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## Safety Sidekick Newsletter

Vol. 7  
April 2017

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The Safety Center is pleased to announce the release of their first video on Tribal Road Safety Audits (RSAs). This overview video is the first in a series that will be released this year. In this 4-minute video, Lummi Nation shares how your community - like their small community - can use road safety audits to:

- Obtain multidisciplinary input to road construction and repairs
- Identify low cost, easy-to-implement safety improvements
- Create a tangible plan for community leaders and decision makers

Click [HERE NOW](#) to watch the video and learn how you and your community can benefit from RSAs.

Also, our first issue of 2017 provides us with the opportunity to introduce you to Stakeholder team member Byron Bluehorse. Byron is one of our critical links to tribal transportation issues, and a strong supporter of Road Safety Audits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Steve Albert".

Steve Albert  
Director  
National Center for Rural Road Safety  
[info@ruralsafetycenter.org](mailto:info@ruralsafetycenter.org)

Safety Center Update

**Safety Center Stakeholder Group Member Spotlight**

Our first issue of 2017 brings us another opportunity to spotlight a member of our Stakeholder Group. We are happy to share with you some information about Byron Bluehorse, who is an Assistant Professor with the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Tribal Management Program.



Byron is also the manager of the Alaska Tribal Technical Assistance Program, whose mission is to help tribes become aware of the significance of tribal transportation issues through education and training, to help tribes define transportation systems that enhance community and economic development, promote desired land use, protect cultural resources, to orient and coordinate federal, state and local governments, and maximize efficient use of indigenous transportation resources.

Byron Bluehorse is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. He holds a bachelors degree in University Studies and a masters degree in Community and Regional Planning from the University of New Mexico. From 1993-1997, Byron served in the U.S. Marine Corps, an experience which led him to Japan, Panama, and the Philippines. After receiving an honorable discharge, Byron returned home to New Mexico to pursue a higher education. While in graduate school, Byron served as an AmeriCorps volunteer where he helped to establish the University of New Mexico Tribal Service Corps. Byron's past employment experience includes the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, U.S. Forest Service, Resource Center for Raza Planning and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). After moving to Alaska in 2005, Byron began working as a Contracts and Grants Specialist for the BIA. In this capacity, he provided technical assistance in the area of P.L. 93-638 Indian Self-Determination contracting to tribal entities in the Interior and Arctic Slope regions. Byron currently lives in Fairbanks and is a member of the American Planning Association.

#### *Becoming involved in safety*

While working for the Alaska Tribal Technical Assistance Program Center (AKTTAP), Byron met many Tribal planners who were passionate about shedding light on the need for more safety opportunities. Those mentors opened his eyes to the safety arena. AKTTAP eventually hosted a Regional Safety Summit, which many Tribal Governments participated in, to raise awareness of available opportunities and technology to improve and develop new programs. They also worked with several Tribes to develop safety plans. AKTTAP also held a peer-to-peer safety workshop session where they utilized Tribal input to create a safety website ( [tribalsafety.org](http://tribalsafety.org) ) where Tribes can access numerous resources.

Byron shared an example of a safety activity that he has been involved with that he feels could be a best practice for others. He has participated in several Road Safety Audit (RSA) teams, one of which led to a report in which he served as lead author. Byron shared that being a part of these teams has opened my eyes to the history, process, and benefits of an RSA. He strongly encourages anyone interested in RSAs to take RSA training and participate in an RSA audit. Such opportunities provided him with a better understanding of the built environment and the movement of people. He also developed a greater appreciation for low-cost options such as roadway reconfiguration, also known as Road Diets.

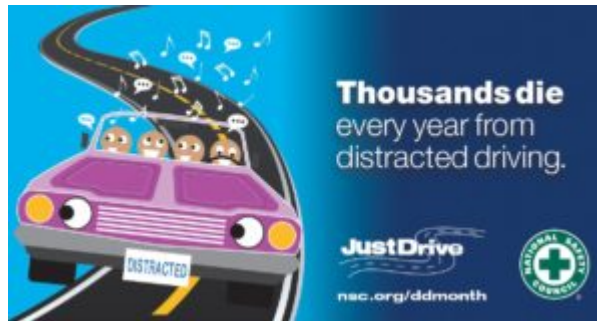
One recommendation that Byron would like to share with the safety community is to listen to your clients and the community, as they have the local knowledge of the roads that they drive daily and can add valuable insight to safety concerns. Quantitative data can help, but gathering local knowledge and stories increases greater success to find and implementing counter measures that could be used.

