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Speech by President Kennedy at Great Falls, Montana

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GREAT FALLS, MONT. -- 26 SEP 63

I am delighted to be in Great Falls, the heart of the first fully operational wing in the country consisting of 150 Minuteman missiles. That installation represents both American brawn and brains -- and it is an essential part of our deterrent forces behind whose shield we seek to develop our natural and human resources.

Three years ago last Sunday I spoke in this hospitable state; and I associated myself at that time with the natural resource philosophy of a great President from another party, Theodore Roosevelt. I am proud to do so again today. I presented at that time a nine-point program for resource development in the Sixties; and I want to take
this opportunity to review with you the progress made on those pledges.

1. First, I pledged a reversal of the policy of "no new starts," and the substitution of a policy of comprehensive plans for multi-purpose river development. Promptly in 1961 work was started on 83 water resource projects and 65 small watershed projects -- in fact, more watershed projects were approved for that year than in any previous year in our history. By the end of this fiscal year we expect to have approved new construction starts on a total of 211 water resource projects and 182 watershed projects. The total Federal dollar investment will be about $4 billion.
Negotiations are now underway which should lead to final ratification of the Columbia River Treaty with Canada. It has moved into the last stages, and it is my hope that work will be commenced soon on the Libby Dam Project in northwest Montana.

2. **Second**, I said we would devote the benefits of public resources to the public good -- that we would not permit them to be developed for the sole benefit of special interests. In the past three years there have been no Hells Canyon blunders.
Our land has not been exploited by private mineral interests without full compensation to the public. And our large reservoirs and power plants such as Hungry Horse, Fort Peck, Canyon Ferry (and eventually Yellowtail and Clark Canyon in the Beaverhead) sell their power under a policy of strict adherence to the public preference clause. The power from these projects is marketed by the Federal Government to assure consumers of the full benefit of low-cost hydroelectric power.

To make certain that every power project -- no matter how constructed -- will make its maximum contribution to the Nation's
economy, the Federal Power Commission has, for the first time, embarked on a National Power Survey.

Moreover, we have taken measures to see that our vanishing public seashores continue to be available to the public by incorporating them in our national park system. It is a disgrace that only two percent of our seashore is dedicated to public use. The three national seashores created since 1961 represent the first major additions to our National Park System in 16 years. Each one of the three -- Cape Cod on the Atlantic, Point Reyes on the Pacific, Padre Island on the Gulf -- alone represents more acreage than was added to the system
in the entire previous 8 years. Expansion of other park and recreation areas will be possible when legislation, now before Congress, is passed. Under this legislation fees charged persons who use the park together with other revenues will be placed in a Land and Water Conservation Fund expected to total $2 billion.

3. Third, I promised I would appoint to the Federal Power Commission, to the Department of the Interior, to the Rural Electrification Administration and to other agencies men who would follow a policy of maximum development of our resources -- men whose sole allegiance was to the public interest.
As Chairman of the Federal Power Commission, I appointed Joseph Swidler, a long-time public servant with TVA. As Secretary of Agriculture I appointed Orville Freeman, whose record as Governor of Minnesota left no doubt concerning his dedication to the public interest. To replace the policies established by Mr. Mc Kay when he was Secretary of the Interior, we now have Stewart Udall, who demonstrated as a Congressman his deep commitment to the maximum development of our resources. And you all know, at least by reputation, Norman Clapp, the REA Administrator, John Baker and Charlie Murphy in Department of Agriculture, and Jim Carr, Ken Holum, John Carver, John
Kelly, and Charlie Luce in the Department of the Interior.

I have not been disappointed in their performances. The Federal Power Commission, reducing its backlog of natural gas cases, has ordered refunds of $424 million to pipeline customers. Orville Freeman and his staff have advanced the kind of program that has increased farm income and living standards -- including a vigorous program of REA -- while reducing burdensome surpluses. Stewart Udall and his staff have pursued an aggressive policy of developing resources for the public benefit, increasing outdoor recreation opportunities, and moving large blocks of energy to power-starved areas.
4. Fourth, I emphasized the need to coordinate resource and conservation planning and programs, and pledged to remedy this deficiency.

That planning got underway early in 1961. I asked that the Congress enact a Water Resources Planning Act, calling for the establishment of a Water Resources Council of key cabinet officers to coordinate Federal river basin planning and development activities. Pending Congressional action on this request — which I have renewed each year — the various cabinet officers are meeting informally for this purpose.

Recreational development, which has a direct relationship to
our water resources, is being coordinated by a new Recreational Advisory Council.

The first comprehensive review of land policies in 30 years will be provided by the Public Land Review Commission under legislation introduced by Congressman Aspinall. And I have also recommended the establishment of planning commissions for each of the major river basins.

One of the most important of the river basins is the Missouri, which has its origins here in the Montana mountains. You know its force and its strength -- and how its strength has been harnessed. You know, too, its beauty. 180 miles of it, from Fort Benton to Fort
Peck Reservoir, remains in the same natural state in which Lewis and Clark saw it 158 years ago.

