

IRRIGATION OF FLATHEAD RESERVATION, MONT.

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L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

RECOMMENDING

THE AUTHORIZATION OF CONSTRUCTION OF AN IRRIGATION SYSTEM FOR THE FLATHEAD INDIAN RESERVATION IN MONTANA.

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DECEMBER 21, 1907.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

*Washington, December 20, 1907.*

SIR: The act of April 23, 1904 (33 Stat. L., 302), provides for the survey and allotment of lands embraced within the limits of the Flathead Indian Reservation, in the State of Montana, and the sale and disposal of all surplus lands after allotment.

The reservation is situated in a semiarid region, so that irrigation is essential to successful farming. The Indian Office has made several investigations to ascertain the cost of constructing irrigation works on the reservation for the benefit of the Indians, but no definite plans for the irrigation of the entire irrigable area have ever been made.

During the last summer the Director of the Reclamation Service, under my informal authority, made a hasty reconnoissance of the reservation, but the funds available were insufficient to make a thorough investigation.

As the allotments are nearly completed and the surplus lands will be opened in the near future, the preliminary surveys and estimates for an adequate system of irrigation should be made and the work begun at the earliest possible date. I therefore have caused to be prepared the accompanying draft of an item appropriating \$50,000 for the preliminary surveys, plans, and estimates of irrigation systems to irrigate the lands of the reservation and to begin the construction of the same, the entire cost of the work to be reimbursed from the proceeds of the sale of the lands.

I recommend that it receive the favorable consideration of the Congress.

Very respectfully,

JAMES RUDOLPH GARFIELD,  
*Secretary.*

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.