

STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

ALABAMA-COUSHATTA TRIBE OF TEXAS



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HISTORY

The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (ACTT) is a federally recognized Native American Tribe located in Deep East Texas, ninety minutes north of Houston and twenty minutes east of Livingston (in Polk County, Texas). ACTT has the oldest Reservation in the state of Texas, comprised of approximately 10,500 acres adjacent to the Big Thicket National Preserve and Sam Houston National Forest.

Previously two tribes, now united as one, the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas boasts a unique story dating back to the 1700s. The tribes lived in adjacent areas in what is now the state of Alabama, and by 1780, the tribes migrated to modern-day East Texas. During the Mexican War of Independence from Spain, the tribes fought with the revolutionaries. Their many contributions included a battalion of 300 warriors who were instrumental to the capture of San Antonio in the battle on April 1, 1813. The newly formed Mexican government recognized both tribes independently and offered them tracts of land for permanent settlement. Those lands are attributed to the tribes in early maps of the region, including Stephen F. Austin's map of Texas.

In 1836, Sam Houston brokered a treaty with the tribes before the Texas War of Independence from Mexico. The agreement provided the title of land between the Neches and Sabine rivers for one community with both tribes in return for assurance the tribes would not side with Mexico. Tribal members served as guides for Houston's army and provided provisions to feed Texas refugees fleeing from Santa Anna's army. Today, Houston's descendants still acknowledge their contribution to the Republic of Texas. The United States federal government officially recognized our nation in 1987.

Over the years, the Tribe has expanded services to include a fully functioning sovereign government with a full array of health and human services, including the Chief Kina Health Clinic, Education Center, Tribal Police Department, social services, historic and cultural preservation, and emergency management. There are 1,435 Tribal citizens, of which 651 live on the Reservation. The Tribe is governed by an elected Tribal Council and advised by a Principal Chief and a Second Chief.

Today, the Tribe is proud to be a premier contributor to the local economy by providing hundreds of jobs and attracting thousands of visitors annually through tourism and hospitality. Naskila Casino is a major entertainment attraction that provides gaming and dining 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It offers hundreds of gaming machines, restaurants, rewarding memberships and an excellent shuttle service. Five minutes from Naskila Casino is Lake Tombigbee Campground, located on beautiful Lake Tombigbee, a 26-acre fully stocked lake. The campground offers a campground store, RV sites with full hookups and dump station, luxury and primitive tent sites, a variety of cabin sizes and lodge rooms, swimming area, canoe & kayak rentals, fishing, and a pavilion. Travelers and visitors have the convenience of utilizing services provided by the Ischoopa Travel Center, including fuel, snacks, hot food, restrooms, and a casino. The travel center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Due to the economic growth of the community, and continued growth for the future, such as new housing developments for the citizens, it is imperative to meet the needs of and to support the overall well-being of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas residents and all who visit the Reservation.

SUMMARY

Improvements to the current transportation system are overdue, and changes are needed to prevent any increase in transportation-related accidents. Of roads within the Reservation, only 3 of 17 (18%) are paved and the width of these roadways are narrow, ranging from 16', for paved roads, to 11', for unpaved roads. Additionally, most of these unpaved roads are comprised of an unstable dirt surfacing and base that easily wear down and require routine maintenance to keep them drivable. Most roads on the Reservation lack efficient drainage systems and have become impassable during heavy rain events, even preventing emergency personnel from reaching Tribal members during weather emergencies. Many local roadways are in densely forested areas that prevent drivers from seeing upcoming hazards and have little to no reflective road signs, striping, or streetlights to keep drivers on the road at night. The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas has taken a proactive approach in identifying some of these areas to improve and plans to continue using this approach moving forward.

Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas is committed to making transportation safer for the visitors and the growing community of the Reservation. This Strategic Transportation Safety Plan (STSP) was established to call attention to the various safety issues present in ACTT's transportation system and create strategies that prioritize the mitigation of serious injury and death. Prioritization of these strategies will be determined through a data-driven approach with an analysis of crash statistics and a review of current policies and processes that have an influence on transportation safety. This STSP will serve to inform the public, surrounding municipalities, and other transportation organizations of these strategies and the progress that ACTT has made, or is currently working on, to reduce accidents that cause serious injury and death. ACTT plans to use this document to apply for grant awards and acquire funding for transportation projects that complement the strategies found within this plan. Moving forward, ACTT's Transportation Maintenance Department will continue to coordinate with Safety Partners of ACTT and will be held responsible for future updates and developments of this STSP, ensuring that complete transparency of all visions, goals, transportation data, and progress is accessible through this plan.

