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Big Hole Battlefield National Monument

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D. MONTANA)

Big Hole Battlefield National Monument

Mr. President, I wish to direct a few brief remarks to the distinguished Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. My inquiry does not pertain to the Interior Appropriations bill but to the use of funds already appropriated to the Department of the Interior.

Public Law 88-24, sponsored by my colleague Senator Lee Metcalf and myself, extended the boundaries of the Big Hole Battlefield National Monument in Beaverhead County, Montana, and redesignated it as a national battlefield. The Monument preserves part of a battlefield along the route of the 1877 retreat toward the Canadian border of Chief Joseph and his Nez Perce Indian band.

The legislation was signed into law on May 17 of this year. Senator Metcalf and I then initiated inquiries to determine if some park developments could be made during the coming working season. The National Park Service indicated that there was work that could be done and the owner of the majority of the private land that is to be acquired has indicated a willingness to sell at fair market values.

The National Park Service has advised that existing funds are available which could be used for land acquisition as well as for the construction of roads and parking areas. They have assured us that this could be done without deleting other projects from their programs.

It is my hope that the National Park Service will proceed along these lines and I am confident that they will do so with an expression of approval from the Senate Committee on Appropriations. This project will require no new funds this

year and I, therefore, ask the able Chairman, the Senator from Arizona, if the approach as outlined would be acceptable.

Mr. President, I ask that the May 24, 1963, report from the National Park Service be printed at the conclusion of my remarks in the Congressional Record.