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The Secretary of the Interior has disapproved a lease entered into in 1970 between the Tesuque Pueblo and the Sangre de Cristo Development Company.

Under the terms of the 99-year lease Sangre de Cristo planned to develop approximately 5,400 acres of tribal lands north of Santa Fe, New Mexico, for commercial, residential and recreational purposes.

In a letter sent to tribal authorities and company officials, Under Secretary of the Interior James A. Joseph said that the lease was being disapproved because the development of a subdivision of 16,000 non-Indians on the reservation "poses too great a risk of social, economic and political upheaval for the Pueblo inhabitants to be offset by the benefits they might derive."

Joseph said that the presence of so many non-Indians on the reservation could cause "perhaps insurmountable jurisdictional problems" for the 300 member tribe.

Other environmental risks -- water and soil problems -- and the tribe's present opposition to the development were factors in the decision to disapprove the lease.

The lease had originally been approved under delegated authority in May of 1970 by the Area Director for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Albuquerque.

Subsequently, a court ruling enjoined all activity under the lease, directed that an environmental impact statement be prepared and ordered the Secretary to review the lease in the light of this EIS. The impact statement was completed in July.

Joseph, in his letter, said that the Department was aware of implications of the disapproval decision for investors in the project. He said that serious consideration was being given to the possibilities of trying to provide compensation for no-fault losses. He indicated that a decision on this matter would be made shortly.