

COMPANY IS TO POST HUGE SURETY BOND

Denver Reclamation Office Is
Ordered to Draw Con-
tract for Signing

Work Will Start on World's
Largest Dam When Final
Papers Made Out

WASHINGTON, March 11.—(AP)—Secretary Wilbur, by a stroke of the pen, set in motion today the activities for actual construction of the great Hoover dam and power plant, key parts of the \$165,000,000 Boulder canyon project which will reclaim millions of acres in the arid valley of the Colorado river.

Wilbur authorized award of the contract for building the dam and power system, to cost finally approximately \$109,000,000, to the Six Companies, Inc., of San Francisco, a combination of western construction companies, at \$48,890,995.

To speed up getting the dam under way, Reclamation Commissioner Mead immediately telegraphed the Denver office to draw the contract. When signed, the company will post a \$5,000,000 surety bond guaranteeing completion in the allotted six and one-half years or paying a penalty of \$3,000 daily for delay.

Word came from the company it is ready to go when told to start. Preliminary activities, it is expected, will be well under way before the contract is signed, approved and in force. Specifications require construction be started within 30 days from receipt of notice.

Largest in World

The dam, which will be 1,180 feet long, spanning the river between Nevada and Arizona, will be the largest in the world. It will be 650 feet thick at the base, of the arch gravity type, or curving between the two ends, and 45 feet thick at the top.

Between 2,000 and 3,000 men will be employed in building it when work gets into full stride. Most of them will live in Boulder city, the model town to be constructed eight miles from the dam site and connected with the dam by a railroad and highway, now being built.

From the city, inhabitants will be able to see the huge reservoir backed up by the dam, which will create a lake 110 miles long and ranging from 600 feet deep downward to around 100 in the channels of the various small tributary canyons.

The model town will cost about \$2,000,000 and be ready for occupancy within a few months.

The power house and appurtenant works, to cost an estimated \$38,200,000 of the \$109,000,000 for the dam and power system, will generate upwards of 1,000,000 horsepower. From the sale of this power the government will be repaid for the project within 50 years.

The power will be divided among the lower Colorado basin states, but for the time being it will go to the Southern California Edison company, the city of Los Angeles, the metropolitan water district and other California centers.

Costly Affair

Upwards of \$250,000,000 will be spent as the result of construction of the dam, in addition to the government's share.

Los Angeles will spend approximately that amount in building an aqueduct for her municipal water supply. Other millions will be spent in industrial and power development.

The final link in the government's program will be construction of the all-American canal, to pour water for reclamation into the Imperial and Coachella valleys of California. This will cost approximately \$38,500,000.

Millions of gallons of water will be supplied for irrigation purposes in the desert country along the Colorado, in addition to that made available as water supply for the cities and towns of the southwest.

Power for constructing the dam will be supplied for a time by the Southern Sierras Power company of California, which is nearing completion of a 240-mile transmission line from Los Angeles to the dam site. By 1934, engineers estimate, power from the dam itself will be in use, as the government will start generating current before the dam is completed.

Cofferdams above and below the dam site will hold back the river and turn it aside into four great diversion tunnels, each 50 feet in diameter and approximately 3,000 feet long, while the dam is being constructed. Approximately 4,500,000 barrels of cement will go into the dam and power house.