Minnesota Tribal
Road Safety Summit

Summit Report

FINAL REPORT

October 29-30, 2008

Fortune Bay Resort Casino   Tower, Minnesota
Sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration

Prepared by Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

Background

Every year more than 40,000 motorists die and almost 3,000,000 are injured on our Nation's roadways. For ages 4 to 34, motor vehicle-related injuries are the leading cause of death in the United States.[1]

Native Americans are at particularly high risk. Among Native American populations, motor vehicle-related injuries are the leading cause of death extends up to age 44.[2] Between 1975 and 2002, the number of fatal crashes on Indian reservations increased over 50 percent, while nationally they declined two percent.[3]

Minnesota is no exception to the trend. In a comparison of state-wide and Native American fatality rates by population, Native Americans are two and one-half times more likely to be killed in motor vehicle crashes than other citizens.

The Minnesota Tribal Road Safety Summit held October 29-30, 2008 is an important step toward reducing traffic fatalities and injuries among Tribal members. This document describes the Summit, focusing on the insights gained and lessons learned.

The Summit was carried out through the collaborative efforts of Tribal representatives from Bois Forte, White Earth, Leech Lake, and Red Lake, Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Federal Lands Highway and Minnesota Division Offices, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) at Michigan Technological University, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Minnesota Department of Public Safety (MnDPS), and the Center for Excellence in Rural Safety (CERS).

Minnesota Tribes

- Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
- Fond du Lac Reservation
- Grand Portage Chippewa
- Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
- Lower Sioux Indian Community
- Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
- Prairie Island Indian Community
- Red Lake Nation
- Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- Upper Sioux Community
- White Earth Band of Ojibwe

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[1] Hilton J., Race and Ethnicity in Fatal Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes 1999-2004, DOT HS 809 956. May 2006. U.S. DOT, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

[2] Subramanian R., Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes as a Leading Cause of Death in the United States, 2005, DOT HS 810 936. April 2008. U.S. DOT, National Center for Statistics and Analysis.

[3] Poindexter, K., Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes on Indian Reservations 1975-2002, DOT HS 809 727. U.S. DOT, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, May 2004.

■ **Purpose of the Summit**

*Bois Forte Chairman Kevin Leecy
Offering Opening Remarks*

The Minnesota Tribal Road Safety Summit brought together the full range of interested parties to begin communication and cooperation toward the ultimate goal of reducing crash-related injuries and deaths within Tribal communities. The Summit pursued that goal by identifying key Tribal safety challenges and the resources (human, technical, material, and financial) available to address them, and by stimulating multidisciplinary collaboration among safety stakeholders. Specifically, the objectives of the Summit were:

1. Review Minnesota's Tribal road safety issues and challenges;

2. Improve crash data collection, analysis, and sharing;

3. Share experiences and begin developing new Tribal safety initiatives; and

4. Identify safety resources available to Minnesota Tribes.

The intention was to provide participants with a better understanding of programs and resources available for their communities to consider in determining future directions with regard to road safety. A detailed Summit agenda, listing all speakers and activities, is included in Appendix B.

The Summit is a first step. Follow-up within and among Minnesota's Tribes in collaboration with state and Federal partners is required for further progress. Minnesota has strong safety leadership, but local or grassroots initiatives are imperative to drive the numbers down.

Themes

Several key themes emerged from the Summit as recurring emphasis areas in presentations and discussion groups. The themes included *partnerships*, *transportation safety planning*, *data*, and *Tribal safety initiatives*. This report documents the insights provided by speakers and other participants on these topics.

■ Partnerships

Opening remarks by Bois Forte Chairman Kevin Leecy and MnDOT Commissioner Tom Sorel emphasized the importance of strong partnerships. This includes Tribal safety stakeholders working with Tribal elders and advisors to elevate road safety as a priority and implement Tribal safety initiatives. It also includes Tribes partnering with Federal and state partners. The value of collaboration was reinforced in presentations and group discussions throughout the Summit.

Participants learned about and were encouraged to support an important statewide collaborative effort to advance safety efforts on Minnesota's public roadways. *Toward Zero Deaths* (TZD) was established in 2001 as a partnership led by MnDPS, MnDOT, and the Department of Health, in cooperation with the State Patrol, FHWA, Minnesota county engineers, and the Center for Transportation Studies at the University of Minnesota. The program team works with community and corridor groups to improve safety in designated area.

