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A proposal for a National Recreation Area adjoining Yellowtail Reservoir in Big Horn and Carbon Counties, Montana, and Big Horn County, Wyoming, is detailed in a report released today by the Department of the Interior.

A 7l-mile long reservoir will be formed by the construction of the Yellowtail Dam now being built near the mouth of Big Horn Canyon, about 42 miles southwest of Hardin, Montana, by the Bureau of Reclamation as a part of the Missouri River (Project. The dam is expected to be completed by 1966.

The primary purposes of the Dam are to supply hydroelectric power and provide flood control, downstream irrigation releases, sedimentation storage, fish and wildlife conservation and recreation.

Speaking at the ground-breaking ceremony, for the dam last October, Secretary or the Interior Stewart L. Udall called attention to the Region’s potential as a national recreation area because of the striking canyon setting and variety of related interests--scenic, geologic and historical. He also mentioned the economic potential of the area to the Crow Indian Tribe and the Department's desire and interest in working with the Tribe to this end. The Reservation boundary includes about two-thirds of the 195 miles of shoreline.

Lands acquired by the Bureau of Reclamation the project provide only for the operation and protection of primary purposes. The study recommends a boundary extending far enough back from the reservoir to permit adequate management for potential recreation uses and for interpretation and protection of the natural, historical and, archeological values of the area. Crow Indian lands would be included in the development only if their inclusion is approved by the Tribe and the Bureau of Indian Affairs noting as trustees.

"I am enthusiastic about the possibilities this region offers as a national nation area," Secretary Udall said, "and, I am urging the National Park Service to proceed with refinement of boundary and development plans, cooperating fully with the State agency, interested Federal agencies and the Grow Indian Tribe, so that a specific recommendation for establishment of the area can be made this coming fall. To expedite this process, I am suggesting that the Park Service assign one of its staff to the area.

“The report states that the scenery and other natural and historical landmark of Big Horn Canyon and its environs--the mountains, foothills, geologic formation prehistorical sites such as old Fort C. F. Smith have long been recognized and considered worthy of preservation. Ft. smith was an Infantry post established in 1866 as the northernmost of a chain of forts planned to protect travelers of the Bozeman Trail from attacks of hostile Sioux Indians the Fort was abandoned 1868.

The study shows that the Yellowtail Reservoir, combined with the picturesque canyon country, has great potential for sightseeing boat trips, pleasure boating, fishing, diversified camping, hiking, horseback riding and pack trips into the tributary canyons and nearby mountains, and visits to interpretive features having historic, scenic or scientific interest.

The proposed recreation area can be reached from U. S. 87 to the north, Wyoming State Route 14 to the south while the proposed Interstate 90 will provide primary access.

The report recommends concession developments at principal recreation sites to provide services beyond those installed by the National Park Service. A waterfowl management area has been proposed by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife for the upper end of the reservoir in Wyoming. This area will be developed and managed by the Wyoming State Game and Fish Commission.