

## [Marshalls company wins biggest FSM construction contract](#)

**MAJURO** — A Marshall Islands contractor has won a \$27.5 million bid to pave roads and install a sewer system in the Federated States of Micronesia as U.S.-funded construction work gets moving after being stalled for five years.

U.S. Department of the Interior infrastructure official Stephen Savage said Friday that approximately \$130 million in U.S. construction grant funds has accumulated since a Compact of Free Association went into effect in 2003.

Organizational problems and a legal dispute between the FSM government and its first project management group prevented the use of U.S. funding until now.

Pacific International Inc., a Majuro-based construction company, won the largest bid to date for sewer installation and road paving in Chuuk, one of four states in the FSM, confirmed Savage.

“This is one of the first projects to be bid out in the FSM utilizing Compact funds,” said Savage, who is based in Honolulu. A major focus of U.S. funding in both the FSM and Marshall Islands is infrastructure improvements.

“Along this stretch of road you can only drive at about five-to-seven miles per hour,” said PII operations manager Kenneth Kramer, describing the pot-holed state of the road in the main urban center of Chuuk, the most populous of the four Micronesian states with about 75,000 people. “It takes you 30 minutes just to drive four-and-a-half-miles.”

PII is to install sewer pipes and then pave this stretch of road with a nine-inch layer of concrete, Kramer said.

The Majuro contractor paved a 10-mile stretch of road in Majuro, the capital of the Marshall Islands, under a Japan-funded project in the late 1990s, and has completed many U.S.-funded construction projects in the Marshall Islands.

Two additional phases of the Chuuk road project will be bid out near the end of phase one, which is expected to start next month and take two years to complete, according to Savage.

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