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Safety Center Blog

**Do you want to help spread the safe driving message? The timing is right!**

April is Distracted Driving Month, and the National Safety Council would like for you to help spread the word about their #JustDrive campaign for safety. They have assembled a variety of distracted driving social media resources, as well as posters, fact sheets, and infographics to use in your own communications. As long as cell phone use continues to be a prominent cause of distracted driving, it is important to promote focused driving and drive cell phonefree.



Why is distracted driving such a critical safety issue? It's a national safety priority because it is prevalent among drivers of all ages. Drivers talking on phones, hand-held or hands-free, can fail to see up to half of what is around them. This includes other drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, fixed objects, and wildlife that can be in the roadway. The National Safety Council reports that car crashes are the leading cause of workplace deaths, and distracted driving is a leading factor in road fatalities. The number of people killed or injured in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers is on the rise. In 2014, 3,179 people were killed, and 431,000 injured, in this type of crash.

To access the National Safety Council distracted driving resources, click [here](#).

For more statistics on distracted driving, please click [here](#).

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## Education

### **FMCSA Establishes National Training Standards for New Truck and Bus Drivers**

In early December, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announced their Final Rule establishing comprehensive national minimum training standards for entry-level commercial truck and bus operators seeking to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) or certain endorsements. The rule recognizes the knowledge and skills necessary for the safe operation of commercial motor vehicles. It also establishes minimum qualifications for entities and individuals who provide entry-level driver training. The entry-level driver training Final Rule retains many of the consensus recommendations of a negotiated rulemaking committee comprised of 25 stakeholders and FMCSA representatives.

The comprehensive CDL training requirements, which emphasize safety and promote driving efficiency, will result in lives saved, reductions in fuel consumption and emissions, vehicle maintenance cost reductions, and industry-wide performance improvements. The rulemaking was mandated by Congress in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21).

Applicants seeking a CDL will be required to demonstrate proficiency in knowledge training and behind-the-wheel training on a driving range and on a public road, with training obtained from an instructional program that meets FMCSA standards. There is no required minimum number of hours for the knowledge or behind-the-wheel portions of any of the individual training curricula, but training providers must determine that each CDL applicant demonstrates proficiency in all required elements of the training in order to successfully complete the program.

Mandatory, comprehensive training in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and all U.S. territories would apply to the following individuals under the Final Rule

- First-time CDL applicants, including: "Class A" CDLs and "Class B" CDLs
- Current CDL holders seeking a license upgrade (e.g., a Class B CDL holder seeking a Class A CDL) or an additional endorsement necessary to transport hazardous materials, or to operate a motorcoach or school bus.

All of these individuals are subject to the entry-level driver training requirements and must complete a course of instruction provided by an entity that meets the qualification standards set forth in the Final Rule. FMCSA anticipates that many entities currently providing entry-level driver training, including motor carriers, school districts, independent training schools, and individuals will be eligible to provide training that complies with the new requirements. Drivers who are not subject to or are excluded or exempted from federal CDL requirements are not subject to this Final Rule. For example, military drivers, farmers, and firefighters who are exempt from federal CDL requirements are not subject to this Final Rule.

The entry-level driver training Final Rule went into effect on February 6, 2017, with a compliance date of February 2020. [Click here](#) to view the entry-level driver training Final Rule. [Click here](#) to learn more about Entry-Level Driver Training. [Click here](#) to view the list of Entry-Level Driver Training Advisory Committee members.

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## Safety Culture

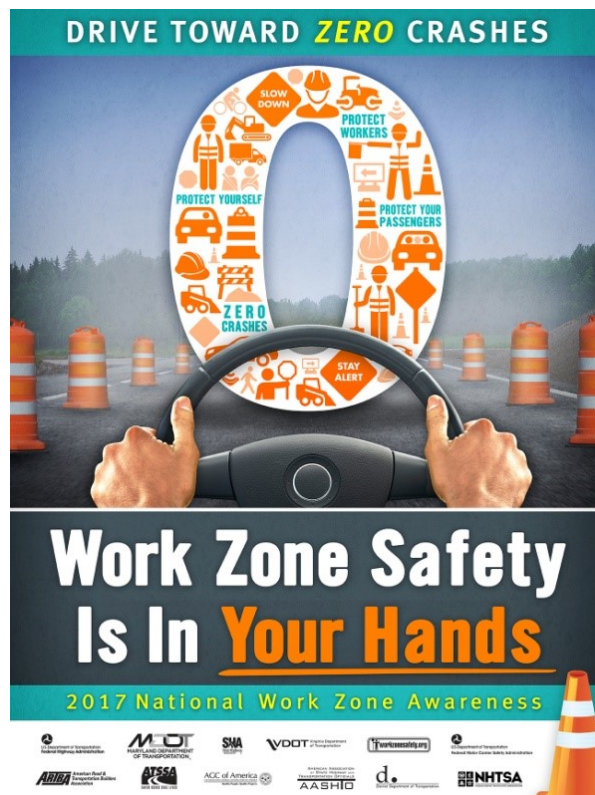
### It's Almost Time for Orange!

