



In historic times it is known that the Crow, or Absaroka, were among the earliest people to dwell in the area and they have remained to the present.

Within a few miles of the dam site are the remains of Fort C. F. Smith, an Army infantry post established in 1866 to protect travelers on the "Bozeman Trail"--the main supply route between Fort Laramie, Wyoming, and Virginia City, Montana--who were constantly under attack by the Sioux and Cheyenne for "encroachment" on their hunting grounds.

Farther downstream from the dam is the site of the Hayfield Fight, where a small force of haycutters and their soldier guards repelled a superior number of attacking Sioux by using the then newly issued breech-loading Springfield rifles. This fight has become a classic of Western Indian wars, being the first battle in which the new weapons were used.

In addition to providing a safe water access to area formerly nearly inaccessible, the reservoir will offer new opportunities to the area for all types of water-based recreation and other outdoor activities.

The proposed recreation project is in one of the Nation's major vacation areas and meets National Recreation Area qualifications established by the President's Recreation Advisory Council. It can be reached from the north and west by U. S. Highway 87 and Interstate 90, now under construction, and from the east and south by U. S. Highway 14. The Department estimates that more than a half-million visitors annually would travel to the area by 1970.

The Crow Indian Tribal Council, the Council's planning and economic consulting firm, and the National Park Service are making a joint master plan study of the entire reservation area to consider the recreation potential of the Indian lands and their relation to the recreation area. The results of the study will enable the Tribe to determine the extent of its participation in the development of the national recreation area.

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