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# State Aid E-Scene

## MnDOT OCR introduces the tribal tools you've been waiting for

By: Isela Gomez and Joseph Castillo, Office of Civil Rights

Ever wonder if you need to be including tribal employment requirements in your federal aid contract?

How to determine if tribal special provisions should be included in contract?

How to calculate percentage of project on tribal land?

If you answered yes to any of the following, help is here. You can now access the following:

- [Tribal District Map Application](#)
- [OCR Tribal Employment webpage](#)

The Tribal District Map Application is a project planning tool designed to enhance communication between Tribal Nations, contractors, local government agencies, and MnDOT.

Specifically, it shows upcoming or potential MnDOT and State Aid bridge and road construction projects for the next 10 years (multi-county projects are not included on the map).

The datasets used contain additional information that shows proximity of these projects to Indian Country and Tribal Nations.

### **Tribal map overview**

#### ***What does it do?***

- Supports coordinated planning of highway heavy construction
- Determines a project's proximity to Indian Country
- Identifies the percent of a project on Indian Country,
- Provides contact information for tribal employment representatives

#### ***How about the benefits?***

- Planning: meaningful opportunity for tribal participation in project planning
- Communication: improve dialogue with our tribal partners
- Transparency: ensure project accountability from planning through development

### **Tribal Employment webpage**

Some of the featured areas, include:

#### ***Tribal Employment Overview:***

Background information on tribal employment as it relates to highway construction in Minnesota.

#### ***Tribal Projects:***

Advertisement Duties: A breakdown of the pre- and post-advertisement duties for city and county engineers as they relate to MnDOT's policies concerning dealings with the state's tribal nations.

#### ***Frequently Asked Questions:***

Contractors working on or near tribal land. Answers to some of the most frequently asked questions from contractors working on or near one of the state's 11 reservations.

If you have questions or concerns regarding these new tools, or projects on or near tribal lands, please contact the [Contract Compliance Specialist](#) (PDF) assigned to your region or the [Tribal Affairs Office](#).

# MNCMAT 2 update

By: Loren Hill, Program Support Engineer

The Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool (MNCMAT) version has been undergoing redesign for almost a year. The [June 2019 E-Scene](#) (PDF) gave an introduction and explanation of the development of MNCMAT 2, and anticipated schedule.

The new application will have most of the functionality of the current application – maps, charts, reports, filters, spatial selection, and stacks. Highlights of the numerous new functionalities in MNCMAT 2 include:

**Plot of Intersection Crashes (PIC)** – this allows users to get a graphical representation of the crashes within an intersection (see Figure 1)



Figure 1

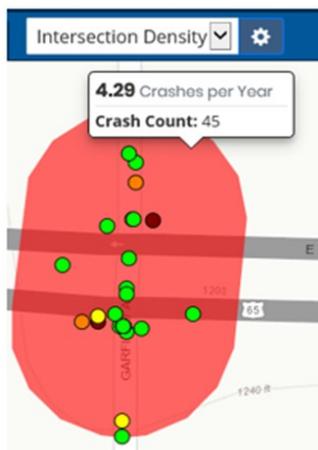


Figure 2

**Intersection and Segment Rates and Densities** – this allows users to select and view intersections and segment rates and densities (see figure 2).

**Stacks** – the stacks are similar to the functionality in the current application. Major improvements to the functionality include:

- Stacks will now display crashes AFTER filters are applied. The current application did not account for filtering when displaying Stacks.
- Stacks will be for intersections first and then for segments between intersections.

**Charting for Units** – MNCMAT 2 will display counts of vehicles, and drivers and non-motorists for many of the data elements. The current application does not allow charting for Unit level crash data.

**Matching attributes within a Unit** – For example, if you ask for a crash involving a 16 year old male driver, only those crashes would be returned. The current application would also incorrectly return a crash involving a 16 year old female and another male driver.

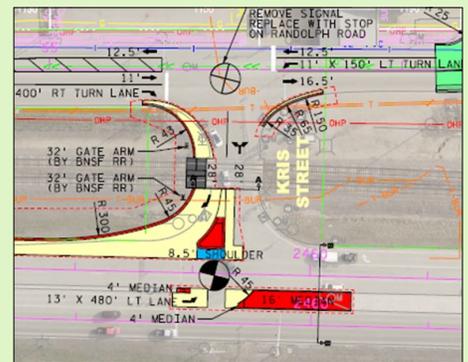
**Officer Sketches and Narratives will be available** - This is a huge step forward for analysts examining specific crashes.