VISIONS & GOALS

Whether you are a resident, visiting, or just traveling through, the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas visualizes an environment where anyone can feel welcome courtesy of quality roadways that are reliable no matter the weather. Drivers can feel safe navigating across the Reservation during the night under streetlights that illuminate the roadways, reflective signage for easy navigation, and striping to avoid veering off. The many projects ACTT has done to expand has successfully encouraged new people to settle on the Reservation. All these new residents can enjoy freshly updated transportation systems that make traveling around the Reservation safe and convenient. Both existing and new residents feel safer walking around the Reservation after speedbumps, proper speed limit signs, and other traffic management strategies were done in areas with heavy foot traffic to encourage vehicles to travel at safer speeds. They can wait at easily accessible bus stops and enjoy safe public transport to anywhere on the Reservation. They can travel home safely in heavy rain because of efficient roadside drainage systems that clear the roadways of storm water. They can completely rely on Emergency services reaching them no matter the weather conditions. In future crash analysis studies, they show that ACTT's efforts have caused a decline in serious injury and deadly accidents across the Reservation.

The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas has set various goals to meet that will ensure future efforts are focused on the visions discussed in this section. The following goals will allow ACTT to identify appropriate projects that will complement those visions and prioritize issues that have the most impact on reducing serious injury and death across the Reservation:

- Implement more focus on transportation safety through input of its citizens and community awareness programs.
- Significantly reduce accidents that cause serious injury and death by the year 2030.
- Organize more internal meetings on the topic of transportation safety to ensure the continuation of this STSP.

SAFETY PARTNERS

The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas works many internal and external departments, called Safety Partners, that have helped in making transportation safer in the reservation. The following list is the many Safety Partners that have contributed to the making of this Strategic Transportation Safety Plan and plan to continue working with to provide safer transportation in the reservation.

- ACTT Tribal Council
- ACTT Transportation Maintenance Department
- ACTT Police Department
- ACTT Chief Kina Health Clinic
- ACTT Emergency Management Department
- ACTT Fire Department
- ACTT Education Department
- Polk County Office of Emergency Management
- Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

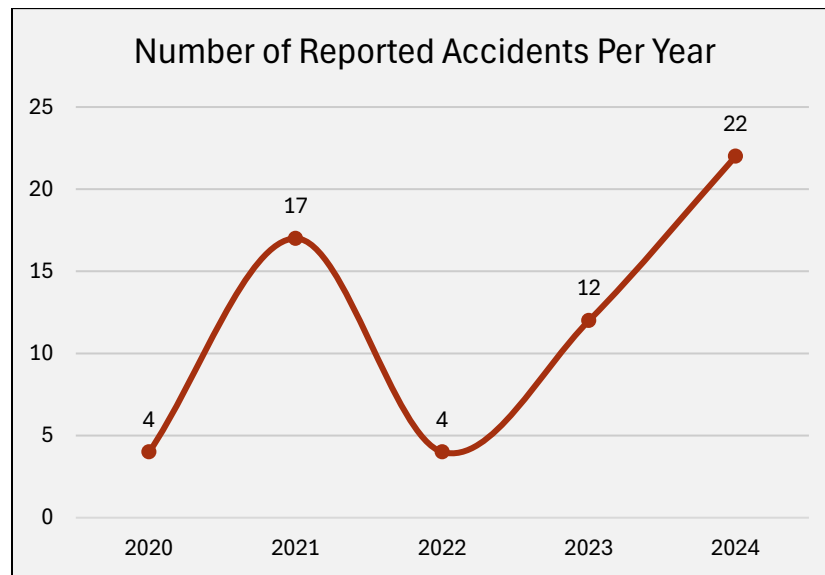
PROCESS

The following dates outline the process that the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas has taken and will do to establish this Strategic Transportation Safety Plan.