Each spring, the National Work Zone Awareness week (NWZAW) is observed in an attempt to bring national attention to worker, motorist, and pedestrian safety in work zones. Co-sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the America Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA), this annual campaign kicks off the construction season by highlighting the most important issue in transportation; safety. In 2017, the kick-off event will be held in the state of Maryland took place on April 3-7. The theme for this year's event was "Work Zone Safety is In Your Hands", and will highlight the importance of motorists driving extra cautiously through work zones.

From 1982 to 2014, 24,745 individuals lost their lives in work zone crashes for an average of nearly 750 people a year. You do not need to be a highway worker to be affected by this; at some point, anyone who uses a car will be faced with moving through a work

zone. Work zones are inherently hazardous; roads configurations may be changed, construction workers are on the roads, heavy equipment and machinery crowd the lanes, and motorists, even those familiar with the area, are left to navigate now unfamiliar territory. However, through proper education, engineering, smart technologies, and enhanced preparedness, we can do our best to mitigate the dangers.

While technologies and education have been improving, improving awareness remains the single greatest strategy to combat work zone casualties. In 2015 alone there were 700 deaths and over 35,000 injuries that occurred in work zones. While there is no doubt that



the responsibility for safety is shared by all, drivers have a special responsibility to use extra caution when traversing work zones. Highway workers are trained in temporary traffic control, and will do their best to use devices such as signage, paddles, high visibility apparel, concrete barriers and other tools to guide motorists through the work zone. However, it is crucial for motorists to be cognizant of the warnings they see. While workers will give ample time to allow for speed and course corrections, a driver who is not paying attention puts the whole system at risk.



So what can you do as a driver and an advocate? Start with improving your own work zone IQ. [Take this quiz](#) on [workzonesafety.org](http://workzonesafety.org) to improve your recognition of roads signs and understanding of the rules. There is a large repository of free resources available for you on the [National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse](#) website to familiarize yourself and to share with others.

**ATSSA**  
**GOES ORANGE**  
FOR WORK ZONE SAFETY

Highway construction is expected to increase in the next few years, and with those new projects come increased potential for traversing construction projects. Help keep yourself, your loved ones, and the dedicated workers safe by taking work zone safety in your own hands.

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## Engineering

### Road Weather Management and Safety

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Every Day Counts (EDC) Program has surfaced two road weather management innovations to support safety and mobility during adverse weather events. Rain storms, snow storms, and other weather events significantly impact road travel. FHWA cites 22% of vehicle crashes (including almost 6,000 deaths and almost a half million injuries) attributable to weather each year. EDC round 4 is promoting the deployment of Integrating Mobile Observations (IMO) and the Pathfinder Implementation Plan as strategies to mediate some of the problems caused by weather.

While the unpredictability of storms often renders even the best laid plans awry, forewarned is forearmed, and additional preparedness increases the ability to better navigate the volatility of an adverse weather event. Pathfinder and IMO both use information to help agencies manage road systems and prepare motorists before and during weather conditions.

Pathfinder is the result of collaboration between the National Weather Service and state departments of transportation (DOTs), as well as state DOT support contractors, to provide road weather information and translate weather forecasts into consistent transportation impact statements for the public. FHWA calls the [Pathfinder Implementation Plan](#) "a multi-step process on what information to share when and how before, during, and after high-impact weather events. This provides the public with consistent and actionable messages on potential impacts to the transportation system".

Benefits include enhanced collaboration, informed travelers, and improved mobility, safety, and economy.

IMO is based in the collection of weather and road condition data from government fleet vehicles. Data is collected from ancillary sensors installed on the vehicles, in combination with native vehicle data such as windshield wiper status and traction control system activation. Data provides maintenance managers with details about the weather and road conditions along their road networks, which can be used in their winter maintenance decision support systems and also for traveler advisories and warnings.