Similar to the current application, MNCMAT 2 will be a web based application, with capability to function on mobile devices. While there continue to be data issues beyond our control, we are happy to report the project is on schedule for an early 2020 rollout to include 2010 to 2019+ data and user training. Trainings are scheduled for mid-March, announcements will be made on the SALT website and be sent out via email once available.

# Local Partnership Program update

By: Mao Yang, Assistant Operations Engineer

The Local Partnership Program (LPP) website has been updated to include contact and solicitation information for each district. The program, administered by District State Aid Engineers (DSAE), provides opportunities for local agencies to submit projects to MnDOT that addresses a transportation deficiency and would benefit both the state and local systems. If the project is selected through the solicitation, MnDOT will fund a portion of the project with state funds and the District State Aid office will assist the local agency to implement the project. For more information about the program and how you can get involved, visit the [LPP webpage](#) or contact your DSAE.



(MnDOT District 4 and the City of Detroit Lakes leveraged LPP funds to make improvements at the intersection of US 10 and Kris Street and improvements on Randolph Road. Proposed improvements included removing a traffic signal on Randolph and putting in a reduced conflict intersection at US 10 and Kris Street. The project addresses safety and traffic flow concerns at the intersection with US 10 and delays on Randolph Road.)

# Historic and archaeological surveys

By: *Elisa Bottos, Project Delivery Engineer*

The Cultural Resources (CRU) within the MnDOT Office of Environmental Stewardship, reviews all federal aid highway projects for potential impacts to historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

There have been some changes to the funding of the contracts for the archeological investigations which has caused a longer timeline to procure the consultants to perform the necessary work. Previously, contracts could be executed in about five to six weeks, however with the new process it could take as long as eight weeks. Also, CRU only has authority to spend up to \$500,000 per Fiscal Year (FY) for these investigations and have less flexibility if more investigations

are needed. Funds carried over from the previous year count against the next FY's allocations. This funding has an 80-20 federal-local cost split.

Because of these two reasons, it is even more important to get the [Cultural and Threatened and Endangered Review Request](#) (Word) for your project submitted as soon as possible. CRU is asking that the forms be submitted at least two field seasons (April - November) before the environmental documentation is due. For example, if the project's environmental documentation is due spring 2022, CRU would like project managers to submit the review request in the first quarter of 2020, It is understood that some agencies may not know of projects

this early, but the earlier the coordination the better.

Local agencies can also choose to hire their own consultants for historical and archeological surveys using 100 percent local funds. MnDOT CRU should review the scope of work for these consultant contracts to ensure that the consultant is doing the necessary work and the relevant information is included in the report in order for CRU to make a determination and for State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to concur in a timely manner. Please visit [CRU website](#) for more information.

# New work zone flagger law — what you need to know

By: *Ken Johnson, State Work Zone and Pavement Markings Engineer*

A new Minnesota law empowers work zone flaggers to report drivers that violate the stop sign used by flaggers to control traffic in work zones. Similar to the bus stop arm violation law, enforcement may issue a citation within four hours of the incident. Following are some key points that flaggers and agencies should be aware of:

- The law requires specific training for flaggers in order for them to be able to report violations. They must be trained in -
  - ⇒ Flagging operations and equipment
  - ⇒ Traffic laws
  - ⇒ Identification of vehicles
- The process and requirements of reporting a violation

- To report a violation, the flagger or supervisor should call 911 and notify the dispatcher that this is a non-emergency and it's about a work zone flagging violation
- Enforcement must ticket within four hours of the incident
- The owner of the vehicle (or the lessee of a leased vehicle) is subject to a fine of \$300, unless another person is cited for the violation (hopefully the actual driver)
- If a person challenges the citation, the flagger is very likely to be called to testify

More information will be discussed at an upcoming MnDOT traffic topics webinar to be held on Wednesday, January 22 from 2-3 p.m. As with

other traffic topics, the webinar will be recorded for later viewing. Please visit [traffic topics webpage](#) for more information. Viewers are also welcome at the MnDOT Shoreview Training and Conference Center.



