

58 state road projects awarded contracts

BY NOEL E. OMAN

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Fifty-eight Arkansas road construction projects totaling \$105 million have been awarded contracts with federal stimulus money, the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department said Wednesday.

The projects total 180 miles, Frank Vozel, the department's deputy director and chief engineer, told the Arkansas Highway Commission at its regular meeting.

Of those projects, 13 have been completed, he said. They total 31 miles and cost \$8 million.

Altogether, the department has identified 111 "shovel-ready" projects costing an estimated \$465 million and stretching 241 miles. The department is expecting \$315 million in stimulus money, with other aid expected to account for the difference, officials said.

The state still has more than \$200 million to obligate by March 2010 under the terms of the federal stimulus program, Vozel said.

Congress enacted the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, signed by President Barack Obama in February, to shore up the nation's flagging economy with an injection of \$787 billion in government spending.

Four projects worth \$10.1 million were awarded contracts Wednesday. They were among 48 projects the Arkansas Highway Commission opened apparent low bids totaling \$29.3 million.

The stimulus projects, the low bid and the low bidder included:

Construct 1.8 miles of embankment and minor drainage structures for U.S. 71 north of the Arkansas-Louisiana line in Miller County, \$8.2 million, Eutaw Construction Co. of Aberdeen, Miss.

Rehabilitate 1.10 miles of Interstate 40 in Pulaski County from Interstate 30 to U.S. 67/167, \$1.4 million, Redstone Construction Group Inc. of Little Rock.

Construct culvert and approaches on less than a mile of Bradley County 2, \$399,932.75, R. Thompson Inc. of Hamburg.

Install a traffic signal at U.S. 64, Rooster Road and Lower Ridge Road in Faulkner County, \$146,997.90, L.E.G. Enterprises Inc. of Cabot.

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Contact: webmaster@nwanews.com