In some cases, TZD has been adopted at the regional level. For example, in January 2008 stakeholders in MnDOT District 2 (Bemidji District) began to question what they could do in their specific region and began the Northwest TZD Coalition. Looking at safety data from the 4 E perspective (engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency response), they held a series of planning meetings followed by a workshop in April 2008 with participation from law

enforcement, hospitals, engineers, and high school students, among others. Data were presented on safety belts, alcohol and single vehicle run-off-road crashes, speeding drivers, young drivers, and intersections, followed by discussion and breakout sessions. The workshop resulted in a plethora of activities, including Safe Communities workshops, Leech Lake Health and Safety Fair, AARP Driver instructor training, Beltrami County fatality review, TZD statewide conference, MADD Chapter, and team planning meetings. Future plans include outreach to increase participation, TZD communication and marketing, identifying funding sources, and measuring results.

Summit participants expressed appreciation for the chance to learn more about collaborative efforts and for the opportunity to advance partnerships themselves through discussion groups and informal sessions where they were able to share experiences, learn from one another, and work together in developing ideas for moving forward.

■ Transportation Safety Planning

A key theme that emerged at the Summit is the need for strong safety planning processes to drive road safety initiatives forward. FHWA's Office of Federal Lands Highway Associate Administrator John Baxter introduced participants to national efforts focusing on Tribal safety planning, which was followed by a detailed presentation on a three stage process for developing Tribal specific safety management plans.

Step One: Strategic Highway Safety Plan for Indian Lands

In 2004 the Strategic Highway Safety Plan for Indian Lands was completed as a policy statement defining national goals to improve Tribal transportation safety.

The strategic plan identified eight specific emphasis areas to reduce the number of fatal and injury crashes in Indian Country:

- Decision-Making Process;
- Data Collection;
- Run-off-the-Road Crashes;

Strategic Highway Safety Plan for Indian Lands

Vision – *Implement effective transportation safety programs to save lives through communication and collaboration.*

Mission – *All transportation users arrive safely at their destinations.*

- Occupant Protection/Child Restraint;
- Alcohol/Impaired Driving;
- Other Driver Behavior and Awareness;
- Drivers Under the Age of 35; and
- Pedestrian Safety.

The plan calls for two integration components: 1) an organizational structure allowing for the integration of the entities involved with Transportation Safety; and 2) a formal management system to direct the activities of entities that will effectively achieve the mission and vision.

Step Two: Safety Management System Implementation Plan

The Safety Management System (SMS) Implementation Plan was signed in August 2008 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and FHWA's Office of Federal Lands Highway in partnership with Tribes and state DOTs. Similar to Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) transportation improvement programs (TIP), the SMS identifies items to address over the next three to five years through implementation at both the national and Tribal levels.

A Steering Committee, including representatives from Tribes, FHWA, BIA, The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and Indian Health Services (IHS) meets semi-annually and Safety Summits are conducted to stimulate interest and dialogue.

Step Three: Tribal Safety Management Plans

The next step is to develop Tribal specific safety management plans. These cross discipline plans will be developed on-site with Tribal representatives and will identify safety countermeasures and programs to address the specific needs of the community. Five Tribes in Washington and Montana have completed plans, which are available through TTAP.

Minnesota's Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Participants also learned about the process behind the Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), which adopted the TZD goal and has been used as a model plan before the Safe Accountable Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was passed. SAFETEA-LU requires states to develop a statewide, coordinated safety plan that provides a comprehensive framework and specific goals and objectives for reducing highway fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

The TZD 2004 goal was to reduce the annual number of fatalities to below 500 fatalities. The goal was met in 2007 (494 fatalities) and was revised to a target of fewer than 400 fatalities by 2010.

The SHSP development process included a review of current research and literature to identify strategies for reaching the new goal. The following box presents examples of the strategies included in Minnesota's SHSP.

Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Strategies

6 Education Strategies
Stronger Graduated Drivers License
Safe community coalitions

2 Technology Strategies
In-vehicle safety systems
Vehicle-infrastructure integration

10 Engineering Strategies
Road edge treatments
Intersection treatments

4 EMS Strategies
Implement statewide trauma system
Enhance 911 system capabilities

7 Enforcement Strategies
Primary seat belt law
Increased resources
Increased red-light enforcement

2 Data System Strategies
Improve data systems
Integrate general & highway
vehicle databases

■ Data

An overarching theme of the Summit was the need for accurate and timely data along with analytical tools to identify safety problems and appropriate countermeasures.

Crash Reporting

The process of collecting and analyzing data begins with the information gathered at the scene of the crash. If a crash is not reported, it cannot be included in the data. The Minnesota police accident report (PAR) and citizen accident report (CAR) are available in both paper and electronic formats (85 percent currently generated electronically). The criteria of the reports are guided by the D-16 Manual, which defines such details fatalities, injuries, and property damage only crashes, and the national Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC), which represents a voluntary and collaborative effort to generate uniform, accurate, reliable, and credible crash data to support data-driven highway safety decisions within a state, between states, and at the national level.