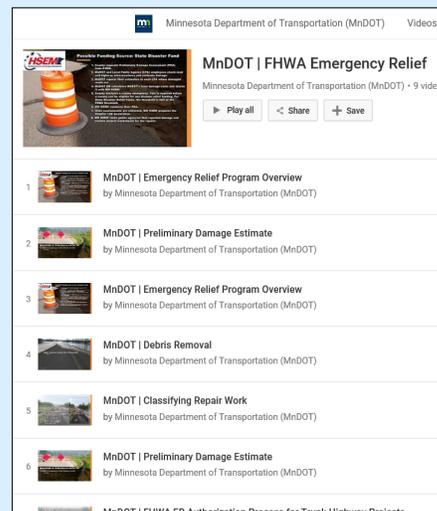
# Emergency Relief update

By: Bill Meinholz, Assistant Project Development Engineer

This is a friendly reminder that the Minnesota 2018-1 event (affected counties included: Carlton, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kanabec, Koochiching, Lyon, Murray, Redwood, and Renville) is approaching two years. June 15, 2020 is the last date for any projects to be authorized. If you are working on a project from this event, please submit everything to State Aid to go through the DCP process as soon as possible.

Spring is coming and along with that snow melt and rain. In order to help

you prepare for future events MnDOT and State Aid are putting together a FHWA Emergency Relief workshop. Please join us in St. Paul on Wednesday February 19, 2020 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. There will be a Skype option available. Additional training for the FHWA Emergency Relief program has been created and several of the videos have been posted online. To view these, visit the [MnDOT YouTube channel](#).



# Patented and proprietary products final rule

By: Sulmaan Khan, Project Development Engineer

FHWA has recently rescinded regulatory provisions that have been in place for use of patented or proprietary items on federally funded projects. This ruling withdraws 23 CFR 635.411 (a)-(e). What this does is allow for project sponsors to use patented or proprietary items, specifications, or processes on federal aid projects without being required to provide certifications, public interest findings (PIFs), or developing research or experimental work plans. The final ruling for this went into effect on October 28, 2019.

The goals of the FHWA ruling is to reduce regulatory burdens, encourage innovation in highway transportation technology and methods, in addition to providing greater flexibility in making materials and products selection on federal aid projects. Responsibility for the effective and efficient use of federal funds subject to the requirements of

federal law will still be applicable. The statutory requirements of 23 U.S.C. 112 for competition and competitive bidding will also continue to apply to federally funded projects.

Additional information on the final ruling can be found on the [FHWA website](#). It is recommended to take a look at the [final rule](#) (PDF) and the [question and answer document](#) that is found on the FHWA website.

State Aid is in the process of updating our documents and website to reflect the new FHWA ruling. If there are any questions in regards to the ruling, please do not hesitate to reach out to Sulmaan Khan at [sulmaan.khan@state.mn.us](mailto:sulmaan.khan@state.mn.us) or 651-366-3819.

# FLAP update

By: Lynnette Roshell, Special Programs Project Development Engineer

Thirteen applications were received by Eastern Federal Lands FHWA for Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) project funding in 2020-2022.

I have reviewed the applications and forwarded my scores to Eastern Federal Lands FHWA.

They hope to schedule a meeting later in January or early in February to make the project selections.

I hope that we can get concurrence on selections by April 1 so that we can incorporate the selected projects into the draft 2021-2024 STIP.

If you have any questions, please contact Lynnette Roshell at [lynnette.roshell@state.mn.us](mailto:lynnette.roshell@state.mn.us) or 651-366-3822.



# MnDOT to launch new training program for work zones

By: Alyssa Rubenstrunk, Communications Program Manager

MnDOT is working on a new training program for work zone traffic control and safety. The program will be used to help train and reduce the risk of work zone related crashes. This effort also provides a systematic approach through training levels while focusing on continuous available and easily accessible trainings. This new training program will help provide public agencies and private companies with the tools and resources needed to properly manage work zone risks.

The project has been divided into three phases.

The first phase (Phase 1) of the project was to develop a training plan. A technical advisory panel was formed to help complete this phase, members are comprised of: MnDOT (SALT, Maintenance, Construction, and Traffic Engineering offices), U of MN CTS, local (county and city), Safety Signs, and SRF. This phase focused on identifying work zone training needs, assessing available trainings, and determining gaps between the needs and available trainings.

In order to determine training needs, a series of data gathering efforts were completed in late 2018/early 2019.



