Michigan Tech TTAP attended the June National Congress of American Indians conference in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, to offer information on our center’s activities and to learn about new opportunities and issues in Tribal transportation. In addition to our own presentation, the BIA, Federal Transit Administration, and counsel from Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Enderson & Perry, LLP presented.

At this workshop, The BIA informed attendees that the Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) Program Coordinating Committee suggested changes to conform the IRR Program with the new federal transportation legislation, and these changes had been accepted by the Director. (See the IRRPCC Web page at <http://www ttap.mtu.edu/irrpcc> for details.) Among the changes brought by SAFETEA-LU and announced by the BIA, tribes may now contract directly with the Federal Highway Administration. According to counsel from Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Enderson & Perry, LLP, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has done this by contracting directly with the Department of Transportation, and other tribes considering this should understand that these contracts may be based on federal contracting rules and not on PL93-638 rules.

Following the BIA updates, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) representative Lorna Wilson informed tribes about funding opportunities for tribal and rural transit. Ms. Wilson has been attending tribal meetings for many months to introduce tribes to FTA programs and to establish fair methods of funding distribution for all interested governments. At the NCAI Transportation Workshop, she told attendees that all important FTA programs and opportunities would be published in

**Safety Corner: Indian Highway Safety Program**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs makes funds available to federally-recognized Indian tribes for implementing traffic safety projects under the Indian Highway Safety Program. These funds are awarded annually on a competitive basis for project proposals submitted by May 1 of each year. The projects should focus on reducing the number of traffic crashes, death, injuries and property damage within Indian country.

Review the grant opportunities and requirements in the Federal Register: April 24, 2006 (Volume 71, Number 78), Page 21036-21038 <http://frwebgate3.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=0634139848+0+00&WAISaction=retrieve>
Editor’s Corner

Meetings, meetings, meetings... This issue has several reports on meetings that TTAP staff attended over the summer. We spend a lot of time at meetings because it’s part of our job to keep up-to-date with what’s going on in tribal transportation. You’ll see a report on our attendance at the NCAI conference in Sault Ste. Marie on page 1, where I found out about more than just the state of the IRR program: Venezuela is giving tribes fuel oil at a 30% discount. You read that right, four tribes in Maine benefitted from Venezuela’s discounted fuel oil program last winter, and other tribes may be eligible. Check the sidebar on page 7 to find out more.

Bernie and Cheryl also attended the Region 2 TTAP meeting, which brings all of the TTAPs together to plan and coordinate our activities. A wrap-up of that meeting is on page 6. Planning the upcoming National Tribal Transportation Conference was among the items discussed at the Region 2 meeting, and you can read about where and when the NTTC takes place on page 5.

One of our readers contributed an interesting picture on page 7, and our next issue will also have a picture or two from our readers. You too can get your pictures and stories published by just e-mailing us items to be considered for future issues. --John

PS: Training requests for 2007 are due December 8, 2006 (submit distance education training requests at any time)

The deadline for contributing suggestions, corrections, or information for publication in the next Pathways, Volume 12, No. 4, is October 30, 2006. Any contributions made after that date will appear in Volume 12, No. 4. You may contribute information for publication on www.ttap.mtu.edu at any time.
NEW in the TTAP Library

These documents are available for FREE in print or on-line.

**Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access, Parts 1 and 2**

“Unfortunately, many sidewalks and trails do not adequately meet the needs of people with disabilities, who make up nearly one-fifth of the American population (U.S. Census Bureau, 1994)...Although the current ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) do not specifically address sidewalk and trail design, the guidelines do contain provisions that are applicable to sidewalks and trails...In an effort to determine when ADAAG provisions apply to sidewalks and trails, and to bridge the remaining gaps, the Federal Highway Administration sponsored a project to research existing conditions on sidewalks and trails for people with disabilities. As part of Phase I of this project, an extensive literature review was conducted, and existing guidelines and recommendations for developing sidewalks and trails were compiled and analyzed...[The Part 2] guidebook is the second part of a two-phase project focused on designing sidewalks and trails for access. It was created to provide planners, designers, and transportation engineers with a better understanding of how sidewalks and trails should be developed to promote pedestrian access for all users, including people with disabilities...Many of the recommendations provided in this guidebook are based on research gathered during Phase I.”