Location elements of the crash data include the route system, route number, reference point (along with a reliability score), city, and county. Nonlocation elements include such details as date, time, day, light conditions, weather, etc. Person level elements include age, gender, condition, safety equipment, and severity. **Names and addresses also are reported but are not part of the public record,** which is important to note for those with reservations about sharing crash data. Vehicles information (type, make, body type) and actions (contributing factors, sequence of events, preaccident action, most harmful event, and direction of travel) also are reported.

Current efforts to improve Tribal crash reports include redesigning police and citizen crash reports to be more in line with MMUCC and to develop and pilot an abbreviated PAR for property damage only crashes. Electronic PAR submission is being promoted as is submission of property damage only crashes to police agencies. The need for this valuable data is being marketed to law enforcement and others.

Crash Data Collection

Red Lake presented its data collection system where law enforcement usually collects crash data, but others produce crash reports as well (e.g., engineers, analysts, and prevention practitioners).

In recent years the traffic safety community has demanded crash data quality improvements. The demand is driven by funding/ grant opportunities and the need to better target roadway improvements, prevention, and intervention. Red Lake has a grant from BIA and must produce statistics to show the need for continued funding.

To develop effective, targeted countermeasures it is necessary to understand the who, what, when, where, why, and how of crashes. Contributing factors, such as distractions, weather con-ditions, road conditions, alcohol/drug use, animals, etc., provide important information. Additional crash data include airbag deployment, safety belt use, child safety restraint use, vehicle damage, and collision type (e.g., rollover, rear end, broadside, and head on).

The data are shared with other agencies with mutual goals, pur-poses, and funding sources. In Red Lake this includes engineers and planners, prevention practitioners, and the Tribal sanitarian.

Experience shows collecting Tribal crash data is tedious, as it is often done manually. Electronic transfer has proven difficult. Statistics are not presented until the end of the year, which limits data-driven programs and decisions. In addition, it difficult to meet the varying needs of different agencies requesting crash data. Also, Tribes report crash data to BIA, which reports to the FBI. This type of reporting can cause inaccurate or duplicate sta-tistics for local agencies, counties agencies, and states.

Tools are available to assist Tribes in collecting crash data. Com-puter aided dispatch (CAD) systems (e.g., SMART and BULLBERRY) help identify elements such as crash location. I-CARE (Indian Crime Awareness Research and Evaluation) is focused mainly on crime but is now working with DOTs to incor-porate crash data as well. CISCO, from the BIA, is another software package available to help Tribes collect and share data electronically.
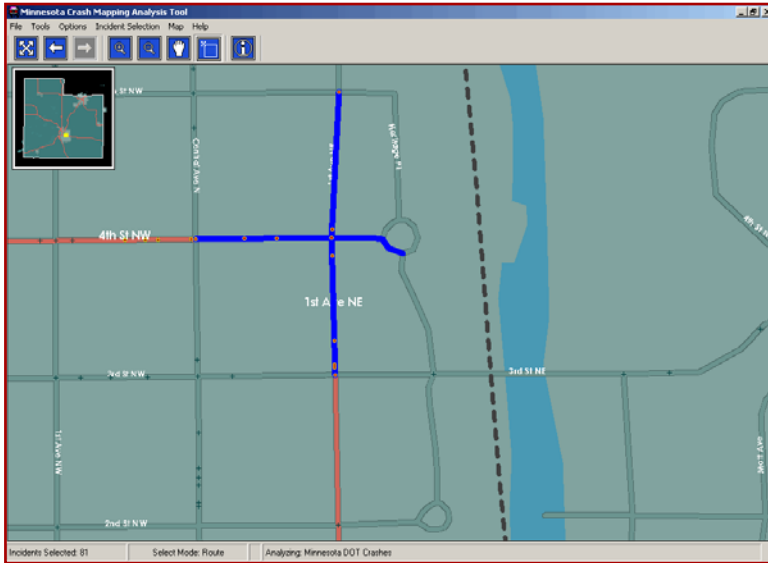
Crash Data Analysis

Support is available through both MnDOT and MnDPS for Tribes to analyze crash data for decision-making and programming. **MnDOT's Crash Mapping Analysis Tool (MnCMAT)** was adopted in 2006. The tool covers the entire state and applies 32 filters to crash data from the DOT database to produce GIS-based charts, maps, and reports. Primary selection is by county, with multiple secondary selection methods for cities, points, areas, and roadway segments or corridors.

