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A $34 million Bureau of Reclamation contract has been approved for award on September 22, for construction of the Central Arizona Project's Havasu Pumping Plant on the Bill Williams Arm of Lake Havasu, Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus announced today.

The Secretary said the contract will go to S. J Groves and Sons Co., Sparks, Nevada, on the lowest of 13 bids opened in Phoenix last August 16. Guy F. Atkinson, Company, South San Francisco, California, was second with $34.3 million while Mardian Construction Company, Phoenix was third low bidder with $34.6 million. The Engineer's Estimate was $30.8 million. There was less than $5 million difference between the lowest and the highest of the 13 bids.

The job calls for construction of a reinforced concrete pumping plant structure with dimensions of 304 by 137 feet; two 12-foot inside diameter steel discharge pipes; and intake channel and inlet transition. Also included are metalwork, mechanical items, and embedded parts of electrical systems; roadways, service yard, parking area, highway detour, highway bridge and flood protective drain.

The building, most of which will be below ground surface, will be constructed in a previously excavated area. It will house six pumping units, each with a capacity of 500-cubic-feet-per-seond, and other equipment. The contractor will have 975 days to complete the work. Commissioner Higginson said this will be the third of four major contracts required to deliver water from Lake Havasu into the Granite Reef Aqueduct, which has a capacity of 3,000 cubic feet per second.

The first was construction of the Lake Havasu Intake Channel Dike and partial excavation of the pumping plant site completed in 1973. The second is construction of the 6.8-mile-long Buckskin Mountains Tunnel, begun in 1975 and scheduled to be completed in early 1980. The fourth will be for purchase of the pumps and motors for the Havasu Pumping Plant in 1979. Higginson said the Havasu Pumping Plant, when completed, will lift an average of 1.2 million acre-feet of Colorado River water annually about 800 feet from Lake Havasu to the inlet portal of the Buckskin Mountains Tunnel through two buried discharge pipes. The tunnel will deliver the water into the Granite Reef Aqueduct, now under construction, for a 190-mile trip to the south side of the Salt River in eastern metropolitan Phoenix. An extension of the aqueduct system will carry water as far as Tucson.

The Central Arizona Project will deliver supplemental water to farms cities, and industries in the Phoenix-Tucson Area. First delivery of water to the Phoenix area is scheduled in 1985 and to the Tucson area in 1987.