**Document links:**

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalks/index.htm (Phase 1, PDF/HTML versions)
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/index.htm (Phase 2, PDF/HTML versions)

**Water/Road Interaction Field Guide**

“Many drainage problems on low volume roads begin with surface water concentration and flow. Other problems involve road/stream crossings.

The purpose of this Guide is to:

- Provide an illustrated field-going guide of observable water/road interaction problems damaging to road, watershed condition, water quality, aquatic life, or public safety;
- Increase awareness of how road location, design, maintenance, and management affect interactions with rainfall, runoff, and ground water;
- Facilitate communication on water/road interaction problems among professionals and technicians in a variety of physical and biological science disciplines and fields of engineering;
- Improve recognition of basic road drainage problems, and the ability to identify and verify likely causes;
- Increase awareness of possible alternative treatments to mitigate existing problems;
- Develop knowledge and experience required to conceptualize road segment characteristics that provide desired safe access with minimal affect to watershed, water resources, and aquatic life;
- Help inform line officer decisions.”


**Document links:**

Advocacy Council for Tribal Transportation (ACTT) Group Formed in Minnesota

On July 18, 2006 the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) formally approved the formation of the Advocacy Council for Tribal Transportation (ACTT). The proposal was presented by Linda Aitken, Tribal Liaison for Minnesota Department of Transportation and Teresa Peterson, Vice-Chairman of the Upper Sioux Community. Additional comments in the support of the group were also made by Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Melanie Benjamin; Mike Moilanen, Planner for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and Annamarie Hill-Kleinhans, Executive Director of MIAC.

The group was first discussed in an October 2005 letter from Melanie Benjamin to the other Minnesota Tribal Leaders; her response to an invitation to the 2005 Annual Minnesota Tribes and Transportation Conference. She recommended the creation of a “joint tribal transportation planning group” comprised of a representative from each of the 11 Minnesota Tribes, MnDOT, BIA and FHWA. The purpose of the group is to discuss roadway policy and devise a cohesive plan for roadways on or near Indian Reservations in Minnesota.

Ms. Benjamin’s initial suggestion to form the group was endorsed by MIAC, MnDOT and FHWA, with the recommendation by MIAC that a proposal be brought back to them outlining the purpose, goals and objectives of this group for their review and approval. Two group meetings were held in Mille Lacs to accomplish this – April 28, 2006 and June 21, 2006. Those meetings fleshed out the framework of the ACTT addressing the following – group name, reporting, mission statement, goals & objectives, group membership & leadership, meeting schedule, potential issues for the group to address and liaison opportunities.

The ACTT group will meet quarterly, with the meeting rotating between Tribal locations. Two tribal co-chairs will now be elected from within the group. Group membership will consist of the following: 11 tribal representatives, 3 MnDOT representatives, 2 FHWA representatives, 1 representative each from BIA, MIAC, & TTAP, 1 township representative, 1 city engineering representative and 1 county engineering representative.

Additional information about this group will likely be discussed at the upcoming 2006 Minnesota Tribes and Transportation Conference being held on October 17-18, 2006 at the Northern Lights Casino & Event Center on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation. For more information about the ACTT or the Conference, please contact Linda Aitken, Tribal Liaison for Minnesota Department of Transportation, at Linda.Aitken@dot.state.mn.us or 218-547-0060.
Get Ready for the 9th National Tribal Transportation Conference!