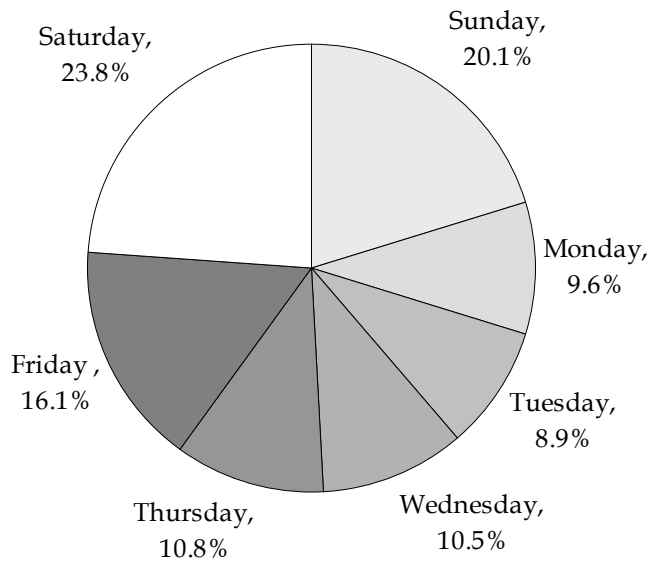*MnCMAT Select Crashes Using Route Selection.*

For example, MnCMAT was used to receive additional highway safety improvement program (HSIP) funding from FHWA when it identified the need to target local and rural roads. The tool is available to Tribes through MnDOT and does not require additional software. Additional information (including approval forms) can be founds at http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/sa_crashmap.html.

In a different context, **MnDPS' Crash Facts** are used not only to identify locations in need of attention, but also to identify countermeasures. For example, a high visibility impaired driving enforcement campaign was conducted in July because alcohol-related crashes are overrepresented during that month.

The database does not contain personal identifiers. The annual Crash Facts report is published by June of each year and presents data by countermeasure area in a variety of configurations. MnDPS has three researchers on staff available to provide data runs for anyone from the public, not just grantees. Data queries are not processed for attorneys.

Crash Facts – Alcohol Related Crashes by Day of the Week

White Earth Primary Safety Belt Law
All drivers of vehicles operating on White Earth Indian Reservation public roads and passengers riding therein shall be required to fasten seat belts while the vehicle is in motion. Minor children are required to be safely, securely, and properly fastened while riding in a motor vehicle and the driver is responsible for the proper fastening of a minor's seat belt. Minors are defined as persons between the ages of 4 years and not more than 11 years of age and children younger than 4 years who are required to be in child safety seats.

Seat Belt Exemptions: This article shall not apply to:

- A person driving a passenger vehicle in reverse;

- A person riding in a seat in which all the seating positions equipped with safety belts are occupied by other persons;

- A person who is in possession of a written certificate from a licensed physician verifying that because of medical unfitness or physical disability the person is unable to wear a seat belt

- A person who is actually engages in work that requires the person to alight from and reenter a motor vehicle at frequent intervals and who, while engaged in that work, does not drive or travel in that vehicle at a speed exceeding 25 miles per hour;

- A rural mail carrier of the United States Postal Service while in the performance of duties;

- A person driving of riding in a passenger vehicle manufactured before January 1, 1965; and

- A person driving or riding in a pickup truck, while engaged in normal farming work or activity.

■ Tribal Safety Initiatives

A variety of Tribal safety initiatives were presented at the Summit, providing participants examples of programs they may adopt within their own communities to further improve road safety.

Primary Safety Belt Law

White Earth recently passed the State's first primary safety belt law. A recent survey showed only 43 percent belt use in the community, which is far below the state and national averages. The need for change was driven by statistics showing failure to wear a safety belt contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic safety-related behavior and the chances of surviving a traffic crash are cut in half when a safety belt is not used (63 percent fatality rate). Unbelted fatalities and serious injuries touch every Minnesota Community, accounting for more than 200 deaths and 500 serious injuries each year. These crashes resonate beyond the victim and their families. The community picks up the tab in each crash case, including emergency response, medical assistance, increased insurance premiums, unemployment compensation, and more.

Statistics show reservations with upgraded primary laws experience fewer deaths and serious injuries, and primary laws increase belt use by five to 10 percent. Secondary laws confuse citizens and hamper law enforcement.

The proposed primary safety belt law, along with these supporting arguments, was presented to White Earth's Tribal Council, with sponsors including the White Earth Police Department, Legal Department, IHS, and Child Protective Services (CPS) Committee. The Council agreed and asked for surveys, which found 99 percent of the reservation citizens approve the law. Of 212 surveys only one person opposed the law, which gained approval and takes effect on the reservation in January 2009.

GIS Data Analysis

The White Earth Nation has been using GIS for over 10 years, and it is now used in most Tribal departments. Because of the popularity of GIS in recent years, White Earth pursued a reservation-wide GIS web site accessible by all Tribal staff. In January 2006, the White Earth DOT took the lead on this effort, supported by ProWest & Associates.

Because of the amount of coordination and work involved, implementation was expected to take place over a period of two to three years. The reservation has directed two percent of its planning dollars toward this project, which was estimated to cost $175,000. The funding covers project planning, parcel development, computer hardware, programming, database development, and training. The reservation was able to save $28,000 by ordering the needed GIS software through the Geographic Data Service Center at no cost.

