



NEWS RELEASE

Department of Public Safety

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Work Begins on Levees in Pierre-Fort Pierre Area

PIERRE, S.D. – Construction efforts began late Friday on emergency levees along the swollen Missouri River in the Pierre and Fort Pierre area.

The Army Corps of Engineers completed the bid process late Friday and awarded contracts totaling \$4.3 million for the construction of emergency levees on both sides of the river downstream from the highway bridge between Pierre and Fort Pierre.

Morris, Inc., of Fort Pierre received the general contract. The Corps of Engineers said the bid for levee work on the Pierre project was \$1.8 million. The winning bid on the Fort Pierre levee work was \$2.5 million. The contract requires that construction be complete by Thursday, June 2. The Corps is funding the project.

Levees are being constructed to protect the shoreline south of the Missouri River bridge, on both the Pierre and Ft. Pierre sides of the river. No levees will be constructed north of the Missouri River bridge.

“The quick action to finish a contract and get dirt moving on these emergency levies is a ray of good news in this very difficult flood fight, but property owners simply can’t rely on the levees being finished in time to protect these communities,” Governor Dennis Daugaard said. “Weather forecasts show significant rainfall across a broad stretch of the upper Missouri River basin. Both the timing of increased reservoir releases and the volume of flows could change if additional runoff enters the river basin. Property owners should continue all individual efforts to protect their property.”

The primary purpose of the levees is to protect public infrastructure; however, a secondary effect will be to also protect private property. The levees will be designed to prevent flooding from a release of water from Oahe Dam of up to 125,000 cubic feet per second (CFS), or a water level of 1,434 feet above sea level.

Releases from Oahe Dam were increased to 85,000 cubic feet per second on Saturday morning. The current schedule calls for releases to increase to 100,000 cfs by June 6.