Recently, the Department of the Interior and the Corps of Army Engineers cooperated in a joint study to determine how the resources of this portion of the river might best serve the people of Montana and the Nation. The study resulted in 5 possible plans of development. The alternatives range from preservation of the river as a Wilderness Waterway to development of the river's full hydro-electric generating capacity.

Now the public is being asked to express its preference, to give its advice and counsel. This is
altogether appropriate -- for the resource belongs to the public.

5. Fifth, I expressed the hope that we would develop better budget practices for natural resource projects, to demonstrate the income-producing, wealth-creating aspects of those projects.

In each of the budgets I have submitted progress towards this objective has been made. The Budget Documents fully take into account the fact that much of the cost of water resource projects is fully returned to the Treasury -- and that these projects will continue to provide benefits for future generations long after their costs have been repaid. They clearly distinguish these income-producing,
wealth-creating assets from other types of expenditure.

6. Sixth, I pledged to restore to REA its former role of pre-eminence, to free it from political interference and to end the threat of higher rates of interest and budgetary starvation.

One of the first acts of the Secretary of Agriculture was to dispel the cloud of political control which had hung over the loan authority of the Rural Electrification Administrator. One large controversial loan for a needed generating plant, for example, which had long been blocked by political pressure, was made in June 1961.-- the largest generation and transmission loan ever made. In ad-
dition, the statutory interest rate is no longer being challenged.

The REA budget for fiscal 1962, which had already been submitted when I took office in January 1961, called for $145 million for rural electrification loans. This was immediately raised to $195 million, and the Congress added a $50 million contingency fund. For fiscal 1963, $400 million for rural electrification loans was requested. And for 1964, $485 million has been requested.

7. Seventh, I pledged to step up the fight against water pollution, a program which I am happy to say Montana cities and towns are attacking vigorously and with success.
Early in 1961 we launched a full-scale attack upon this destruc-
tive practice. Under the legislation adopted that year we have almost doubled the program of research, grants to local commu-
unities and demonstration grants. Already $263 million in Federal funds has been made to 2,400 commu-
nities to construct waste treatment facilities. Ultimately more than 5,000 communities throughout the Nation will benefit from this program. In addition, we are not hesitating to enforce the law against all violators. In the 2-1/2 years since 1961 we have insti-
tuted more than the number of actions to enforce pollution con-
trol that had been instituted in the 7 previous years. Nine major
regional water research laboratories are being constructed to assist in this effort.

8. *Eighth,* I pledged that we would restore America's leadership in atomic power development; and in these past 2½ years we have sharpened the focus of our atomic development program to exploit our greatest opportunities.

We are, for example, participating in the imaginative program to utilize the steam from the New Production Reactor at Hanford for the generation of electricity. We have recently launched three new atomic power plant projects through cooperative arrangements...
with public and private utilities. We are placing a new emphasis upon developing the atomic power reactors of ultimate importance and attractiveness: the "breeders." which will produce more fuel than they consume. And we are giving fuller support to the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear explosives -- known as Project Plowshare -- to the utilization of radio-isotopes for the benefit of man, and to the development of nuclear fuels for use in outer space.

9. Ninth, and finally, I pledged that we would apply to the develop-
ment of our natural resources
the full scientific resources
of the Nation.

No pledge was more important
to our future, for science holds
the key to our resource progress.
To organize available scientific
facilities and leadership, we have
established a new Office of Science
and Technology, a new Assistant
Secretary of Commerce for Science
and Technology, and a new Science
Adviser to the Secretary of the In-
terior.
The Federal research effort to purify saline and brackish inland water is today more than five times the level of early 1961. Four major demonstration plants have been opened in these 2-1/2 years, and under construction now is the world's first saltwater conversion test facility to evaluate the various processes under study.

The Federal Council on Science and Technology has recently completed a far-reaching report on how scientific research can improve the quantity and quality of available water.

Scientific discoveries are also expanding the horizons of weather modification. Research at the
Desert Research Institute at the University of Nevada and elsewhere is opening vast possibilities for actually changing the weather on a regional or continental scale.

In the field of fossil fuels science is developing a whole array of new devices to recover energy, transform it and carry it to the consumer. We are examining, and have already made substantial progress in, the liquefaction of coal into gasoline, the recovery of energy from low-grade coal reserves, the transmission of power directly from the mouth of coal mines and transportation of coal by slurry.

Methods of converting the large reserves of oil shale in Wyoming
to usable petroleum are being intensively studied. And of special importance to the West are our timber and water research centers, in schools such as Montana State College at Bozeman and Montana State University at Missoula in the field of mineral research, one of the truly world famous technological colleges, the School of Mines at Butte.

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So much for the past and the present. We look now to the future. We may take some satisfaction from the progress already made on the nine points announced only three years ago. But it will require constant vigilance to main-
tain the pace. And I am glad to return to Montana today to renew the pledges made here three years ago. Their final fulfillment requires the cooperation of many individuals, in many branches of public service and private life. And that cooperation has been forthcoming -- these pledges are being fulfilled -- and we can therefore look to the past with pride and to the future with confidence.