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ADOT predicts 6,000 jobs from stimulus

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PHOENIX (AP) — State transportation officials predict that federal stimulus money will lead to the creation of 6,000 jobs.

The Arizona Department of Transportation said five projects in Maricopa County alone will generate 2,180 direct jobs.

ADOT is among the first major state agencies to detail jobs created from the stimulus money, which can be used for projects at the state, county and local levels.

Arizona's construction industry is hurting after it lost 77,000 jobs from January 2007 to January 2009.

A third of the state's construction workers are unemployed, a rate higher than any other state's and far higher than the 21 percent national unemployment rate for construction.

"We're not looking a gift horse in the mouth. All of something is better than all of nothing," said David Martin, president of the Arizona chapter of the Associated General Contractors. "But there is far more need than what the stimulus package will underwrite."

Martin said some Arizona contractors are hoping ADOT projects will keep them in business or competitive at current levels.

The Obama administration predicts stimulus spending will save or create 70,000 jobs in Arizona.

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