Benefits to IMO include cost-efficiency in operations, proactive management, and improved mobility, safety, and economy.

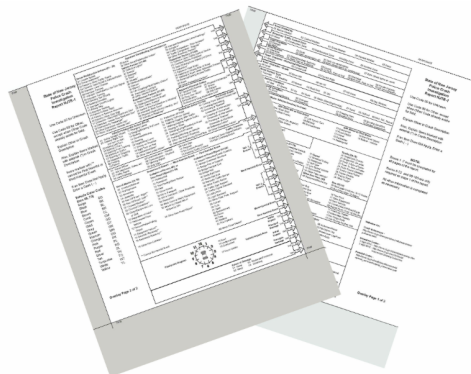
For more information, there is a fact sheet available on [Weather-Savvy Roads](#).

The Federal Highway Administration also maintains a [Road Weather Management](#) website.

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## Traffic Records Data- A National Priority

The United States Department of Transportation Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (DOT/TRCC) is a collaborative group representing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and the USDOT Office of the Secretary to maximize the quality of safety data and analysis. This occurs across six systems: crash, vehicle, driver, roadway, citation & adjudication, and injury surveillance.



Data quality is critical. Completeness, timeliness, and accuracy are all important factors when it comes to using traffic safety data for decision-making. Since data is necessary for pinpointing traffic safety issues and identifying appropriate countermeasures to reduce crashes, there is a vested interest among transportation professionals in ensuring traffic records are accurate.

Improved collection, management, and analysis of traffic safety data at the State and Federal levels is at the crux of the work of the TRCC. In order to help states with their traffic safety data collection, management, and analysis, there are multiple support resources the DOT/TRCC member agencies provide. These include NHTSA's Crash Data Improvement Program, Traffic Records Executive Training, and GO Teams Program; and the FHWA Roadway Data Improvement and Data and Analysis Technical Assistance Programs. To learn more about these five opportunities for States, please visit the [Technical Assistance and Training](#) page.

Each state has a Traffic Records Coordinating Committee Chair and Coordinator. There are many variations among the ways individual states handle their own traffic records coordinating committee membership and roles. Recognizing that there were states looking to their peers for ways to optimize their activities, the DOT/TRCC conducted a project to review state TRCC effectiveness. The resultant report includes definitions of successful TRCCs and provides examples from six case study states, and others. The recommendations provide state TRCC members with ideas they can adopt and adapt to their own. In late 2015, FHWA published the results of their [State Traffic Records Coordinating Committee Noteworthy Practices](#) guidance document.

To find your state TRCC Chair and/or coordinator: [State TRCC Personnel](#)

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### Upcoming Trainings and Events

#### Upcoming Safety Center Webinars

##### **May 2017 - Incorporating Safety Data into the Planning Process at the Rural Level**

Date: May 4, 2017

Time: 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM Mountain/1:00 PM to 2:30 PM Eastern

This webinar will provide an overview of the elements of safety data analysis and identify opportunities to integrate safety data into the transportation planning process.

To register for this webinar, click [here](#).

## **June 2017 - ITE Vision Zero Virtual Toolbox**

Date: June 1, 2017

Time: 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM Mountain/1:00 PM to 2:30 PM Eastern

This Safety Center and ITE co-sponsored webinar will provide information on ITE's new Vision Zero Toolbox. The toolbox showcases best practices, analytical techniques, policy guidance, and communication and educational tools for Vision Zero (the goal of zero traffic fatalities among all road users) to make them easily accessible to practitioners.

To register for this webinar, click [here](#).

## **July 2017 - How to Address Roadway Safety Issues for ATVs and Other Off-Road Vehicles**

Date: July 12, 2017

Time: 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM Mountain/1:00 PM to 2:30 PM Eastern

This webinar will provide an overview of the risk factors associated with deaths and injuries when riders take ATVs and Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles (ROVs) on the road. These include youth as a particularly vulnerable riding population, and the higher risk of traumatic death when crashes occur on rural versus urban roads. It will also include a discussion about the challenges and potential strategies related to raising public and stakeholder awareness of this widespread roadway safety issue.

To register for this webinar, click [here](#).

