June 8, 1970

Dr. John E. Naugle
Associate Administrator
Space Science & Applications
Code S - NASA
400 Maryland Avenue - SW
Washington, D.C. 20546

Dear John:

As agreed at our meeting on May 18, I am enclosing a statement explaining the Sioux Falls center which you may wish to include as part of the minutes for the ERS/PRC meeting of April 21.

My visit to Sioux Falls, where I addressed a local and regional audience on April 22 and 23, revealed a great deal of enthusiasm for the early development of the user data facility. A site search is currently being made, to be followed by a design contract provided Federal funds are made available.

Interior welcomes participation by other agencies in this project in the form of input or funds for the design and operation of the center.

Sincerely,

Bill

W. T. Pecora
Director

Enclosure

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Earth Resources Information Center
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

In April 1970, the Administration notified Senator Karl E. Mundt, South Dakota, of the selection of Sioux Falls as the site for a data center as part of the ERTS/EROS Program. Initially, it will be a users center providing data processing, interpretation, and distribution capability for the Department of the Interior and other user groups.

Selection of Sioux Falls as the site for the center followed a location analysis performed by RCA under an Interior Department contract. The analysis defined a limited area in the north central United States within which a single antenna installation could receive data from the ERTS-A or similar later satellites in real time for the entire conterminous United States. Specific locations within the defined area were evaluated for technical suitability by RCA.

The Sioux Falls users center would be operated as part of the EROS Program of the Department of the Interior, using data from the ERTS satellite, in support of Interior programs as well as for other Federal, State, local, and private users who wish to participate. It will be planned to become a reception center for follow-on operational systems, contingent on the success of the ERTS-A and B experiments. Location of the experimental data-use center at Sioux Falls will ease the ultimate transition of the center into an operational mode.

The Administration's 1971 budget did not propose funds for this central data facility. However, the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee in its report on the 1971 Interior Appropriation Bill provided $300,000 for the facility's development. It is planned to acquire the facility through lease construction for a term of 20 years, with an option to purchase. It will be built on a site of about 300 acres to be donated to the Government by the Sioux Falls Industrial and Development Foundation.