Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Contracts totaling nearly $7.5 million to build roads on American Indian reservations entered into by the close of fiscal year 1973 will help make those land areas more economically and socially viable and accessible to visitors, Marvin L. Franklin, Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs predicted today.

''These projects should help Indian reservations catch up with the rest of the country," Franklin said. ''No local roads were built on Indian reservations from 1900 to 1935 -- when the rest of the Nation was getting its foothold on a transportation system," he said. ''Today's Indian reservations need local roads to move the people, goods and services necessary for optimum economic, social and educational development."

The contracts include:

A $1,627,936 contract to asphalt surface 27 miles of the southern end of Route 18, Hualapai Trail (U,S, Highway 66 North) on the Hualapai Indian Reservation, Coconino County, Arizona. The successful bidder is W.R. Skousen, Mesa, Arizona.

This will bring all-weather access to the Havasupai Reservation 27 miles closer and provide asphalt surfacing to the junction of the road leading to the Hualapai Youth Camp and Thornton Lookout.

A contract for $1,543,345 to grade, drain and surface and construct curbs, gutters and sidewalks on Zuni Pueblo streets was let to Neilson, Inc. of Delores, Colo. In addition, the contract provides for grading, draining and surfacing Nutria Road and Rio Pescado Bridge on the Zuni Reservation in McKinley County, N.M. When completed, the project will provide additional hard surface streets and sidewalks in Zuni Pueblo and an all-weather road to the Nutria Lakes Recreation Area. Total construction mileage involves 13.04 miles.

A $1,168,998 contract for grading, draining, and bituminous surfacing of 30.3 miles of access roads and bus routes serving Queens Well, Santa Rosa Ranch; and Pisinimo on the Papago Indian Reservation, Arizona. Successful bidder was D.C. Speer Construction Company, Phoenix, Ariz.A $919,338 contract to grade, drain, and give a bituminous surface to a 12 mile stretch of road that serves the villages of Vaya Chin, Hickiwan, and Charco 27 on the Papago Indian Reservation in Arizona was let to Ashton Company Tuscon, Ariz. This road, on Route 34 is a school bus route and has been given high priority by the Papago Tribe.