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Northern Great Plains Center

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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September 22, 1961

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D. MONTANA)

Northern Great Plains Regional Center - Sidney, Montana

Mr. President, the Department of Agriculture this week took a major step forward in the advancement of soil and water conservation in the Great Plains area. The Secretary of Agriculture has now advised the distinguished Chairman of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, Mr. Russell and my able colleague from Montana, Lee Metcalf, and myself that the very severe drought which has plagued the Northern Great Plains region in recent months has caused the Department to review its program of soil and water conservation research and has determined that the proposed Northern Great Plains regional center at Sidney, Montana, should be given priority in its planning program.

The Secretary states that they will use available funds in the amount of approximately \$30,000 for preparation of plans and specification for the Sidney facility. We anticipate the construction on this project will be included in the Department of Agriculture's fiscal year 1963 program.

This news will be well received in Eastern Montana and when the regional center is put into operation it will make a major contribution to the constant search for new and better ways of conserving soil and water. The unpredictable climatic conditions in Eastern Montana, the Dakotas, and Wyoming are a continuing threat to the agricultural economy of the area.

Sidney, Montana, is a busy and growing city. Local interests are eager to have such a facility. In fact the farmers have been participating in cooperative research on a limited scale for some years now. A site for the regional center has been informally offered by Sidney interests and the Montana Branch Experiment Station in Richland County will also facilitate research at the proposed center.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed at the conclusion of my remarks a series of communications, concerning Senator Metcalf's and my contacts with the President, the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of the Budget in recent weeks concerning the Northern Great Plains Regional Center.

COBY