Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Ayres 202-343-7445
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A contract amounting to nearly $2.4 million has been awarded to Nielson's, Inc. of Dolores, Colorado, to build slightly more than 12 miles of road and a bridge over a wash on the Navajo Indian reservation about 10 miles south of Shiprock, New Mexico, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson announced today.

When completed the project will give all-weather access to the otherwise isolated community of Burnham, New Mexico, the Navajo Irrigation Project, the proposed El Paso Gasification Plant, Chaco Canyon National Monument, and to medical and recreational facilities. It will also serve as a route for school buses and will eventually connect with New Mexico State Road 371.

"Roads on Indian reservations enable the economy of the reservation to expand," Commissioner Thompson said. "They enable children to be bussed to school instead of being transported to boarding school away from their families. They provide a social lifeline that keeps a community healthy and viable. I am proud to announce that this stretch of road will be built by the Bureau of Indian Affairs."

The contract calls for the construction of 12.178 miles of bituminous highway beginning approximately 3.5 miles north of Newcomb from U.S. Highway 666 and extending easterly to Burnham, New Mexico, and constructing 603.5 feet of pre-stressed concrete bridge over Chaco Wash.