

# Sand Creek Massacre site in S.E. Colo. preserved

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Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, R-Colo., has had her first bill signed into law.

Tuesday, President Bush signed her bill to further preserve the Sand Creek Massacre site in southeast Colorado.

On Nov. 29, 1864, 700 Colorado volunteers slaughtered about 150 Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians at dawn in Kiowa County, near the present-day town of Eads.

In February, Musgrave introduced the bill, called the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site Trust Act of 2005. Sen. Wayne Allard, also a Republican, ran a companion bill through the Senate.

Alexa Roberts, superintendent of Sand Creek National Historic Site, said this is the final step toward establishing a National Historic Site.

It allows the federal government to take the land in tribal trust for the Cheyenne and

Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma, she said. The land can be used only for historic, religious or cultural uses compatible with the use of the land as a national historic site.

Roberts described the land as a shortgrass prairie in excellent condition.

"Right now, it's a natural landscape with cultural value. It's been used as pasture land for many, many years," she said.

Roberts said the site could have educational information about the massacre, but planning hasn't begun yet.

"We've still got lost of work to do," she said.

For years, the exact site was unknown, she said. Over the years, people forgot where it was, and efforts to pinpoint the spot were fruitless.

Retired Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, a Republican, introduced the first legislation to pay for the site study in 1998, Roberts said.