

Tribe wins key contract status

Shoshones: Designation makes them a preferred source for federal projects

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A company created by the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation has landed a contract that makes it a preferred source for up to \$100 million in federal projects.

Under the Department of Labor's multi-year award, NWB Technology, a subsidiary of tribally-owned NWB Economic Development Corp., will offer information technology services, surveying and mapping, energy consulting, security and surveillance to various federal agencies.

"We have a \$1 million contract with the FBI for language translation services," Michael Devine, NWB Technology's chief operating officer, said Tuesday. "We have returned missionaries and former military translators who can work on documents in Chinese, Kurdish, Albanian, Arabic."

The FBI contract "is just the first of what we believe will be several translation contracts," he added. "We believe we have the [translation] software and personnel superior to anything else on the market."

A promising government contractual partnership with Northrop Grumman Corp. also is developing, for computer-oriented work. Also, Brigham City-based NWB has been designated by both Northrop and Booz Allen, another prime federal contractor, for future homeland security-related jobs.

In all, the \$100 million worth of contracts could generate hundreds of positions, among them internships and on-the-job training slots for the 450 members of the Northwestern Band.

Already, NWB's construction division is busy. One project is a \$25 million tribal interpretative center at the southern Idaho site of the 1863 Bear River Massacre - where U.S. Army troopers slaughtered hundreds of the band's ancestors. Builders also are working on a 10-unit housing development in Ogden.

Devine praised the state's Division of Community and Economic Development (DBED) for serving as a "midwife" to NWB's new opportunities. "They have made us the poster child of Native American economic development," he said.

DBED Director Jeff Gochmour said a "major marketing effort" has been launched to bring NWB to the attention of federal contractors.

"This contract vehicle will provide a great opportunity for strong growth and employment for one of our Utah tribes," he said.

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