Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson today announced that a nearly $2.2 million contract for surfacing about 25 miles of road on the Papago Indian Reservation in Arizona -- second in size among Indian reservations only to the Navajo -- has been let to a Phoenix, Ariz., contractor, Tanner Bros. Contracting Co.

The project includes the grading, draining, end surfacing of 25.63 miles of Bureau of Indian Affairs' Routes 23 and 34. This is a vital link for the villages of Hickiwen, Raya Chin, Kaka, Vantana, and Santa Rosa. It is the route for school busses, an avenue to health facilities, and the road to jobs for the Papago.

"This project replaces a road that washed out when it was flooded and became like a washboard in the hot summer sun," Thompson said. "The new thoroughfare encourages the best kind of social and economic development."

Nearly 8,000 Papago Indians live on the -reservation, which is over 2.7 million acres.