

## **Wyoming Transportation Commission Awards Highway Construction Contracts Funded by ARRA**

The Wyoming Transportation Commission awarded \$51.5 million in highway construction contracts Thursday, including \$36 million for projects to be funded with federal economic stimulus program money.

The new contracts bring to \$86.6 million the amount of stimulus-funded construction WYDOT has contracted for in the past month, and another \$4.2 million has been spent on engineering and design work.

Federal Highway Administration figures indicate WYDOT is leading the nation in the percentage of its highway construction stimulus funding obligated for projects. The FHWA considers stimulus money obligated if a department has called for bids on a project that will use stimulus funding. Based on that criteria, WYDOT had 97 percent of its stimulus funding obligated as of May 11, nearly 19 percent more than the second-ranked state.

The department expects to receive \$157.6 million in stimulus money for highway construction, and have about \$156 million of it under contract by the end of this month. The FHWA estimates that amount of spending on highway construction can be expected to provide work for about 4,300 people, including equipment operators, laborers, supervisors and engineers in the work zone, and support personnel such as mechanics and materials suppliers.

The largest contract awarded Thursday went to S&S Builders of Gillette, which submitted the low bid of \$15.3 million for construction of 1.75 miles of Burma Road in Gillette, including an overpass at I-90. The project is part of Gillette's plan to improve transportation in a growing part of the city and it will not be funded with stimulus money. The project will include reconstruction of four blocks of Burma Road north of I-90, and construction to extend the road over the interstate to the south to connect with Oakcrest Drive. The section north of the interstate will be five lanes, and the new section to the south will be three lanes. The work is expected to be done by Sept. 30, 2010.

Casper's McMurry Ready-Mix won the largest of the stimulus-funded contracts with the low bid of \$11.5 million for widening and a pavement overlay on a deteriorating 10-mile section of US 18-20 immediately west of Lusk. The pavement will be widened by 8 feet to include an 8-foot safety shoulder on each side, and a 2.5-mile-long climbing lane will be added for westbound traffic west of the Lusk Rest Area. Other improvements will include two electronic message signs, additional snow fence, new road closure gates, turnaround areas for snowplows and trucks and additional lighting at junctions with US 85 and WYO 270. The contract completion date is Oct. 31, 2010.

A variety of work to preserve the pavement on 28 miles of I-80 between the Utah border and the Bigelow Interchange will be completed under a \$10.6 million stimulus-funded contract awarded to low bidder Interstate Improvement Inc. of Fairbault, Minn. The work will include isolated concrete slab replacement, installation of dowel bars between the slabs in the passing lanes to improve load transfer from one slab to the next, and joint sealing. The work is scheduled to be completed by Sept. 30, 2010.

Cheyenne's West Lincolnway between Westland Road and Otto Road will be rebuilt to include four lanes, a turn lane and a landscaped median under a \$9.9 million stimulus-funded contract awarded to low bidder Sema Construction of Centennial, Colo. The project had previously been delayed for about five years due to a lack of funding. The contract completion date is Oct. 15, 2010.

Cheyenne's Reiman Corp. won a \$2.5 million stimulus-funded contract to address rutting problems on nearly 13 miles of I-90 immediately east of Moorcroft by June 30, 2010. The contract calls for the ruts to be filled and then the entire highway to get a seal coating. The contract also includes bridge rehabilitation work at the west end of the project.

L.M. Olson Inc. of Rawlins submitted the low bid of \$2.2 million for stimulus-funded improvements to rest stops in Fremont, Hot Springs, Big Horn and Natrona counties to be completed by Aug. 27, 2010. The work will include installation of storm sewer systems and sidewalks and modifications to picnic arbors and landscaping.

The commission awarded the contracts during its regular monthly meeting in Cheyenne. It is expected to award additional stimulus contracts on May 28 during a special teleconference meeting scheduled to deal with the additional volume of construction contracts being awarded due to the availability of the stimulus money and the time limits the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act imposes for using that money.