

Utah Valley's Newspaper

Wednesday
FEBRUARY 23, 2011

Daily Herald

LOCAL NEWS
FOR 136 YEARS
75 CENTS

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MADE IN UTAH COUNTY



ASHLEY FRANSCCELL/Daily Herald

An employee with Northwest Pipe Company welds a piece of pipe on Friday, at Northwest Pipe Company in Pleasant Grove.

Pl. Grove company making steel pipe to enclose Murdock Canal

A Pleasant Grove company is being touted for manufacturing all 21 miles of 126-inch steel pipe being used to enclose the Murdock Canal.

Each section of the huge pipe is 40 feet long, weighs 23,000 pounds, holds 26,000 gallons of water — and you may have personally contributed. The pipe is being made from melted down cash-for-clunkers cars, making it a true locally made, green project.

Because the pipes are crafted in Pleasant Grove at Northwest Pipe Company, officials estimate the project will pump a staggering

\$235 million into the Utah Valley economy, providing 400 jobs for nearly 30 months. Both Northwest and water officials said they are proud that the pipe is being made locally, directly benefiting the economy.

Thirty-two-ton coils of steel, made up of cash-for-clunkers cars and resembling giant rolls of tape, are slowly unwound into a special machine. They are welded in a spiral using a proprietary process. The welds are X-rayed and tested for perfection.

"We pump 26,000 gallons of water into each section of pipe and pressurize it to make sure it is water-tight," said Mike Wray, operations manager for Northwest. As a final finish, about 25 gallons of paint are used to coat each 40-foot section of pipe.

 **PHOTO GALLERY**
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Pipe

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Between 200 and 300 feet of pipe is made every day, he said. Every single 40-foot piece has been custom-designed to exactly fit the terrain along the 21-mile trail.

The manufacturing is so exact that pipes in different sections can be, and have been, installed in advance of their counterparts, yet they match up exactly when joined together. Every pipe has a unique identity code, and so even stacked in a muddy yard, officials can look at the code and know exactly where a specific pipe needs to be delivered.

"We have a lot of confidence in the manufacturer," said Steve Cain of the Provo River Water Users Association, which secured funding for the massive project. "We know within an inch or so where each pipe will go."

To ensure the integrity of the pipe over the next decades, "we'll inspect every inch of the pipe every year," Cain said. "We've begun the actual installation of pipe. We started in earnest just before Christmas, and just over a mile of



ASHLEY FRANSELL/Daily Herald

A employee of Northwest Pipe Company inspects the welding on a pipe at Northwest Pipe Company in Pleasant Grove, on Friday. The company is producing all 21 miles of the 126-inch pipe to enclose the Murdock Canal.

pipe has now been laid."

When all is said and done, piping the former canal will not only save water, it

will also add a 21-mile pedestrian-equestrian trail running from the mouth of Provo Canyon to Point of the Mountain.