The first step in making this project a reality was to create a Reservation wide parcel layer. Two of the three counties the Reservation covers already had been parceled. Clearwater and Becker Counties agreed to share their parcel layers with the reservation. Mahnomen County did not have funds available to have a parcel layer created so White Earth made funds available for the parceling, which is nearly complete. A number of layers already are visible on the GIS web site with future plans to incorporate AsBuilt data, electrical lines, culvert inventory, septic inventory (in process), and crash data.

Each person must attend a training session before they are assigned a username and password. The web site currently is accessible and is being used by Tribal staff who will be able to use all this information, including crash data, to update their long range transportation plans (LRTP).

Low-Cost Safety Improvements

Bois Forte is implementing a number of low-cost safety improvements to prevent serious crashes on reservation roads, including training for the department of public works (DPW) employees to protect their safety, maintain the equipment in good condition, and provide safe construction environments.

Heavy equipment operator schools for band members minimize unsafe situations and provide better maintenance. Snow plow

training was provided by MnDOT personnel, along with training for other equipment addressing different types of environmental considerations. Other training includes safe trench construction, proper protective equipment, blood born pathogens training, and safety on construction projects.

A partnership agreement was signed between the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa and the St. Louis County, who built a sand/salt facility on the Bois Forte reservation, and agreed to keep the facility filled for the next 25 years. Both Bois Forte and St. Louis County will have full access to the salt and sand for faster response times.

They have a bear sanctuary, which means a high population of bear, lots of cubs, deer, etc. Early mowing of ditches prevents animals from hiding in the tall grass, which can be a risk to motorists when they dart into the roadway or the vehicle leaves the roadway.

The reservation also keeps a check on the culverts and monitors the "back roads." Local road improvements include signs, pavement markings, etc. DPW officials invited county and MnDOT officials to view their roadway conditions. This led to additional funding.

Education

**Fond du Lac
Injury Prevention Activities**

- Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) program;
- Driver's Education;
- Child car seat / Booster seat program; and
- Brain Injury Prevention Project.

The Fond du Lac Reservation is implementing an injury prevention program with funding provided through an IHS/Tribal injury prevention cooperative agreement. Only 23 Tribes in the U.S. are funded under this grant. Since 75 percent of motor vehicle deaths impact individuals between the ages of 1 and 19, the program targets the reservation's youth.

Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) program activities include red ribbon week, buckle up safely, brain injury, helmet use, safety belts, motor vehicle crashes, and drug/alcohol abuse. The latter program uses fatal vision goggles which simulate the alcohol impairment condition. The youth are able to see and understand how alcohol affects their vision and motor skills.

Injury prevention components are included in driver education, including subjects such as cell phone use, safety belts, in-vehicle and outside distractions, and alcohol impaired driving.

The car seat/booster seat program format changed from individual appointments to bimonthly classes, which appears to have

increased the use of seats. Other activities include "Click It for a Free Movie Ticket," which rewards parents "caught" with children buckled up with movie tickets, using crash test dummies at a pow-wow, a car seat clinic, and training for Fond du Lac law enforcement.

Enforcement

Leech Lake's child passenger safety program involved building a coalition with police, courts, and judges. This group of law enforcement personnel is actively promoting passenger safety with Room to Live DVDs, which are given out with booster seats, car seats, etc. They hope for a primary law resolution. Promotional bags are issued at pow-wows and the coalition is working directly with children, as well as with the media. Leach Lake has a Head Start grant which can be used to purchase child car seats and educate parents.

Summit Results

Summit Breakout Discussion

A primary Summit objective was to provide participants with a forum to share their experiences, learn from one another, and work together to begin identifying future directions. To achieve this, Summit participants were divided into breakout groups around specific discussion topics. On the first day, participants attended small group, multidisciplinary sessions focused on data. For the day-two sessions, participants were divided into three topic areas: engineering, enforcement/EMS, and education. The discussions on both days focused on: 1) what is current practice; 2) what are the gaps and obstacles; and 3) what can we do to move forward? The following highlights from each breakout session were presented to the full Summit (a detailed collection of participant comments from the breakout sessions is available in Appendix C).

■ Data

- The discussion groups successfully started a dialogue among the summit participants who shared ideas, programs, and challenges.

- The data collection instruments, processes, and sharing practices vary widely between the Tribes, the BIA, the State, and FHWA for a host of reasons.

- We need to develop a comprehensive data collection plan, which includes standard specifications and forms for recording data along with grants and incentives to encourage data collection.

- Some Tribes are increasingly using technology to capture, transfer, and analyze their crash data.

- We need to provide more technological equipment to expand accurate and efficient crash reporting.

