

FY22 SMART Grants Program: Quarterly Report Feedback

Reporting Period: 12/31

Recipient Name: Three Affiliated Tribes

Project Title: MHA Nation Drone Project: Planning and Protocol Development

Project Type: UAS

Comments from SMART Program Staff and Subject Matter Experts

*The below information is an aggregate of feedback, comments, and suggestions received from the SMART Program staff and subject matter experts after reviewing your quarterly report. You are encouraged to review this information and contact the SMART Program if you have any questions or would like additional feedback from the program team or your individual SMEs. As a reminder, the next quarterly report, for the reporting period 1/1/24-3/31/24, is due **4/30/24**.*

Achievements and Lessons Learned:

- The project has performed well in terms of stakeholder engagement. SMART staff is interested in learning more about the outcomes of the world cafe and drone camp activities when they are available.
- The Evaluation Plan does articulate some clear and quantitative performance measures (like flight time v the 3 hour drive to deliver the payload, 4 trainings delivered, etc).

Concerns:

- The report indicates the project team has yet to define the use cases for the technology. Usually this is the first step to identify operational characteristics and capabilities, and delays in this area risks delaying everything else in the project.
- The report describes the need for the 35-mile BVLOS operations over water. As this is longer, faster, and over more challenging terrain than most BVLOS flights, how has the project team accounted for these considerations in their aircraft selection and operational planning? What additional aircraft performance capabilities are required?
- Some of the performance measures proposed in the Evaluation Plan are quite broad and cannot be directly tied to this project (e.g. public engagement reach). It would be good to see more detailed attention paid to specific, measurable metrics and baseline data for those metrics.
- We understand that this project is part of a much larger and ongoing effort that extends far beyond SMART. However, it is crucial that the project team define a specific scope, comprised of SMART-funded activities, within the larger project vision that can be evaluated and successful on it's own. The grantee's ability to successfully apply for a stage 2 grant will rely on having even preliminary outcomes to point to, rather than having moved several large project components forward but without a clear deliverable.

Resources and Recommendations:

- This team should consult with the Accomack-Northampton Community Development Corporation SMART team to see how they approached building up to an appropriate flight length/conditions, and their aircraft selection, as their conditions are somewhat analogous.