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Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today approved an agreement between the Crow Indian Tribe and the National Park Service under which some of the Crow Tribal lands in Montana will be included in the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area.

The action was requested by the Crow Tribe and concerns reservation land in Montana adjacent to the Recreation Area, which surrounds the reservoir formed by the Yellowtail Dam on the Bighorn River in South Central Montana and North Central Wyoming.

The Recreation Area was authorized by Congress in 1966, and included some Crow Reservation 1arid that had been acquired by the Bureau of Reclamation.

"This arrangement will permit a splendid Indian-owned resource to be put to use for the recreational advantage of the public, while the Indians themselves derive substantial economic benefits from the influx of tourists who come to enjoy the area I s natural beauty," Udall said.

The agreement was signed at a ceremony in the Secretary's office by Ed1son Real Bird, chairman of the Tribal Council, and Mrs. Pauline Small, Council secretary. Director George B. Hartzog, Jr., signed for the National Park Service, which administers the Recreation Area.

Real Bird pointed out that under the terms of the agreement the tribe will enjoy significant concession rights on lands presently within the recreation area in Montana.

"Under this agreement," Real Bird said, "certain rights or privileges, including the sale of fishing and hunting permits, native handicrafts, overnight accommodations, and boat, camper and auto supplies will be extended to the Tribe."

"This joint venture of the Crow Tribe of Indians and National Park Service is of a new undertaking. It is the hope of the chairman that this cooperative method brings opportunities for my people such as employment, business, other related tourism industry, and the development of our resources. Since the Tribe is to become the principal concessioner of the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, we are in hopes that this brings about the tourism that has not been available in the past, by providing motels, boating, and related recreation facilities. We feel this cooperation with National Park Service sets a new feature in government - Indian tribe relationships, and that many worthwhile ventures will materialize throughout the United States. Such endeavors will certainly bring the true image of the American Indian in perspective. We expect this agreement to be one more forerunner for the development of the Crow Tribe."

The National Park Service will assist in the development of lands, roads, trails, structures and other improvements; cooperate in Indian improvement programs, and give certain preferences to Indians in employment.

Udall noted that nothing in the agreement detracts from the responsibility of the Secretary of the Interior or of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to administer grazing permits and leases or to exercise other

trust responsibilities.

The agreement is for 50 years but may be modified or amended by mutual consent.