- A real opportunity exists for increasing communication, facilitation, and partnerships among the Tribes, state agencies, counties, and cities.

■ **Education**

- There is a lack of data for identifying problems accurately.

- We must engage the community directly. Communication is critical, e.g., media, newsletters, etc. We could start a coalition to push forward such initiatives.

- DPS will make sure Tribal contacts are on the mailing list to get grant applications, media releases, etc., so the Tribes can use them.

- There are long standing partnerships on the engineering side. DPS will work with MnDOT to improve their partnership with the Tribes.

- Injury prevention specialists do a great job but they should work more closely with law enforcement.

- Perhaps a small task force could come out of this meeting to overcome the data issues.

■ **Engineering**

- A great opportunity exists right now for tribal involvement given current emphasis on the SHSP, RSAs, tribal safety plans, etc.

- MnDOT wants the local and tribal units of government to develop local safety plans.

- Tribes need to know what technical assistance, training, and other resources are available to them in pursuing safety efforts.

- There is a lack of relationships, collaboration, and coordination, even within some Tribes among their own departments.

- We need to get past data collection and focus on analysis, e.g., turning the data in problems identified, evaluation, etc. Safety is not data driven, it is analysis driven. This must be understood at all levels and all need to have the skills/tools to conduct analysis.

■ **Enforcement/Emergency Response**

- NW TZD is viewed as an opportunity.

- Car seat giveaways are going on now. We need to focus on the education component.

- More focus is needed on motorcycle safety. Motorcycle data is lacking on reservations. A helmet law should be enacted.

- Safety belt data should be broken down by short trips, long trips, etc., and then focus should be given on how we get increase usage on shorter trips.

- Work is needed on jurisdictions for tribal police to enforce safety belt laws. Red Lake is having a conversation with the counties on enforcement issues.

- The difference between Tribal and state penalties poses a range of problems.

- There is confusion regarding the treatment of non-band members on Tribal roads.

- White Earth has taken a lead in accessing and working on Section 402 grants, bringing people together to work on behavioral initiatives.

- Challenges are primarily the need for funding and access to reservation data.

Moving Forward

Minnesota is committed to taking next steps in the pursuit of safer Tribal roadways. As emphasized at the beginning of the Summit and throughout, an important component of any future direction should be to continue to foster partnerships and multidisciplinary collaboration.

Participants will inform the Tribal Elders, leaders, and other safety stakeholders in their communities about the Summit results and lessons learned to determine future directions with regard to transportation safety education, enforcement, infrastructure, and data. Management needs to understand the costs and benefits of crash and injury prevention.

The results from the Summit will be shared with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council to raise the priority of safety and obtain the commitment of Tribal leaders to direct attention and resources to safety improvements on reservation roads.

The Advocacy Council for Tribal Transportation (ACTT) meets quarterly to discuss transportation issues that concern the Minnesota Tribes. With representatives from the 11 Tribes, MnDOT, TTAP, county and city engineers, FHWA, BIA, and others, this group provides an ideal forum for exploring methods for pursuing goals and initiatives expressed during the Tribal Road Safety Summit.

More information about resources available from the state, regional, and Federal partners involved in the Summit can be found at:

MnDOT: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mntribes/

MnDPS: http://www.dps.state.mn.us/

TTAP: http://www.ttap.mtu.edu/

FHWA Office of Federal Lands Highway:
http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/irr/safety/

FHWA Office of Safety: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/

CERS: http://www.ruralsafety.umn.edu/

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Appendix B: Agenda

OCTOBER 29-30, 2008
TRIBAL ROAD SAFETY SUMMIT AGENDA

PURPOSE
1. Review Minnesota's tribal road safety issues and challenges;
2. Improve crash data collection, analysis, and sharing;
3. Share experiences and begin developing new tribal safety initiatives; and
4. Identify safety resources available to the Minnesota Tribes.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29TH TRIBAL ROAD SAFETY SUMMIT SESSION I

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Registration
12:30 PM – 12:50 PM	**Opening Ceremony**
12:50 PM – 1:30 PM	**Opening Session**

Setting the Stage
Kevin Leecy, Chair, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa

U.S. Transportation Safety Issues
John Baxter, Federal Highway Administration

Minnesota Transportation Safety Issues
Tom Sorel, Commissioner, Minnesota DOT

Tribal Transportation Safety Management System Implementation Plan
Tom Fronk, Bureau of Indian Affairs

1:30 – 2:30 PM   **Plenary Panel: Safety Data**

Crash Reporting
Loren Hill, Crash Data Proponent

Collecting Tribal Crash Data
Gina Benson, Red Lake Nation

Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool
Mark Vizecky, Minnesota DOT

Minnesota Crash Facts
Kathy Burke Moore, Minnesota DPS

2:30 PM – 2:45 PM	Break
2:45 PM – 4:00 PM	**Breakout Groups – Part I**

- What data do we have?
- What are the gaps?
- What are the obstacles to sharing data?
- What can we do moving forward?

