



Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Strategic Transportation Safety Plan (STSP)

November 2016

Kootenai Tribe of Idaho -- Strategic Transportation Safety Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho is deeply concerned for the safety of Tribal members and the general public using the Tribal Transportation System. The concern has led the Tribe to develop this Strategic Transportation Safety Plan as a means of addressing certain emphasis areas where safety can be improved by employing various strategies. We join with our local and state partners in striving for Zero Deaths on our highways and preventing or reducing the serious effects of vehicle crashes.

The Tribal Council is committed to improving transportation safety in order to reduce the risk of death and serious injury that could result from incidents on our transportation system. This plan tells the story of transportation safety needs and strategies for our community. Implementation of the plan will improve transportation safety for the tribe, its people, and its visitors. As part of an ongoing effort to make safety improvements, this Strategic Transportation Safety Plan was developed with input from Tribal, local and regional safety partners. In the past 5 years, safety on the Tribal transportation system has remained fairly consistent but there is room for improvement and potential issues that need to be addressed. The Tribe is targeting reduction in wildlife/vehicle collisions and reducing potential safety problems on certain roads over the next 5 years.

VISION

In 2016, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho developed a transportation system vision with goals and objectives in the update of the Tribe's Long Range Transportation Plan. The vision states:

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho envisions a transportation system that provides mobility and safety for all users that is fiscally sustainable and has the least impact on Tribal cultural and environmental values. The transportation system will provide safe, convenient and maintainable access to Tribal housing, Tribal fish hatcheries, mitigation project areas, economic enterprises and cultural sites.

The goal for achieving this Vision, specific to transportation safety, is— *preventing serious injuries and saving lives on the Tribal transportation system*. The stated objective under this goal is to *develop a Tribal Strategic Transportation Safety Plan which employs, as appropriate, engineering, enforcement, education and emergency services in order to guide investment decisions to achieve the goal*.

Safety of all users, whether Tribal members or the general public, of roads listed on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory is of paramount importance to the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. This Strategic Transportation Safety Plan lists various emphasis areas that need to be attended to and strategies within those areas that could be employed in order to enhance the safety of all users of the Tribal transportation system.

The State of Idaho's Strategic Highway Safety Plan uses the byline – **Toward Zero Deaths, Every Life Counts**. The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho agrees with the state's safety emphasis and wants to see that no one dies or is seriously injured on our transportation facilities.

SAFETY PARTNERS

Improving the safety of the traveling public on our transportation facilities is a joint effort by tribal, county, city, state and federal entities. Coordination among the entities takes various forms from contracts with city and county law enforcement to regional transportation forums. Whereas much of the transportation system listed on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory is on county, state and city roads, the Tribe interfaces with the corresponding transportation agencies responsible for maintenance and safety issues on those roads. The Boundary Area Transportation Team (BATT) is one forum which gathers together all transportation agencies operating within Boundary County for purposes of planning and information flow among the agencies, including the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. The Tribe is a member of the BATT.

PROCESS

This Plan was developed through workshop sessions with the Tribal Council's Transportation Committee, the Tribal Police Department, Tribal Administration and discussions with the Boundary Area Transportation Team.

EXISTING EFFORTS

Roadway safety is achieved by the ongoing efforts of roadway maintenance, roadway design and construction, driver education, education of school children on walking, biking and school bus safety, road safety audits and law enforcement. As roadway safety has always been a concern of the Tribe, development of this specific Strategic Transportation Safety Plan is a means of documenting the Tribe's transparent commitment to roadway safety and protection of Tribal members.

DATA SUMMARY

Vehicle crash data is the best source to look at issues of safety on the road system. Crashers are reported by law enforcement agencies to the state and are catalogued by the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). The Kootenai Tribal Police Department does not yet report vehicle crashes to the ITD database system. The ITD database is housed in a Geographic Information System (GIS) which enables spatial analysis, mapping and quick recovery and viewing of crash data as well as other roadway feature housed in various layers of the GIS, all of which can be the backbone of asset management. The Tribe's GIS needs to contain a layer addressing roadway crashes in order to be compatible with local and regional law enforcement agencies.

The Tribal Police Department stated recently that there are very few, if any, vehicle crashes on the roads maintained by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. The Department feels that the roads are operating safely due to low volumes, low speeds in the residential areas, direct and frequent influence by families and friends on the driving habits Tribal members and the presence of law enforcement.

The Police Department along with Fisheries, Wildlife and other Tribal departments consider Twin Rivers Road hazardous even though there is no record of vehicle crashes since the property and road came into Tribal ownership and maintenance responsibility. As indicated in the 2016 Road Safety Audit of Twin Rivers Road, there are alignment, grade and construction issues all along the road that could result in personal injury and property damage to Tribal members

and the general public if not addressed. The Audit Report includes a number of remedial actions that could be taken. (See the Twin Rivers Road Safety Audit on file at the Tribal office or as appended to the Long Range Transportation Plan)

County roads and city streets included in the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory show low numbers of vehicle crashes most of which deal with running off the road and overturning. No particularly strong patterns of crashes over the 2011 through 2015 period were evident. The crash records also show no pedestrian or bicycle incidents on the inventory roads. The inventory roads, along key corridors, should be considered for sidewalks, roadway shoulders or separated pathways in order to reduce the risk of pedestrian and/or bicycle related crashes.

State Highways listed on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory (State Highway 1, US Highway 2 and US Highway 95) have high volumes of traffic, high posted speed limits and high numbers of vehicle crashes as shown in the table below.

Vehicle Crashes 2011 through 2015

Route	Mileposts	Locations	Volume	Crashes	Fatal	Injury	PDO*	WVC**	% of Total
SH-1	0 – 11.175	US-95 - Canada	1100-710	27	0	5	22	15	56
US-2	64.35 – 80.184	US-95 – Montana	5500-1200	99	5	25	69	45	45
US-95	493.29 – 505.2	McArthur Lk. Rd. – Bonners Ferry city limit	7000-8000	134	2	45	87	53	39
US-95	505.2 – 508.379	Bonners Ferry south to north city limits	8000-12500	80	0	35	45	3	4
US-95	508.379 – 522	Bonners Ferry north city limit to SH-1	8400-2100	98	1	26	71	47	48

*Property Damage Only **Wildlife/Vehicle Collisions

The recorded crashes indicate various types including, but not limited to, rear-end, overturn, run off the road, sideswipe, angle turning and striking wild animals. Wildlife/vehicle collisions were by far the highest percentage type of crash on all the rural sections of the state highways as shown in the table above. Two of the wildlife/vehicle collisions on US-95 resulted in human fatalities and one of the five fatal crashes on US-2 resulted from a wildlife/vehicle (motorcycle) collision. By observation and comments by the ITD maintenance crews, most wildlife/vehicle collisions result in wildlife mortality. The wildlife/vehicle collisions on the rural sections of US-95 occurred in nearly every mile stretch of the highway but with very few areas of concentrated crashes. On US-2, there are definite spatial patterns of wildlife/vehicle collisions from one mile east of Three Mile Junction to North Division (Moyie Springs) and from Two Rivers Road to Ridgewood Road.

Other crash types with lower overall percentages but that show trends were overturning, angle turning and rear ending. Impaired driving, speed too fast for conditions, inattentive driving and impaired driving were the highest contributing factors in the crashes on all sections of the state highways. Of the five fatal crashes on US-2, four involved alcohol impairment and all occurred on the nine miles of highway east of the Moyie River Bridge.

The state highway sections on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory are of great importance to the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho because they provide access to Tribal properties and are therefore the travel routes for Tribal members as well as the general public. It may prove beneficial for safety's sake to look at the crash areas and crashes to determine with the state and county if there are safety improvements that could be made to lower the incidence of these crashes.

SAFETY EMPHASIS AREAS

Description of Emphasis Area 1: Data Management – Geographic Information System

- Keeping track spatially of vehicle crashes, road conditions and improvement strategies is paramount to attending to safety issues on the road system.
- Data management is beneficial to the Tribal Police Department as well as the Tribal Council for purposes of understanding and dealing with safety issues.
- Safety data can be managed within the Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory and displayed and analyzed through a Geographic Information System.

Goal for Emphasis Area 1 – Geographic Information System:

- Establish a Geographic Information System to be used in support of the Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory.

Strategy for Emphasis Area 1 – Geographic Information System:

- Hire a consultant experienced in GIS to field collect all fields included in the Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory and develop a GIS in conjunction with the Tribe's GIS work. The consultant should coordinate with the Idaho Transportation Department's Office of Highway Safety to establish the criteria for developing a vehicle crash layer in the GIS.

