

# The Connector



November 2015

## Message from WisDOT Secretary Mark Gottlieb

It was my pleasure to attend the annual Wisconsin Tribal Transportation Conference held November 3 and 4 in Green Bay. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) continues to partner with Wisconsin's 11 federally-recognized tribal governments on initiatives to increase public safety and economic opportunities, along with preserving historic, cultural and environmental resources. This edition of the WisDOT Connector highlights the many ongoing transportation-related efforts important to Wisconsin tribes, WisDOT and federal government officials.



Over 200 people attended the recent Tribal Transportation Conference in Green Bay including tribal representatives, federal and state government officials.

## Strengthening partnerships with Wisconsin's tribal community

[Wisconsin Executive Order 39](#), issued in 2004, affirms the government-to-government relationship between Wisconsin's tribes and the state of Wisconsin.

In what's become a national model, the resulting [Partnership Agreement](#) defines the process in which WisDOT and the Wisconsin Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) work cooperatively with Wisconsin's tribal governments on policies, programs and issues impacting tribal communities. WisDOT and tribal governments have established several key groups and initiatives that build upon the Partnership Agreement:

- The [Inter-Tribal Task Force](#) meets quarterly and serves as the main policy advisory group regarding any transportation related matters with the potential to impact tribal communities. Task force members include [WisDOT statewide and regional tribal liaisons](#), other agency employees, FHWA

and representatives appointed by each tribal government. The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa facilitates the Inter-Tribal Task Force through a Memorandum of Agreement funded by WisDOT.

- The [Tribal Historic Preservation Project](#) is led by the Lac du Flambeau Lake Superior Band of Chippewa with membership consisting of tribal historic preservation officers, federal agencies and WisDOT staff. Collectively, the group addresses the care and treatment of historic properties, burial and other sacred sites.
- The [Tribal Transportation Safety Project](#) collects and analyzes traffic crash data, then gathers key stakeholders to develop strategies that enhance transportation safety on tribal lands. Traffic fatality rates among Native Americans in Wisconsin are about twice that for the remainder of the state, and motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Native Americans between ages 1 to 44.
- A [Business and Labor Development initiative](#) ensures that tribal members receive all the employment, training and economic opportunities for Indian-owned businesses afforded by law. A Tribal Labor Advisory Committee, established in 2011, develops specific strategies to enhance Native American labor opportunities on state and federal projects.

## Recent accomplishments

- The Tribal Transportation Safety Project has conducted road safety plans and audits for a majority of Wisconsin tribes. In cooperation with the Lac Courte Oreilles College and Inter-Tribal Task force, culturally-tailored safety education materials focused on seat belt use and the dangers of texting and impaired driving are now available. In partnership with the Stockbridge Munsee tribe, WisDOT hosted the 2015 Tribal Transportation Safety Summit last March in Bowler, Wisconsin.
- The Tribal Labor Advisory Committee is overseeing an effort to implement a statewide labor initiative to involve more Native American businesses and workers in transportation projects. Work continues with the state Department of Workforce Development on the inclusion of tribally-tailored functions within the new statewide public labor exchange database.
- As part of the Statewide Native American Labor Initiative, WisDOT is overseeing TrANS programs in northern Wisconsin. Transportation Alliance for New Solutions helps prepare people for entry-level positions in the construction industry. The first TrANS will be held in Washburn, serving Bad River and Red Cliff communities. A second TrANS session is planned in Lac Courte Oreilles next year.
- In cooperation with the Lac Courte Oreilles Band, federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, and FHWA, WisDOT entered into agreements that facilitate the transfer of improvement funds to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, allowing the tribe to oversee and manage the completion of two improvement projects offering both Safe Routes to School, and bike and pedestrian improvements within the community.

The Executive Order established over a decade ago between Wisconsin's 11 tribal governments, WisDOT and FHWA set the foundation for a partnership that continues to grow and strengthen. Today, this initiative includes an ever-expanding group of critical partners including Wisconsin businesses, labor force development programs, public and private organizations, local governments and citizens.

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## Saluting Wisconsin snowplow drivers



Governor Scott Walker proclaimed November 30, 2015 as Snowplow Driver Appreciation Day in Wisconsin. The [proclamation](#) highlights the important role snowplow operators play in keeping people and commerce moving throughout Wisconsin's winter season. "Wisconsin's 3,000 county and municipal snowplow operators often work long hours in challenging conditions so the rest of us can safely reach our destinations," WisDOT Secretary Mark Gottlieb said. "As drivers, we can do our part by slowing down, giving snowplows plenty of room to work, and by staying off roads when severe winter weather makes travel treacherous."

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## Who's who at WisDOT

The Office of Public Affairs provides information about WisDOT policies and programs through news releases, publications and audio-visual programs; coordinates public education campaigns; and distributes internal communication materials. Patty Mayers was appointed OPA Director in October 2015 and has worked in OPA since December 2000. Prior to joining OPA, she worked in advertising, public relations and publishing. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism from UW-Madison. You can reach Patty at (608) 266-5599 or at [patricia.mayers@dot.wi.gov](mailto:patricia.mayers@dot.wi.gov).



The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's MAPSS Performance Improvement Program reviews performance measures for five key goal areas that guide us in achieving our mission - mobility, accountability, preservation, safety and service. To check out the latest online reports, simply click on the MAPSS logo.

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