

Western TTAP Steering Committee Meeting

Meeting started: Aug 26, 2025, 10:00:00 AM

Meeting duration: 60 minutes

Meeting participants: Carrie Brown (WTTAP), Smokey, Sherry Ely-Mendes (Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe), Misty Rickwalt (Karuk Tribe), Rovetto, Kyle (FHWA), Sandra Shade (Ak-Chin Indian Community), Luis Sibaja (APTech), Nicole Slaboch (APTech), Noah Rodriguez (Trinidad Rancheria), Torres-Gonzalez, Jaime (FHWA), Leslie Sanders (Trinidad Rancheria), Anthony Smokey (Washoe Tribe), Jaime Torres-Gonzalez (FHWA), Ben Olsen (CSULB), Torres-Gonzalez, Tyler Reeb (CSULB)

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Meeting Summary

1. Opening and Introductions

- Carrie Brown, Western TTAP Director, opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
- Participants engaged in an icebreaker sharing how they would spend an extra hour each week. Common themes included reading, resting, relaxing quietly, exercising, and golfing.

2. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Updates – Jaime Torres-Gonzalez

- Approval was received to move forward with current projects; however, the process remains slow.
- Funding and contract alignment with the fiscal year were discussed, with the Western TTAP agreement expiring September 30, moving into Year 2 on October 1. No no-cost extension is needed yet.
- Jaime is planning travel to attend workshops in the Southwest and Eastern regions and will coordinate updates with Jolene for agenda purposes.
- Updates to FHWA web pages are underway, aiming to mirror Western TTAP resources and improve accessibility of information, including training schedules and committee minutes.
- No current updates on the Southwest TTAP; planning and solicitation efforts expected late in the fiscal year to address new agreements and reporting requirements.

3. Western TTAP Updates – Carrie Brown

A. Recent and Upcoming Trainings

- **Child Passenger Safety Course:** Currently underway with 12 new tribal technicians expected to be certified. Concerns expressed about the recently updated curriculum lacking relevant content for tribal vehicles, specifically the removal of belt-shortening clips, prompting plans to advocate for more tribal representation in future curriculum revisions (expected 2026).
- **Southwest Tribal Transportation Workshop:** Scheduled for September 9-10 in Window Rock, AZ, featuring speakers on micromobility, safety programs, and highway maintenance from various instructors and federal partners. Registration is open with 23 participants so far, capacity for 66.
- **Flagger Certification:** Sessions planned in Trinidad (September 16-17) and Happy Camp (tentatively mid-October). Classes filling quickly; efforts to finalize venues ongoing, including coordination for Happy Camp.

B. Training Access and Offerings

- Western TTAP offers multiple training courses including OSHA 10, and is exploring providing OSHA 30 and other workforce development trainings in response to tribal needs.
- Discussions regarding challenges of providing heavy equipment training due to logistics; potential partnerships with tribes providing equipment or rentals discussed to facilitate training.
- Noted financial challenges due to static budgets for the last 10 years, emphasizing the importance of partnerships with tribes and other programs to sustain training offerings.

C. Training Attendance Challenges and Solutions

- Low attendance and no-shows have been persistent issues affecting program efficiency and planning. Possible solutions discussed include:
 - Implementing a nominal non-refundable registration fee (e.g., \$20) as done by Nevada LTAP to encourage commitment.
 - Enhanced communication such as follow-up emails before training to confirm attendance and increase engagement.
 - Advertising trainings locally first before opening registration wide to avoid no-shows due to travel distance.
 - Continued partnership and coordination with tribal programs (e.g., TEROs) to better target local attendees.

D. Future Planning

- Carrie is preparing a work plan with additional optional tasks to increase funding flexibility for the Western TTAP program to expand services, especially across the five-state tribal service area.
- Emphasis on balancing a core scheduled training calendar with availability for on-demand, requested trainings.
- Proposal for planning regional training partnerships for shared resources and maximized impact emphasized.

