

Low pipeline bid under estimates

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MINOT, N.D. – Engineers say the low bid came in about \$200,000 below estimates for this year's phase of a pipeline to bring Missouri River water to this area and northwestern North Dakota.

Jim Lennington, the engineer for the \$145 million Northwest Area Water Supply Project, said the low bidder was Winter Bros. Underground, a company based in Sioux Falls, S.D. Winter Bros.' bid was about \$6.1 million for construction of 11.5 miles of pipeline

that will stretch from N.D. Highway 23 to Max, along the east side of U.S. Highway 83.

Construction on the new phase might not start until June, however, because of a possible delay in getting pipe delivered to the site.

Work on the NAWS pipeline began in 2002, with about 7.5 miles placed in the ground. Last year, project officials had hoped to put in another 9.5 miles, but Coughlin Construction, the contractor working on that phase, has not yet completed it. Lennington said Coughlin

had until Nov. 14 to complete the project.

Coughlin still has to lay about 17,000 feet of pipeline to cover about 3.2 miles, Lennington said. Penalties are being negotiated between Coughlin and the State Water Commission, he said.

Austin Gillette, who serves on the NAWS Advisory Committee, estimated the penalty against Coughlin could be more than \$90,000, a figure Lennington confirmed.

Officials hope to have the NAWS pipeline built to Lake

Sakakawea in 2005. Minot is not expected to begin treating the water until 2007 or 2008.

The final phase of pipeline construction between Minot and Lake Sakakawea, currently being designed, will take the pipeline from Max to the lake, more than 14 miles.

After the entire pipeline is built from the lake to Minot, a pre-treatment facility and booster station are to be built near Max and a 3-million-gallon reservoir will be put in near the old radar base south of Minot.