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM   **Human, Technical, and Financial Resources**

Resource Roundtable Discussions

MnDOT	MnDPS	CERS
FHWA	BIA	TTAP

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30TH TRIBAL ROAD SAFETY SUMMIT SESSION II

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	Registration
8:00 AM – 8:20 AM	**Highlights from Data Discussions and Overview of Day Two**
8:20 AM – 8:40 AM	**Minnesota's Strategic Highway Safety Plan/NW Coalition TZD**

> *Brad Estochen*, Minnesota DOT
>
> *Mike Kamnikar*, Minnesota DOT, District II
>
> *Jeremy Cossette*, White Earth Nation

8:40 AM – 9:45 AM	**Tribal Safety Initiatives**

> **GIS Data**
> *Burny Tibbetts,* White Earth Nation
> *Dawn Sherk*, White Earth Nation
>
> **Engineering**
> *Cathy Chavers*, District I Rep, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
>
> **Education**
> *Holly Kostrzewski*, Fond du Lac Reservation
>
> **Enforcement**
> *Kim Larson*, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	Break
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	**Breakout Groups – Part II**

- What initiatives are participants currently implementing?
- What additional programs are needed?
- What are the obstacles to implementing these programs?
- What can we do moving forward?

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	**Breakout Group Reports**
11:30 AM – 12:15 PM	**Closing Session**

> **Continuing the Dialogue**
> *Brad Estochen*, Minnesota DOT
> *Loren Hill*, Crash Data Proponent
>
> **Reflections on the Summit and Next Steps**
> *Kevin Leecy*, Chair, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa

Appendix C: Detailed Breakout Group Comments

■ Data

Current Practice

- White Earth employs IHS observation points to measure traffic flow and conducts safety belt surveys.

- Tribes often get a sense of where/how many fatalities occur only through IHS.

- Mille Lacs (and two others Tribes) report crash and safety belt data to the State using the state crash report form.

- Red Lake is Federally funded so they report directly to the BIA and not to the State.

- Documentation is needed to determine who collects what data, who reports to whom, and how can consistency be achieved in data collection and reporting?

Gaps and Obstacles

- Local policy lacks continuity, and not all agencies submit property damage only (PDO) crash information in cases with no fatalities or injuries. Often the Tribal people ask for data but it has not been reported to DVS. The numbers of PDO crashes appear to be decreasing but it is because people are pressed for time or they do not think it is important to report such crashes. No one tracks whether the data are turned into the State.

- Some reservations are POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) certified, which mandates data reporting to keep the department's licensure, and some are not.

- Many times there is no sketch of the crash scene.

- Often location data is inaccurate.

- Data earlier than 2002 are not available.

- Maintenance personnel are not required to use crash data.

- Tribes appear to report either to the BIA or the State and their police certification is not consistent. The reason the BIA data are not shared with the State is unclear. It also is unclear why BIA police are not POST certified. (The inconsistencies may begin at the Federal level.) BIA requires written permission from the Tribal chairman to share the data, which may account for the lack of data sharing with MnDOT.

- While it appears data are available, it is unclear whether they are being analyzed.

- Some Tribes do not have a compact with the State, which results in a lack of trust.

- Some reservations are checker boarded (land mass is not contiguous), which makes data collection between reservation and nonreservation roads difficult.

Next Steps

- Establish reciprocity between the State and Tribes to share information.

- Build relationships and improve collaboration with the counties.

- Utilize partnership agreements, e.g., the State fixes the road and the Tribe agrees to maintain it.

- Work on the politics/relationship building side of all this. Develop a good understanding of current practice and meet with the Tribal elders/leadership. The Tribes need to provide input and feedback to state practice.

■ Education

Current Practice

- Car seats/booster seats, educational campaigns.

- SADD.

- Public information materials:

    - Web-based;

    - Press releases;

    - Quarterly/seasonal materials distribution to Tribes;

- – Brain injury prevention materials; and

  - – Reports and fact sheets.

- Click it or ticket.

- Safe and sober driving.

- Impaired driving education in high schools prior to prom.

- Grant funding for safe communities programs.

- Parent education.

- Buckling up contracts during parents' night.

- Classes for parents on keeping kids safe:

  - – Group and one on one; and

  - – Focus on educating to enable them to teach their parents.

- 55 alive (driver education course for those over 55).

- Safety training video geared toward 13-35 males (provided to unions, companies, etc., to educate workers).

- SNAP: Safe Native American Passengers program:

  - – http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CPS/Training/ CPSCourses/pages/SNAP.html

Gaps and Obstacles

- Safety training materials specific to ethnicity.