- December 26th, 2024 – ACTT selected Schaumburg & Polk Inc. to provide professional help and engineering support for the STSP.
- January 31st, 2025 – Baseline Performance Measurement Data was gathered and processed.
- February 28th, 2025 – Baseline Performance measurement Report was completed.
- March 19th, 2025 – A meeting with ACTT's safety partners was held to discuss the STSP.
- March 31st, 2025 – Completed rough draft of the STSP.
- April 30th, 2025 – Completed final draft of the STSP.
- May 31st, 2025 – ACTT adopted the completed STSP.
- June 30th, 2025 – The final STSP report was submitted by ACTT and posted publicly online.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was conducted by observing accident report data from the years 2020 to 2024. The accident reports used in this analysis are from the TxDOT Crash Records Information System (CRIS) and reports directly from ACTT's Police Department. Over this 5-year period, 59 individual accidents were reported with 10 from ACTT Police Department and 49 from TxDOT CRIS. All reports by ACTT Police Department are on no injury accidents and only contain crash IDs, crash descriptions, and dates. These accidents will be included in the total number of accidents but may be excluded in other analyses beyond total accidents on individual roadways due to lack of specific details.



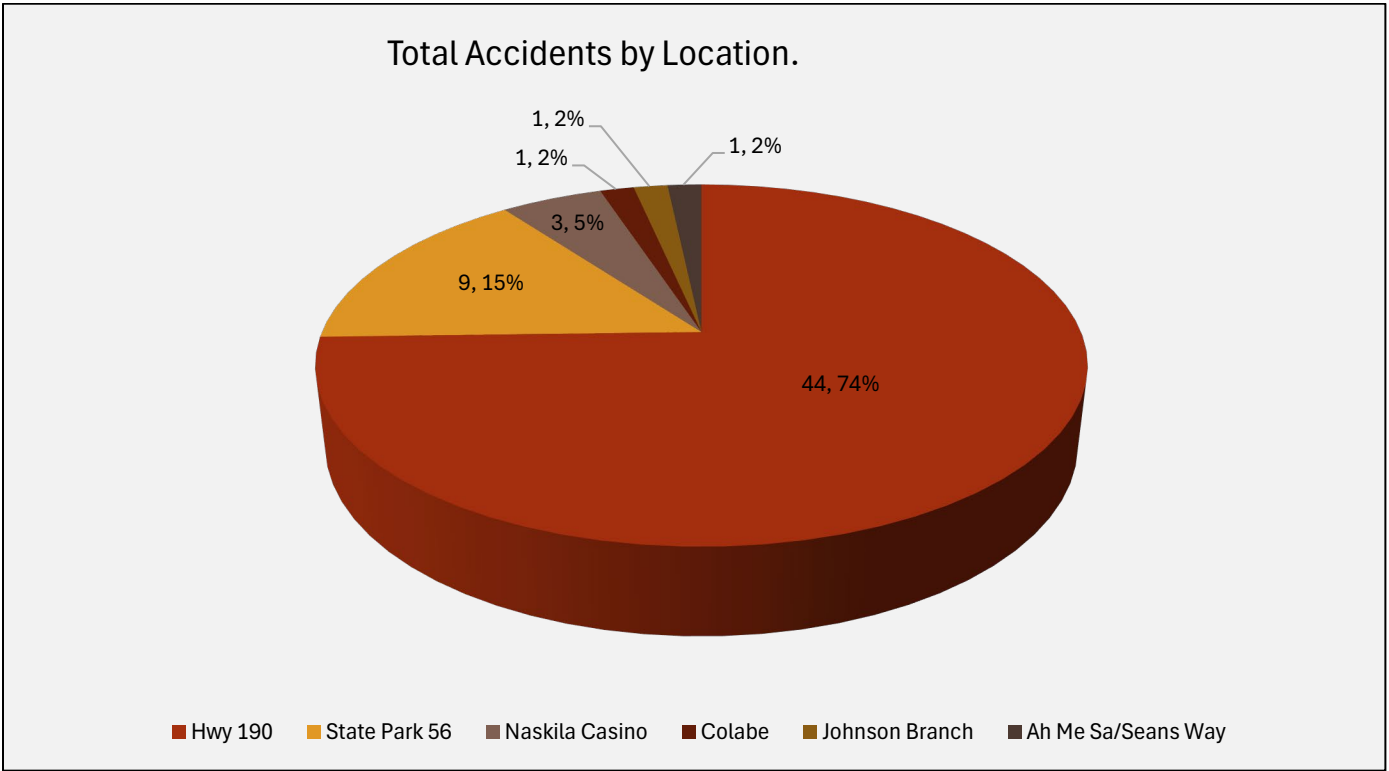
According to the information gathered, only 19 of the 59 accidents reported, 32%, had an injury designation. Of these 19 accidents, 21% were listed as suspected serious injury accidents and 11% were listed as fatal injury accidents.