This included a series of listening sessions with state and local agencies, consultants, and utility companies. In addition, a survey was sent out to those who work on roadways, or work zone related activities. The plan was then developed on the findings and needs received from these activities

Some highlights from the training plan include:

- Training levels
  - ⇒ Levels are categorized and based on job activities and duties. Each level provides a list of recommended work zone trainings.
- Course revision and development
- Expand availability of in-person training
- Improve accessibility to work zone tools and trainings
- Increase awareness and availability of trainings

The second and third phases have not yet begun. The second phase (Phase 2) will focus on developing the training curriculum. And the last phase (Phase 3) will be the program rollout.

If you would like to learn more, come see us at the [ATSSA Northland "How To" Conference](#) (PDF) where Jon Jackels from SRF will speaking. The conference is March 16-18 in Fargo, North Dakota.

If you have any questions, contact Alyssa Rubenstrunk, Project Manager at [alyssa.rubenstrunk@state.mn.us](mailto:alyssa.rubenstrunk@state.mn.us) or 651-366-3837.

## Employee news

### New staff

We are pleased to announce Chris Kufner as our newest Deputy State Aid Engineer. Chris has over 22 years of experience working with the public in the transportation industry. Most recently, he was the MnDOT interim State Materials Engineer where he provided leadership to the Materials Engineering Office and worked on a special project, the Pavement Investment Guide. Chris also served as the MnDOT Metro District Maintenance Engineer where he led a staff of 625 employees, and was responsible for the operations and maintenance of over 5,000 lane miles of roadways and 1,500 bridges in the metro area. He also managed an annual operating and capital budget of over \$75 million. Chris has held a variety of positions at MnDOT, including: Construction Office, Transit Office, Metro District Pavement and Materials, and Metro District Maintenance. In addition, he also worked as the Public Works Director for the City of Vadnais Heights, where he led the public works, parks, and recreation department staff.

Back to State Aid, Sulmaan Khan rejoined the team in October as Project Development Engineer. Sulmaan is replacing Gary Reihl who retired in July. Sulmaan will be leading State Aid in the oversight of the environmental documentation requirements of federal aid projects as well as act as a liaison between local public agencies and other agencies such as: FHWA, US Corps of Engineers, MN DNR, etc.

Kyle Puent is the new Metro District State Aid Construction Specialist. For the last year, Kyle has worked in the

*(continue on page 6)*

## ...continued, Employee news

Consultant Administration group as part of program delivery at the Metro District. Prior to that, Kyle spent six years in construction as a Construction Inspector and Chief Inspector out of the Eden Prairie Resident Office administering roadway construction projects. Before coming to MnDOT, Kyle served in the US Army Corps of Engineers, managing vertical and horizontal construction projects.

State Aid Finance is pleased to welcome Robin Sterzinger. Robin started in October and will be serving as the unit's second trainer. Robin will shadow will be shadowing Mike Kilanowski for the first three to six months. Robin be working out of the Ivanhoe MnDOT/Lincoln County shared building and will report to our Central Office in St. Paul. Robin comes to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge. She has worked for 13+ years as the Lincoln County Highway Accountant and 4+ years as a Financial Accountant for the Deputy Auditor/Treasurer at Lincoln County.

### On the move

John Pantelis has accepted a position in the Cooperative Agreements Unit within

the Office of Construction. John's last day with State Aid will be January 21. If you have any questions, please contact Kim DeLaRosa in the interim.

Tara Olds has accepted a position in the Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAV) Office. Her last day with State Aid will be January 21. After this date, if you have any questions on the following topics, please contact: Girma Feyissa for traffic safety, Sara Pflaum for Safe Routes to School, and Patti Loken if you have any additional questions. With this position now vacant, State Aid has posted the position. Those interested can apply at <http://mn.gov/mmb/careers/>. The deadline for applying is January 21.

Joel Ullring has accepted a position in Office of Materials and Road Research. If you have any questions, please contact Mark Vizecky in the interim.

Cathy Huebsch has accepted a position in the Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAV) Office. If you have any questions, please contact Colleen Brown in the interim.

We wish John, Tara, Joel, and Cathy well as they begin new positions within the agency and thank them for their contributions to State Aid.

### Retirements

On January 10th, Margaret Hylton retired from MnDOT. Margaret started at MnDOT in 1979-1993 in Materials Research and Standards (now Engineering Standards). In 1995 she began working for the Bridge Office, and in 1998 she came to Metro State Aid and stayed here until her retirement. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Dresel in the interim.



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