

# Madison project gets final OK

**By The News-Record staff**

Published: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:25 PM MST

Gillette's Madison pipeline project bill passed its final hurdle Monday after the House voted to approve the bill.

The bill paves the way for Gillette to get \$16.8 million from the state— \$11.2 million in a grant and \$5.5 million in a loan.

Two legislators voted against the bill— Rep. Lisa Shepperson, R-Casper and Rep. Dave Miller, R-Riverton. Shepperson stated earlier that she believed Campbell County was rich enough to fund its own water project and Miller raised a question about using coal-bed methane water to supplement the city's water supply instead of using Madison formation water.

Rep. Tom Lubnau, R- Gillette, who co-sponsored the bill along with Gillette Sen. John Hines, said he was "very proud of the Legislature for recognizing the need for water in northeast Wyoming." But he also said the Legislature was clearly not going to hand out more money for the \$226 million project unless Campbell County was also involved in the project in the future.

"Campbell County has a bigger budget than three Wyoming counties' assessed valuation," he said. "They know we have ways to tax that most counties don't."

The bill must still be signed by Gov. Dave Freudenthal and a final amendment to clean up language in the bill regarding the financial allocation must be approved by the Senate.

Lubnau said he expects the Senate to approve the amendment Monday afternoon.

Mayor Duane Evenson said the next step is to begin soliciting interested contractors. He said the city is meeting with the Wyoming Water Development Commission and the firm doing the city's regional water plan study in early March. The city will send out letters soliciting interested parties after that meeting.