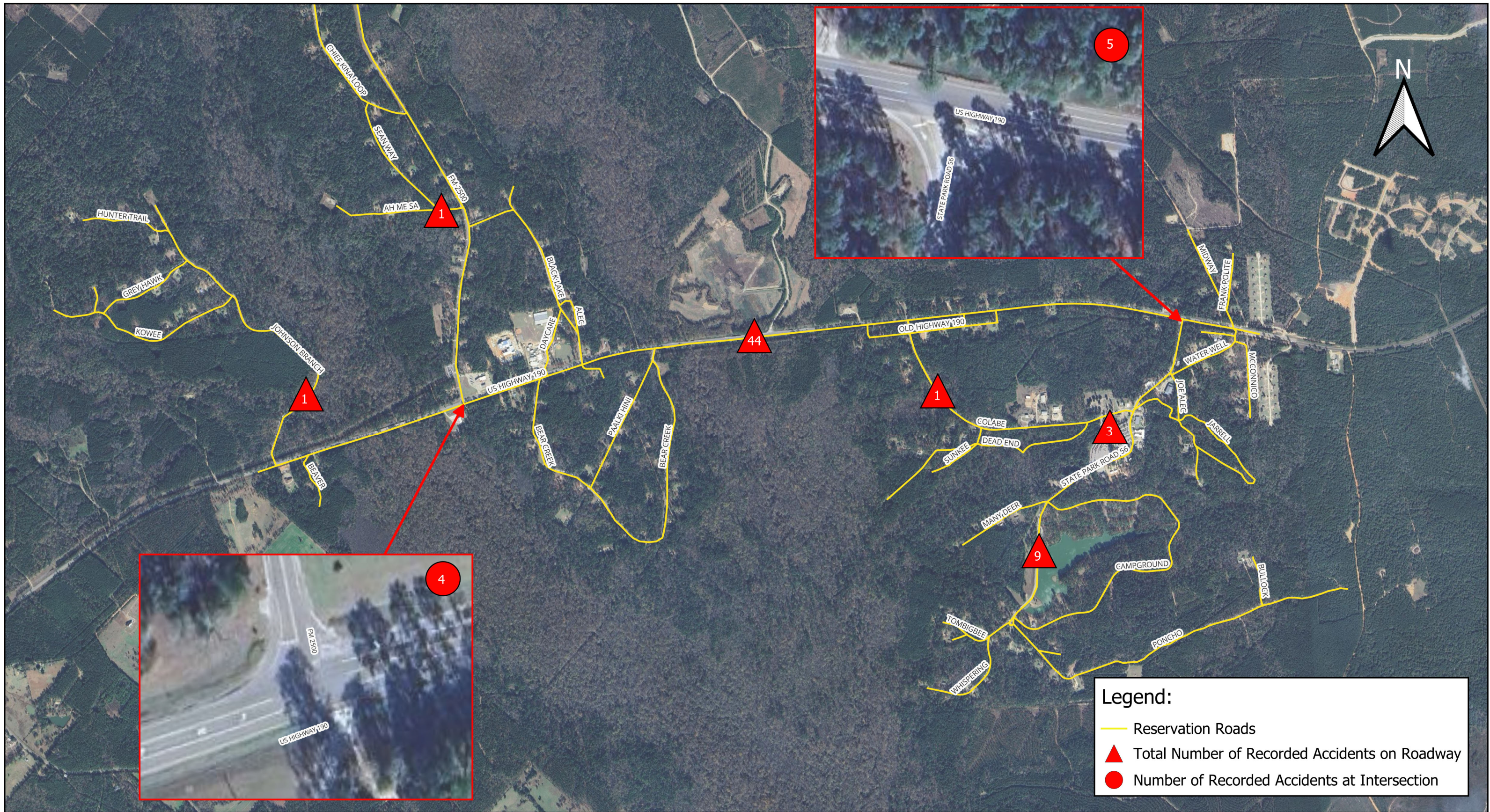
Accidents Per Year by Crash Severity					
Year	Total Accidents	Possible Injury	Suspected Minor Injury	Suspected Serious Injury	Fatal Injury
2020	4		1		
2021	17	1	3	1	2
2022	4	1	1		
2023	12	1		2	
2024	22	3	2	1	
Total:	59	6	7	4	2

A total of 30 injuries were reported across these 19 accidents which makes a 1.6 average injuries per accident that has an injury. Of these 30 injuries, 15% were suspected serious injuries and 10% were fatal injuries.

