

## Tribe and State DOT Collaborate in Regional Planning and Roadway Projects in Washington State

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe is a rural Tribal community on the upper Olympic Peninsula in Washington State, and the majority of its services and government buildings are based in Clallam County. The Tribal transportation staff engages regularly with government agencies at the State, regional, and county levels by coordinating on highway projects with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), participating in the Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO), and attending County Commissioner meetings in Clallam County. Recent collaboration with WSDOT and the regional planning organization benefitted the Tribe through improved pedestrian safety, training on Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Title 23 regulations, and increased visibility and recognition among regional planning organizations.

### A Framework for Collaboration

In 1989, Washington State and 26



By collaborating with WSDOT on this rest area project, the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe learned Federal aid regulations for FHWA Title 23 funds. (Courtesy of Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe)

federally recognized Indian Tribes signed the Centennial Accord, formalizing the relationship between the State and the Tribes that lay claim to property in Washington State. WSDOT published the Centennial Accord Plan in 2003, followed by an updated Plan in 2009, both of which outline how WSDOT will work cooperatively with the Tribes on transportation projects in accordance with the stipulations of the Centennial Accord. In addition to the Centennial Accord’s general agreement between the State and Tribal governments, the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe executes individual project agreements with

State, County, and local government agencies to formalize the cooperative planning and development of transportation projects, including projects along U.S. 101.

### U.S. 101 Improvement Projects

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe has successfully worked with WSDOT to execute federally funded safety-focused corridor improvement projects on U.S. 101 within the Tribal campus area. After developing several properties along the north side of U.S. 101, the Tribe purchased land on the south side of U.S. 101 in the late 1990s and

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built social services offices, recreational facilities, a casino, and a hotel. This development increased pedestrian traffic across U.S. 101, and the Tribe; since then, the Tribe has focused its efforts on improving pedestrian safety along the highway.

In 2001, the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe and WSDOT formed a partnership to construct a pedestrian tunnel under U.S. 101 to provide a safe pedestrian connection between facilities on both sides of the corridor. As the U.S. 101 right-of-way (ROW) is managed by the State, the Tribe needed to partner with WSDOT to complete the project. The Tribe completed the planning, design, and construction for the pedestrian tunnel, and WSDOT provided a temporary lease for the ROW to allow for construction as well as technical assistance to review the project plans. The Tribe used \$1.4 million in Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) funding to complete the project. Opened in 2004, the pedestrian tunnel provides a safe link between the Tribe’s southern campus and the Tribal services on the north side of U.S. 101, as well as to public transit stops on both sides of the roadway.

When the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe received a grant from the National Scenic Byways Program in 2008 to build a rest area at the Sequim Bay Scenic Pullout along U.S. 101, the

Tribe partnered with WSDOT on the project, seeking their expertise in administering Federal aid funds and in completing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Though the Tribe was familiar with the funding regulations associated with the IRR program, they were less familiar with FHWA Title 23 regulations for Federal-aid projects. The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe worked closely with and received assistance from WSDOT’s Olympic Region Office, which administered the grant, to ensure they met Federal regulations and complied with NEPA guidelines. WSDOT also assisted the Tribal staff in working through the planning, permitting, and construction processes. Collaborating on this project helped the Tribe and WSDOT improve communication as well as expand the Tribe’s ability and capacity for working through the FHWA permitting process.

#### **Tribal Participation in Regional Planning**

In addition to working with WSDOT, the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe has been actively involved in regional planning. The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s Chief Operating Officer (COO) represents the Tribe as a member of the PRTPO as Chair of the Policy Board. The PRTPO is a voluntary association of towns, coun-

ties, ports, Tribes, transit agencies, and major employers that work together to develop transportation plans to meet the region’s future economic and population growth. The COO’s involvement with the PRTPO benefits the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, as her participation in the organization’s quarterly meetings provides the Tribe with regular visibility and recognition as well as strengthens the Tribe’s relationships with organizations who share their transportation interests.

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s active involvement in regional planning and its partnership with the WSDOT have allowed the Tribe to establish a significant presence in Statewide, regional, and local planning efforts. The recent projects completed in through the partnership between the Tribe and WSDOT have improved pedestrian safety along U.S. 101 and increased capacity for the Tribe to manage FHWA Title 23 Federal-aid projects.

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