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Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton today announced two decisions resolving long standing controversies over Indian rights.

In a controversy between the Fort Mohave Indian Tribe and the Bureau of Land Management over the ownership of 3,500 acres of land near the Colorado River in California, the Solicitor has determined that the Tribe is legally entitled to equitable ownership of the land and the Secretary has signed an order directing the Bureau of Land Management to take prompt action to carry out the decision.

The executive order which created the Indian Hay and Wood Reserve specified that the Reserve would include 9,114 acres. Present surveys include in that area only 5,614 acres. The ruling by the Solicitor determined that this discrepancy resulted from an erroneous survey made in 1928 by the General Land Office.

In another action, the Secretary implemented a Solicitor's opinion determining that the Colville and Spokane Tribes of Indians have exclusive rights to hunt, fish and boat in the "Indian zone" of Lake Roosevelt in Washington.

Lake Roosevelt was created by the impoundment of waters behind Grand Coulee Dam. The lake extends 151 miles up the river. In 1940, Congress authorized the taking of Indian lands on both reservations for this project.

Secretary Morton said the Solicitor has determined that the 1940 Act, while it authorized the extinguishment of Indian ownership to the lands needed for the project, did not authorize any change in reservation boundaries and therefore did not affect the tribes' governmental authority on their reservations.

The 1940 Act preserved the Indian's hunting, fishing and boating rights in the Indian zone.

A national recreational area is presently established which includes the Indian zone. Five facilities--a campground, marina, and boat launching areas--were established in the zone. The opinion announced today does not require the abandonment of these facilities because the land is owned by the United States free of any Indian title. Under the opinion, however, it will be necessary for any person entering the Indian zone for hunting, fishing, or boating to have a tribal permit.

The total visitations at the five facilities are 30,000 visitor days per year, mostly at one campsite, as contrasted to 450,000 visitor days in the entire Lake Roosevelt national recreation area.

Secretary Morton said the decision does not affect Grand Coulee Dam or any activity of the Bureau of Reclamation in the operation of the project, or the navigation lane he has designated contiguous to the Indian zone, and that under the 1940 Act, the Department of the Interior will continue to regulate the protection of fish and wildlife.

Secretary Morton said the tribal leaders have agreed to administer the Indian zone in a manner which

will permit equitable use of the zone by Indians and non-Indian alike.