Injuries from Accidents Per Year by Severity					
Year	Total Injuries	Possible Injury	Suspected Minor Injury	Suspected Serious Injury	Fatal Injury
2020	2		2		
2021	8	1	3	1	3
2022	3	2	1		
2023	5	1		4	
2024	12	6	5	1	
Total:	30	10	11	6	3

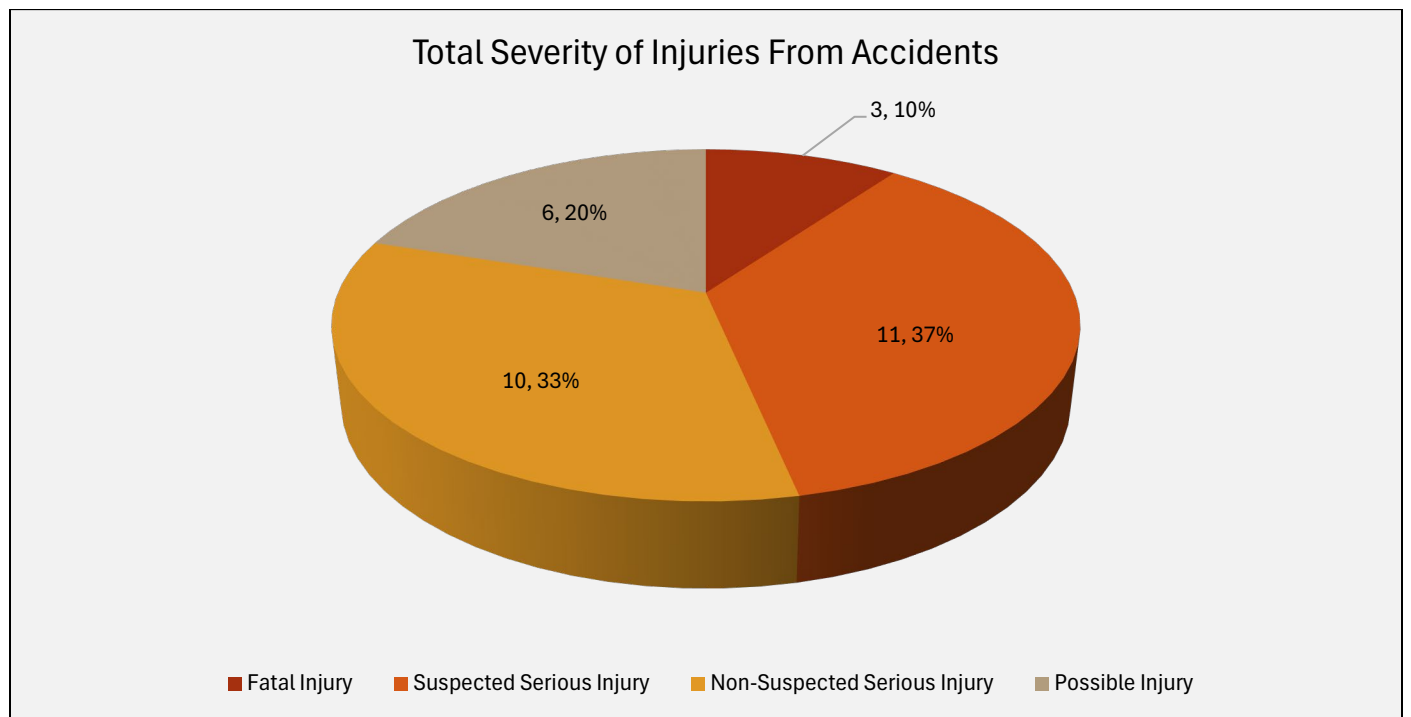
When looking at the location of these accidents, 74% occur on US Highway 190 with the next prominent being State Park Road 56 at 15%. The Naskila Casino, Colabe, Johnson Branch, and Ah Me Sa/Seans Way make up the remainder on the accidents. These remaining accidents are no injury designated accidents meaning that US Highway 190 and State Park Road 56 are the only roadways within ACTT that have documented any injuries between 2020 and 2024.