4. Other Comments and Discussions

- Concerns expressed about the viability of virtual and hybrid training formats, especially for hands-on courses such as child passenger safety.
- Clarification on scholarship availability: currently no scholarships available unless explicitly communicated by Western TTAP; certification fees payable to certifying bodies are generally not covered.
- National Tribal Transportation and Indian Country Conference scheduled the week of September 22nd in Arizona; some members may attend, and possible schedule conflicts with the next committee meeting on September 23rd were acknowledged with openness to rescheduling if necessary.

5. Next Meeting

- Tentatively scheduled for **September 23rd at 10:00 AM**. Members were encouraged to communicate conflicts for potential rescheduling.

Action Items

- Western TTAP to advocate for more tribal representation on the Child Passenger Safety curriculum board to address curriculum gaps.
- Finalize and distribute the agenda for the Southwest Tribal Transportation Workshop.
- Finalize the venue for Happy Camp Flagger certification and adjust travel plans as needed.
- Explore and possibly implement nominal fees to improve training attendance and program sustainability.
- Enhance registration and communication processes to increase attendance commitment.
- Plan partnership approaches for heavy equipment and workforce training with tribal agencies and TAROs.
- Prepare a comprehensive training schedule and work plan incorporating optional tasks to broaden funding and training scope.
- Participants to notify Carrie if the September 23rd meeting time conflicts with

other commitments.

Summary

The Western TTAP Steering Committee meeting was productive, covering participant introductions, FHWA updates on funding and web resources, and extensive discussions around current and upcoming training programs. Challenges with curriculum relevancy, training attendance, and budget constraints were acknowledged with proactive strategies proposed to address them. Collaboration with tribal entities remains a cornerstone for sustaining and expanding training and workforce development opportunities. The committee plans to reconvene in late September, contingent on member availability.

Action Items

- [] Contact the Child Passenger Safety Board and Safe Kids to advocate for more tribal representation and possible revisions to the child passenger safety curriculum. (Carrie Brown)
- [] Finalize and distribute the agenda for the Southwest Tribal Transportation workshop by Friday. (Carrie Brown)
- [] Coordinate with Misty and Tracy to resolve the venue location issues for the Flagger certification training in Happy Camp. (Carrie Brown / Misty Rickwalt)
- [] Explore offering OSHA 30 training and other requested safety and workforce development courses; identify potential trainers or curriculum options. (Carrie Brown)
- [] Develop a regional heavy equipment training program in partnership with tribes to utilize available equipment and trainers, including negotiating costs. (Carrie Brown / Sherry Ely-Mendes)
- [] Consider implementing a nominal fee for virtual training courses to improve attendance and program sustainability; monitor attendance trends and revisit this as needed. (Carrie Brown)

- [] Enhance registration communication by sending reminder emails before trainings to increase attendance commitment and engagement. (Training support team)
- [] Prioritize advertising training courses initially within the host tribe or local area before opening to wider regions to improve attendance feasibility. (Western TTAP / Partner Tribes)
- [] Continue developing the Western TTAP annual work plan, incorporating optional tasks and scheduling key trainings like Flagger certification, grant writing, OSHA 10/30. (Carrie Brown)
- [] Investigate opportunities to provide grant writing workshops in additional locations such as Hoopa, coordinating with local tribal contacts. (Carrie Brown)
- [] Coordinate with the National Tribal Transportation and Indian Country Conference attendees; consider rescheduling the September 23 steering committee meeting if attendance conflicts arise. (Carrie Brown)
- [] Maintain and update the Western TTAP website to mirror resources, training information, and steering committee minutes for accessibility. (Jaime Torres-Gonzalez / Carrie Brown)
- [] Initiate discussions with Ryan about potential no-cost grant extensions as needed for funding continuity. (Jaime Torres-Gonzalez / Carrie Brown)
- [] Explore partnership opportunities with tribal Taro programs to support funding, facilities, equipment, and training program development. (Carrie Brown / Sherry Ely-Mendes / Tribal TERO Directors)