Description of Emphasis Area 2: Data Management – Vehicle Crash Reporting

- Vehicle Crash Reports are result of critical data collection and documentation at the scene of vehicle crashes.
- The State of Idaho maintains a data base of crashes and a processing system for law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

Goal for Emphasis Area 2 – Vehicle Crash Reporting:

- Share traffic incident reports generated by the Tribal Police Department with the State of Idaho.
- Standardize the vehicle crash reporting process.
- Utilize the state of Idaho's crash reporting software.
- Initiate a crash data layer in the Tribe's GIS.

Strategies for Emphasis Area 2 – Vehicle Crash Reporting:

- Use the state of Idaho's Mobile Program for Accident Collection (eIMPACT) software, training and to store the crash information locally (auto-entered into the Tribe's GIS) and transmit the data to the Idaho Transportation Department's Office of Highway Safety (OHS) electronically. This would allow easy access to the data for the Tribe, eliminates the need for the Tribal Police to keep paper copies on hand, eliminates the need to print off a copy of the report and mail it to the OHS, and eliminates the need to re-key the data into the state database.
- Coordinate with the Boundary County Sheriff, the City of Bonners Ferry Police Department, the Idaho State Police and the US Forest Service Law Enforcement on vehicle crashes and roadway incidents on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory roads.

Description of Emphasis Area 3: Wildlife/Vehicle Collisions

- Wildlife/vehicle collisions result in personal, property and wildlife injury, mortality or damage.
- Methods and techniques have been developed to reduce the number of wildlife/vehicle collisions.

Goal for Emphasis Area 3 – Wildlife/Vehicle Collisions:

- Reduce the number of wildlife/vehicle collisions on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory roads.
- Utilize best management practices for warning drivers of wildlife presence along and on roadways.

Strategies for Emphasis Area 3 – Wildlife/Vehicle Collisions

- Work with ITD on using the Wildlife Detection System developed by Sloan Securities at locations along SH-1, US-2 and US-95 where wildlife/vehicle collisions are occurring.
- Look into the use of quick setup warning signs at locations with wildlife/vehicle collisions on roads listed on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory.
- Develop and provide educational material for Tribal members on the issue of wildlife/vehicle collisions.
- Continue to include the wildlife/collision issue on the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative (KVRI) agenda and its Wildlife Accident Collision committee (Tribe is a member of KVRI).

Description of Emphasis Area 4: Safe Roads

- Safe roads are achieved by good roadway design, maintenance, sign posting, illumination, law enforcement, driver education and roadway safety education of children.

Goal for Emphasis Area 4 – Safe Roads

- Keep road maintenance adequately funded.
- Make improvements in areas of potential safety issues.
- Educated drivers, especially new drivers, about safe driving.
- Educate school children on walking, biking and school bus safety.
- Maintain appropriate regulatory and safety signing on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory roads.
- Provide illumination where needed on the Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory roads.
- Provide sidewalks where needed

Strategies for Emphasis Area 4 – Safe Roads:

- Identify road safety deficiencies and appropriate mitigation measures on the Tribally maintained roads listed on the Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory and add improvement projects to the TTIP as appropriate.
- Conduct Road Safety Audits where problems exist or have potential.

- Work with state, county or city transportation departments to identify and eliminate safety deficiencies, including installing pedestrian and bicycle facilities where warranted, on roads listed on the Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory that are not maintained by the Tribe.
- Conduct illumination needs analysis at key locations and provide appropriate luminaires.
- Identify and eliminate safety deficiencies, including installing pedestrian and bicycle facilities where warranted on roads listed on the Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory that are maintained by the Tribe.
- Develop or secure and implement a driver education program.
- Develop or secure and implement a student transportation safety program.
- Develop and conduct annual Tribal road safety fairs.

EVALUATION & IMPLEMENTATION

- The listed goals should be reviewed annually to check validity and accomplishment and adjusted accordingly.
- The Strategic Transportation Safety Plan should be reviewed and either confirmed or updated every five years.
- The Tribal Council's Transportation Subcommittee shall be responsible for overseeing the Strategic Transportation Safety Plan, directing implementation of any of the listed strategies and conducting reviews and updates of the Plan.
- Continued participation on the Boundary Area Transportation Team will ensure coordination with local and regional transportation agencies in order to fully implement this Plan.
- Feedback on transportation safety from Tribal members will help keep the Plan active and responsive.