



United States Department of the Interior

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

SEP 16 1970

Dear Senator Curtis:

By internal memorandum dated April 8, 1970, and in later conversations, the Director, Geological Survey, informed me of your personal discussion with him and your disappointment that Sioux Falls, South Dakota, had been selected by President Nixon as the Department's ERSS Data Center, as announced by Senator Mundt in early April.

The RGA report to which you refer in your recent letter was dated January 27, 1970. The field study had been authorized by direction of our Appropriations Committees in the House and Senate. This report was still under technical review by the Geological Survey at the time the selection was announced by Senator Mundt's office.

A copy of a letter dated April 2, 1970, to Senator Mundt from President Nixon is provided for your reference, as well as the RGA site report. Your concern is, of course, appreciated, but it seems to me that the site selection has already been resolved and is out of our hands.

The Earth Resources satellite program is an exciting concept that will benefit the State of Nebraska in many ways and I trust that your past support for the program will not diminish. I shall be happy to meet with you to discuss our ERSS plans.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Wally

Secretary of the Interior

Honorable Carl T. Curtis  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Enclosures

cc: Sec. Cent. Files  
— Sec. Read. Files (2)  
AS/MR (2)  
Cong. Liaison

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 2, 1970

Dear Karl:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of March 31. It was sincerely appreciated. I want you to know that I share your pleasure that it was possible to designate Sioux Falls as the site for the Data Receiving Center as part of the ERTS-EROS program.

With warm regard,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be "J. Carter", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Honorable Karl E. Mundt  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C.

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATION  
AERONAUTICAL AND SPACE SCIENCES  
JOINT ATOMIC ENERGY

Handwritten initials and a circled number '7'.

June 29, 1970

The Honorable Walter J. Hickel  
Secretary of the Interior  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

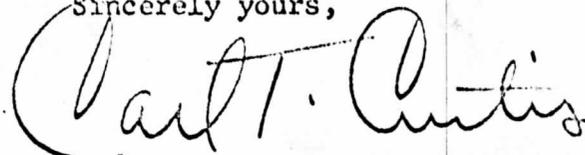
Dear Mr. Secretary:

It has come to my attention that the Department of the Interior either has or shortly will ask the Radio Corporation of America to evaluate, under contract, several parcels of land in the vicinity of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for the ground handling of data from earth resources survey satellites. This suggests that it is the intention of the Department to give no further consideration to the site locations recommended in the State of Nebraska.

It is my understanding that the selection of Sioux Falls for the location of a data center for data from earth resources survey satellites was made on the basis of a report prepared by the Radio Corporation of America under contract to the Department of the Interior. This report recommends Lincoln, Nebraska, at least as strongly as Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Although the RCA report has significant interest to the State of Nebraska, and was prepared at the taxpayers' expense, it was never disclosed to any Nebraskans by the Department of the Interior and came to my attention only after the site selection had been announced. So far as I know there was no site evaluation committee, and it is not clear to me how the selection of the Sioux Falls site was arrived at or who made the selection.

Consequently, I believe that the State of Nebraska has not received the fair and proper consideration by the Department of the Interior for the location of this important facility to which it is entitled, and I would very much appreciate meeting with you at the earliest opportunity to discuss this matter. Prior to that time I would like to have made available to me all of the information on site evaluation leading to the final decision by the Department of the Interior of the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, location.

Sincerely yours,



CARL T. CURTIS, USS

CTC/cma