The 9th Annual NTTC—Improving Transportation Systems—is the nation’s largest tribal transportation conference. Participants from tribes, Federal, State, and private industry, including elected officials, transportation planners, engineers, consultants, lawyers, supervisors, managers, operators, technicians, trainers, industry experts, and others will gather for information and technology exchange. Officials will be on hand to present and answer questions regarding national initiatives that impact tribal transportation needs. 66 percent of last year’s participants were from tribes, pueblos, villages, and BIA offices. This is the best opportunity you will have to meet with officials, ask questions, and find new opportunities.

The 9th Annual NTTC has moved this year to the Morongo Casino Resort and Spa in Cabazon, California (20 minutes west of Palm Springs). Morongo is a tribally-owned and run hotel close to Palm Springs International Airport, with rodeo grounds on-site, many meal options within the hotel, a fantastic climate, and plenty of on-site entertainment and off-site activities.

Highlights throughout the three-day conference include:

- “Best practice” sessions to share state-of-the-art techniques and applications in engineering, planning, and roadway design, all with safety in mind.
- A new Contract Administration track focusing on “Flexible Financing” and “IRR Contract Administration.”
- A new Transit track, including “Transit 101”—an introduction to this emerging area on tribal lands, “Putting together a Transit Plan” and “How to develop a Business Plan.”
- Demonstrate your skills at the Heavy Equipment Rodeo or come as a spectator to cheer the drivers on, and afterwards, attend the “Operator’s Ball!”
- Tour of ESRI Inc. headquarters
- A large vendor/exhibitor area in addition to accommodations within walking distance of the conference area to view equipment.
- An afternoon of round table discussions and hot topics
- And much, MUCH more!

**Hotel Information**
Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon, California 92230
888-667-6646/ $99 plus Tax plus Resort Fee
Guaranteed until October 23, 2006

To register for the conference as an attendee or vendor, go to the Colorado TTAP Web site <http://ttap.colostate.edu/workshops.cfm>. The complete informational flyer is online at the Michigan Tech TTAP Web site <http://www.ttap.mtu.edu>.
Annual Region 2 TTAP Meeting Held
All the TTAPs meet to discuss transportation programs and conferences for tribes

Photos and article by Cheryl Cloud

The Region 2 TTAP meeting was held at the Morongo Casino & Resort in Cabazon, CA on June 12-13, 2006, followed by a planning meeting for the NTTC on June 13-14, 2006. The Morongo is the site/location of the 2006 National Tribal Transportation Conference (NTTC), to be held in November 2006.

TTAP, BIA, and FHWA representatives discussed the following:

• National Local [and Tribal] Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTAPA) Update - Bernie Alkire (Michigan Tech TTAP) distributed a handout explaining the new governing structure being considered by NLTAPA, and participants discussed what implications there might be for TTAPs.

• Professional Development Workgroup Report - Richard Rolland (Northwest & Alaska TTAP) handed out a preliminary report and recommendations on LTAP/TTAP Professional Development interests and needs. The workgroup did a recent survey of program directors. Recommendations focused on getting Center staff more actively involved/engaged in professional development, & the best ways to accomplish that.

• Partnering with FHWA & BIA - Cheryl Cloud (Michigan Tech TTAP) asked TTAPs how they handle this. Issues were discussed and potential solutions to better working environments at both policy and field levels.

• 638 Training - Ed Mouss (BIA Office of Self Determination) spoke about potential opportunities for the BIA & TTAP to work together in this area.

• RIFDS Training - Status report by Ed Hall, III (BIA) of status quo with this.

• TTAP Core Curriculum - The group discussed what direction to go with this, and what to do with the “Tribal Roads Scholar Program” from here.

• Funding & FHWA Issues - Gib Peaslee (FHWA) discussed the required PAR reporting & categorization in relation to annual work plans. He also requested TTAPs to use the NLTAPA logo in all printed newsletters & the like, to unify us as an organization. There was discussion about the BIA money shortfall from last year and how Gib has been working on that and getting the 2006 money out.

• Federal Lands Highway Report - Report by Monica Guordine (FHWA)
BIA Transportation Report - Ed Hall, III talked about Scenic Byways, Economic Development & Tourism

APWA Clearinghouse - Gib Peaslee led a discussion about contract changes with regard to services that will be offered through this contract, and the consistency of those services whether the contract stays with APWA or not.

Breeze Teleconferencing - Bernie Alkire led an informational “show-and-tell” for the group and discussed how this technology works.

Scenic Byways, Economic Development & Indian Tourism - Ed Hall, III passed out some handouts for discussion: 1) Remarks By the Honorable Gale Norton, Secretary of Interior at the 20th Annual National Reservation Economic Summit (RES 2006); 2) The Power of Travel 2006, published by the Travel Industry Association of America. He also talked about several upcoming conferences relating to these topics.

Besides the TTAP staff in attendance, also in attendance were Gib Peaslee and Clark Martin with FHWA Office of Professional Development, Monica Gourdine of Federal Highway/Federal Lands, Ed Hall of BIA Division of Transportation, Ed Mouss of BIA Office of Self Determination.

Representatives from the Morongo Casino/Resort and local tribal officials joined the group for the NN&TC planning meeting.

For more information on the Region 2 meeting, contact Cheryl Cloud, Michigan Tech TTAP Manager.

NCAI Workshop, continued from page 1

Federal Register Notices and sent to Michigan Tech TTAP for posting on <http://www.ttap.mtu.edu>. FTA program funds are awarded on a competitive basis, so tribes are encouraged to apply as soon as they have developed a proposal. Tribes can compete for state-designated transit funds, which might be in addition to funds designated for tribal transportation under other federal programs. FTA funds may be used for startup and existing transit programs, as well as special programs for job access, the elderly, and disabled citizens. Initial funds are limited, but increase for each year of SAFETEA-LU, so early action by tribes will help ensure continuing and growing funding of their transit programs. FTA staff is available in the ten regional offices to help guide agencies through the application process. For more information on the FTA and its programs, go to the FTA Web site at <http://www.fta.dot.gov/>.

What else we find out at our meetings

Gas cost about $3 per gallon for the drive to the NCAI conference this summer. Maybe that’s why I decided to slip into the natural resources committee meeting to see what tribes were doing about rising energy costs. I didn’t have time for the whole meeting, but I was there long enough to find out about an opportunity for cheap fuel.

The Venezuelan government has a program to support low-income and under-represented communities with subsidized fuel oil. Four tribes in Maine and many low-income families in the northeast have benefited from this program, and you might be able to as well. Under the program, your community might receive fuel oil discounted 30% off retail, and the Venezuelan government has also offered an additional 30% of the retail price as grants to community organizations.

Because this is a philanthropic program for communities, the eligibility and benefits are established by the donor on a community basis. This means that a tribal community action group or government should contact CITGO directly for information on the program.

The program is explained on CITGO’s Web site at <http://www.citgo.com/CommunityInvolvement/HeatingOil.jsp>.

The contact numbers listed on CITGO’s Web site are for specific regions, but it does not mean that only tribes from these regions are eligible.

--John

Roadside Hazard!

This snake was found recently near Shubuta, MS across the highway from Dale Hill’s house and he was close to nine feet in length. He was caught behind McCoy’s service center near Shubuta. This is just a reminder that these creatures are actually out there no matter what you believe, sometimes they should get not only prescriptive rights to be there but the full right of way!

Contributed by W. Carroll Murphy, P.E., Director, Office of Engineering, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and Rufus Tubby. Do you have a photo or story to contribute? Send it to ttap@mtu.edu and we may publish it online or in the pages of the Pathways newsletter.
Upcoming Events

2006 Toward Zero Deaths Conference
November 2-3, 2006
Duluth, MN
www.tzd.state.mn.us
Shirley Mueffelman, 612-624-4754
conferences2@cce.umn.edu

9th Annual
National Tribal Transportation Conference
November 13-16, 2006
Morongo Casino Resort and Spa in Cabazon, California

2006 National GIS Day
November 15, 2006
www.gisday.com

Training requests for 2007 are due December 8, 2006