisfactorily progressing toward completing program requirements.

(8) The Secretary shall pay all costs for tuition, books, fees and living expenses incurred by a forester intern while attending an accredited post-secondary school.

(c) Cooperative education program.
(1) The purpose of the cooperative education program is to recruit and develop promising Indian and Alaska Native students who are enrolled in secondary schools, tribal or Alaska Native community colleges, and other post-secondary schools for employment as professional foresters and other forestry-related professionals by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a tribe, tribal forest enterprise or ANCSA Corporation.

(2) The program shall be operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Forestry in accordance with the provisions of 5 CFR 213.3202(a) and 213.3202(b).

(3) To be considered for selection, applicants for the cooperative education program must meet the following criteria:

(i) Meet eligibility requirements stipulated in 5 CFR 213.3202;

(ii) Be accepted into or enrolled in a course of study at a high school offering college preparatory course work, an accredited institution which grants bachelor degrees in forestry or forestry-related curriculums or a post-secondary education institution which has an agreement with a college or university which grants bachelor degrees in forestry or forestry-related curriculums. The agreement must assure the transferability of a minimum of 55 semester hours from the post-secondary

institution which meet the program requirements for a forestry related program at the bachelor degree-granting institution.

(4) Cooperative education steering committees established at the field level shall select program participants based on eligibility requirements stipulated in \S 163.40(c)(3) of this part without regard to applicants' financial needs.

(5) A recipient of assistance under the cooperative education program shall be required to enter into an obligated service agreement to serve as a professional forester or forestry- related professional with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a recommending tribe, tribal forest enterprise or ANCSA Corporation for one year in return for each year in the program.

(6) The Secretary shall pay all costs of tuition, books, fees, and transportation to and from the job site to school, for an Indian or Alaska Native student who is selected for participation in the cooperative education program.

- (d) Scholarship program. (1) The Secretary is authorized, within the Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Forestry, to establish and 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) The education committee established pursuant to this part in § 163.40(a)(1) shall select program participants based on eligibility requirements stipulated in §§ 163.40(d)(5), 163.40(d)(6) and 163.40(d)(7) without regard to applicants' financial needs or past scholastic achievements.
- (3) Recipients of scholarships must reapply annually to continue funding beyond the initial award period. Students who have been recipients of scholarships in past years, who are in good academic standing and have been recommended for continuation by their academic institution will be given priority over new applicants for selection for scholarship assistance.
- (4) The amount of scholarship funds an individual is awarded each year will be contingent upon the availability of funds appropriated each fiscal year and, therefore, may be subject to yearly changes.
- (5) Preparatory scholarships are available for a maximum of two and one half academic years of general, undergraduate course work leading to a degree in forestry or forestry-related curriculums and may be awarded to individuals who meet the following criteria: