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A $500,971.45 contract has been awarded for grading, draining and bituminous paving of approximately 14.7 miles of the Mountain City Owyhee Mountain Home Road on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, Elko County, Nevada, the Department of the Interior announced today.

It will be the first section of some 26 miles of the road to be improved.

The project will provide access for the reservation's Indian population to markets, stores, medical facilities and schools. It will replace a dangerously winding, rough, partially surfaced road frequently obstructed by snow in winter and by mud in the rainy season.

The Duffy Reed Construction Co., Twin Falls, Idaho, was awarded the contract. The firm's bid was the lowest of seven received. The others ranged from $538,383.25 to $660,245.20.