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## **NACE Annual Meeting/Management and Technical Conference Safety Workshops**

Check out the safety lineup for this week's [NACE Annual Meeting / Management and Technical Conference](#) held April 9-13, 2017 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

### **Developing a Local Road Safety Plan**

This Safety Center led workshop was held on Sunday April 9, 2017 with 30-40 participants. The agenda included:

- Local Road Safety Planning - Overview
- Understanding Federal Transportation Safety Programs
- Different Types of Local Road Safety Plans - Case Studies
- Local Road Safety Planning Process
- Actions Steps to Develop a Local Road Safety Plan

If you were unable to attend this workshop, but are interested in attending a similar workshop, please contact the Safety Center at [info@ruralsafetycenter.org](mailto:info@ruralsafetycenter.org) and we can notify you the next time we host a similar workshop.

### **Low Cost Safety Improvements Parts 1 & 2**

Date: April 11, 2017

This is a two part session on low cost safety improvements conducted by the Safety Center. The material presented will focus on what the data shows about roadway safety in the United States, methods or processes about the identification of safety improvement locations, and a description of what we know about low cost safety improvements for roadway segments and curves (e.g., signing, marking, etc.), unsignalized intersections, and roadsides. The measures will be described and, when available, crash reduction factors noted. The material used is part of a longer workshop that is under development for local agencies and will be in draft form. Input from the attendees will be gathered to improve upon the content and format of the slides, along with suggestions about the addition or subtraction of any low cost safety improvements.

### **Rural Road Safety Panel Discussion**

Date: April 12, 2017

Moderators:

- Thomas Mattson Humboldt County CA
- Rick Tippett, Trinity County CA

Panel Members:

- Gordon Kelsey, Klickitat County (WA)
- Derek Troyer, Ohio DOT
- Brian Keierleber, Buchanan County (IA)
- Neil Tunison, Warren County (OH)
- Dr. Marie B. Walsh, Louisiana LTAP

### **Safety Committee Meeting**

Date: April 12, 2017

Draft Agenda:

- Partner Updates
  - FHWA
  - NLTAPA
  - APWA
- National Working Summit on Transportation in Rural America
- NHTSA Road to Zero Grant Award
  - Advancing Local Road Safety Practices with State DOTs
- NACE 2018

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### **What's Hot Off the Press?**

#### **Smarter, Safer Roadways: Road Diets for Rural Communities**

What is a Road Diet and when are they appropriate? This [article](#) from the Kansas LTAP Center newsletter addresses the pros and cons of road diet projects, feasibility, and community benefits to give local governments the necessary information to determine if road diets, or the underlying concepts, have a place in their communities.



#### **Traffic Safety Facts: Young Drivers**

Thanks to an increase and enforcement, over the years, driver fatalities from young drivers have dropped by nearly half in 2006-2015. Sadly, motor vehicle crashes are still the leading cause of death for 15-20 year olds. Find out in this NHTSA release [fact sheet](#) covering alcohol, seatbelt use, and various other factors that contribute to this problem.



#### **Buckle Up: Restraint Use State Fact Sheets**



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

Wearing seatbelts reduces the risk of serious injuries and death by 50%. This is a fact that is shared across the country. How do some parts of the country differ from others? Check out the CDC's state-specific [fact sheets](#) below that give a glimpse of motor vehicle occupant deaths vs. seat belt usage in each state across the country. Furthermore, download customizable versions of these fact sheets for use by your organization.



## U.S. DOT Advances Deployment of Connected Vehicle Technology to Prevent Hundreds of Thousands of Crashes

Connected Vehicles are the future of transportation, and one of the biggest key steps auto-makers are taking to work towards a reduction of traffic accidents. Learn about the USDOT's [proposed rule](#) that would enable Vehicle-to-Vehicle communication technology on all light duty vehicles.



## Road Diets: A Proven Safety Countermeasure

A buzz word among transportation professionals today is "road diet." Described as an increasingly popular strategy to increase multi-modal road use and improve safety in urban areas, road diets are a proven, low cost, and effective safety countermeasure being deployed all over the country. FHWA has released a video detailing the policies, planning, and usage of this technique. Watch it [here!](#)



## Highway Safety Manual Online Overview Course

This [course](#) consists of 13 self-paced informational modules that can be taken in any order depending on the student's prior knowledge level, interest, and time available. The course includes an introduction of HSM terminology, examples of the Roadway Safety Management Process (HSM Part B) and Predictive Methods (HSM Part C), explains the relationship of Crash Modification Factors (CMF) to decision-making and quantitative safety analysis, and human factors.



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