- Data gathering (GIS) training.

- Crash data consolidation.

- Data collection consistency.

- Communications across all areas:

  - – Task forces;

  - – Meetings;

  - – Committees;

  - – Crash data sharing; and

  - – Language/fields on crash form that identify ethnicity (Tribal).

- Change BIA grant guidelines to identify crash location.

- Presentations decision-makers and to the community to help start/implement/fund/change programs.

- Tribal newsletters.
- Tribal Council support.
- More people to assist with community outreach.
- Press/newsletter coverage, better information distribution.
- More peer exchanges for young drivers.
- Education on law and cell phone use for those under 18.
- Lack of funding.
- People/staff (time).
- Community buy-in/support.
- Partnerships.
- Law enforcement (involvement, implementation, man-power).
- Collaboration among the 4 Es.

Next Steps

- Communication:
  - Representatives who go into communities and form a trust with the people; and
  - Once partnerships are created with the communities, move up to Tribal Councils, etc.
- Continue education and start at an early age.
- Build relationship with law enforcement.
- Form coalitions to demonstrate how different departments are working together.
- Create a small task force or workgroup, including DPS, to address crash data collection and distribution issues.
- Work with the media.

■ Engineering

Current Practice

- When White Earth scopes projects, they look at what types of problems are safety-related. State Road 59 seems to be a specific problem.

- Road Safety Audits (RSA) have been conducted on reservations and some Tribes have been trained to conduct RSAs.

- MnDOT is providing RSA training with cities, counties, and Tribes. HSIP sponsors RSAs as part of the program. Tribes are eligible to participate.

- Crash mapping tool is available only for desktop use.

- MnDOT has divided up funds for spot improvements and systemwide improvements. Two counties are funded as pilot counties to develop road safety plans.

- Safe Routes to School (SR2S) funds are available. Fond du Lac has accessed funding for a SR2S planning grant.

Gaps and Obstacles

- Often Tribal personnel do not really know what the other departments are doing within the Tribe.

- Need for training, e.g., how to identify programs that can help them. Then make the leaders aware so they see the benefit. How to work their way through the program, select countermeasures, etc.

- Tribes do seem to be aware of or taking advantage of RSAs.

- Time and personnel limitations.

- Lack of coordination/collaboration.

- Locals may not understand critical crash rates, etc., so MnDOT funding is not available to them.

- Some MnDOT personnel do not support flexing HSIP funds for enforcement.

- White Earth is now partnering with three counties. Some county roads are being returned to the Tribes because it makes sense from a maintenance perspective.

Next Steps

- Focus on data collection and analysis.

- Pass a primary safety belt law – most of the Tribes have approached White Earth to learn how to pass the law. MnDPS helped White Earth with signage and education about the law.

- Use MnDOT safety funding to develop safety plans. Conduct RSAs to identify safety problems and submit applications. Focus on low-cost safety improvements.

- Coordinate the Technology Implementation Plan (Federal Lands Highway with Forest Service, BIA, National Park Service, Wildlife Refuge Road Systems. Competitive funds are available covering most aspects of transportation proposals, including safety. The funds are not being utilized because not enough field staff are available to access the funds.

- Use consultant services to help the Tribes identify and secure safety funding.

- Use BIA funds to hire officers to analyze data and collaborate with other departments, including maintenance.

- Identify programs, contacts, etc., and provide the information to the Tribes. (MnDOT State Aid provides a list of programs/ funding available to locals on their traffic safety page.)

- Coordinate among BIA, Tribes, FHWA, counties, DOTs, IHS, etc., to structure approaches.

■ Enforcement/Emergency Response

Current Practice

- NW Toward Zero Deaths.

- Expanded the MnDOT Bemidji District program.

- Car Seat Giveaway.

- White Earth: Safe and Sober grant and Safe Communities projects.

- Red Lake Tribal Council: contractual agreement with Beltrami County for enforcement authority for nonmembers on reservations, e.g., cross-deputization.

Gaps and Obstacles

- Car seat education.

- Motorcycle helmet emphasis.

- Identify motorcycle crash statistics for Tribal communities.

- Encourage safety belts on short trips.

- Target populated areas versus rural areas.

- Tribal penalties differ from state penalties (often lower).

- Coordinating funding sources and manpower into one safety plan is challenging.
- State funding versus funding for Tribes.
- Lack of Tribal crash data.

Next Steps

- Focus on motorcycle safety, obtain data, and pass a helmet law.
- Use data to target campaigns, e.g., belt use on long versus short trips.
- Identify jurisdictions where Tribal police can enforce belt laws. Collaborate with the counties on enforcement issues (Red Lake).
- Align Tribal and state traffic penalties.
- Code state crash data code by Reservation.