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### Congressional Record - Eastern Montana Coal Deposits and Strip Mining

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 92<sup>d</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 118

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 1972

No. 124

## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, August 7, 1972, at 12 o'clock noon.

## Senate

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 1972

points of view: First, the economic interests; and, second, those who are concerned about the environment.

I do not want to see eastern Montana irreparably scarred by unsightly strip mines which cannot be restored to their original state. This is too much to ask in the name of economic development. We must have a strong set of rules and regulations, State and Federal, which would require the reclaiming of all mined lands. If it is demonstrated that the land cannot be reclaimed, then strip mining should be prohibited.

An area of particular concern to me is when the mineral rights are held by the developer and the surface rights are held by different persons for purposes such as farming and ranching. The farmers and ranchers should not be asked to stand by while the surface of their lands is torn apart. Monetary compensation is not the answer. Some means must be found to make certain that these people are given equal consideration and that both rights are recognized. Adequate protection in this area will undoubtedly require legislative action by the States under their eminent domain laws. The Department of the Interior must also provide these guarantees in the management of our public lands.

In some parts of eastern Montana, such as in the vicinity of Colstrip, the title to subsurface and surface rights are owned by the same party. Strip mining would not disrupt any other activity. The one thing that must be required in these instances is proper reclamation of the land for the future.

I stand ready to assist and support in the U.S. Senate in bringing about a strong workable program of environmental protection through legislation and appropriate studies and inventories of our mineral resources.

### EASTERN MONTANA COAL DEPOSITS AND STRIP MINING

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, eastern Montana has a very rich and underdeveloped resource in its vast coal deposits which extend across the eastern part of the State. Plans for developing this coal by strip mining have generated considerable controversy. There are two