

Bureau of Indian Affairs Indian County Highway Safety Meeting
Wednesday, September 6, 2017
Summit Lake Paiute Tribe Administrative Office, Sparks, Nevada

Attending: Lawrence Robertson, BIA Indian Highway Safety Program Director; Kenneth Copeland, National Highway Safety Administration, Funding Agent for the BIA Highway Safety Program; Eugene Mace, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe Council Secretary/Treasurer; Steve Knispel, BIA Western Nevada Agency; Jerry Barr, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe Council Member; Tildon Smart, Chairman of Fort McDermitt

Mr. Copeland asked what the dynamic is and what the Tribes are looking for with the program. The Highway Safety Administration usually works with Tribes with defined reservations and many roads. This is a different dynamic. The program would generally pay that mileage, but this situation is unique.

- Mr. Robertson explained the steps of the development of the BIA Indian Highway Safety Program for Western Nevada Agency.
- Reaching out to the Tribal Chairs in the Western Nevada Agency especially the direct service Tribes of Summit Lake, Winnemucca and Fort McDermitt
- Looking at the feasibility of a program with a study
- Determining if there is interest in a program
- Talking to the Tribes about it

The geographical distances between Tribes are large. There is not a lot of data since the BIA has been providing law enforcement services. Usually there are three officers handling all of the area. Highway safety programs have been missing. These types of programs educate and provide crash data. This has not been the case in Indian country in western Nevada. They are coming to the Tribes so the program can be explained to the members.

Mr. Copeland stated that police traffic service is traffic enforcement. Officers would be funded to do nothing but traffic. If the officer is called to handle a different type of enforcement, like a fight, funding would need to be found elsewhere because the highway safety program does not cover it.

Mr. Barr questioned the need for law enforcement only for traffic and not for all types of enforcement.

It was explained that enforcing traffic can stop the more serious crimes before they are committed. For example, stopping the drunk driver could prevent a murder before it happens. It has been seen that general crime rates drop when there is a strong traffic program.

They need to pull all the traffic data from the various highway enforcement agencies.

Summit Lake is accessible by dirt roads and is almost impossible to get there in winter so there are no full time residents and very little traffic except during Burning Man and hunting season. McDermitt has a heavy traffic all the time. Winnemucca is working on reforming but has a highway.

The Tribes need to be informed that there is a program out there and then need to crunch the data. The program is data driven.

There are possibilities to do dual grants or find funds from different sources. The tribes will need to fund at least one officer for their reservation.

There was a discussion of sharing enforcement personnel but it would not be very feasible under the circumstances. It could be done but would cost the tribes and be difficult to justify with the distances between reservations.

Summit Lake does not have the data to show there is a problem and justify the program. It would be extremely hard to get the funding. There is a defined reservation but not a defined population.

McDermitt has a much better chance to get the program funding.

If it works in McDermitt that might help free up a BIA officer to assist Summit Lake during the few weeks it is needed. It would also help to gather data.

When it comes to the Tribal officer, they can do all kinds of law enforcement, but the Program only pays the traffic safety enforcement and the Tribe has to pay for other types of crime.

Mr. Barr is concerned that other crimes would be ignored because the Tribe could not pay for it.

Mr. Smart asked if the funds derived from tickets goes to the agency or the Tribe. It goes to the tribe.

They explained the monetary responsibilities so that the Tribes are aware of monetary repercussions in the future.

Mr. Smart would like to start the process to apply for the program. Mr. Copeland said he would do what they could to help as long as it complies with the funding source.

Mr. Barr thanked the gentlemen for coming.

CERTIFICATION

I, **Eugene Mace, Sr.**, Secretary/Treasurer of the Summit Lake Paiute Tribal Council, hereby certify that the Minutes of the September 6, 2017, BIA Indian Highway Safety Meeting were approved by the Council during a duly held meeting October 21, 2017 at which there was a quorum present, and the Council voted:

2 - FOR 0- AGAINST 1-ABSTAINING, Chairwoman Page Linton did not vote because there was not a tie vote.

10/24/2017
Date

Eugene Mace
Eugene Mace, Sr.
Secretary/Treasurer
Summit Lake Tribal Council