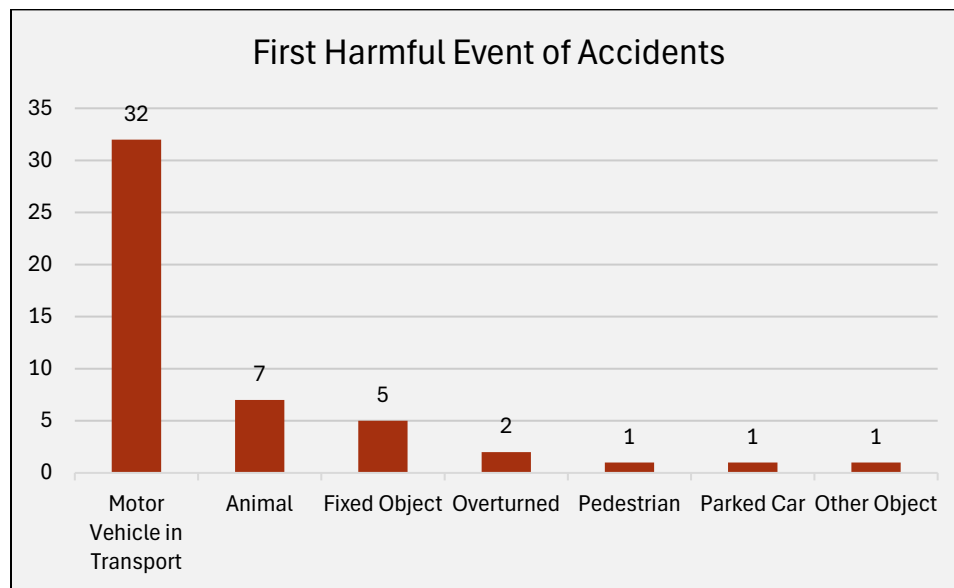


90% of the 30 injuries reported are from accidents on US Highway 190 with the remaining 10% of injuries occurring on State Park Road 56. Of the injuries that happened on US Highway 190, 19% were suspected of serious injuries and 11% were fatal injuries. US Highway 190 proves to be the roadway in most need of transportation safety updates according to this information.

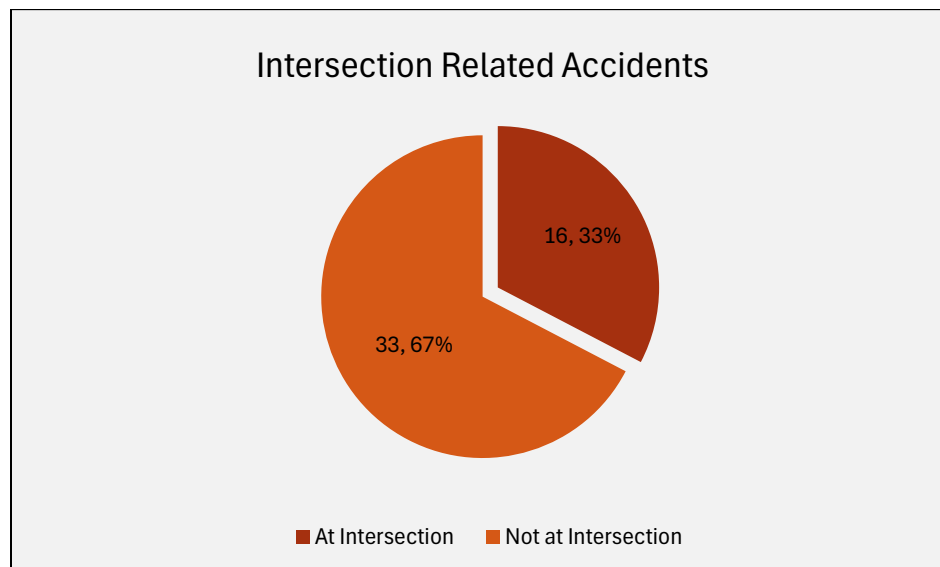
Total Severity of Injuries by Location.					
Streets	Total Injuries	Possible Injury	Suspected Minor Injury	Suspected Serious Injury	Fatal Injury
Hwy 190	27	9	10	5	3
State Park 56	3	1	1	1	
Total:	30	10	11	6	3

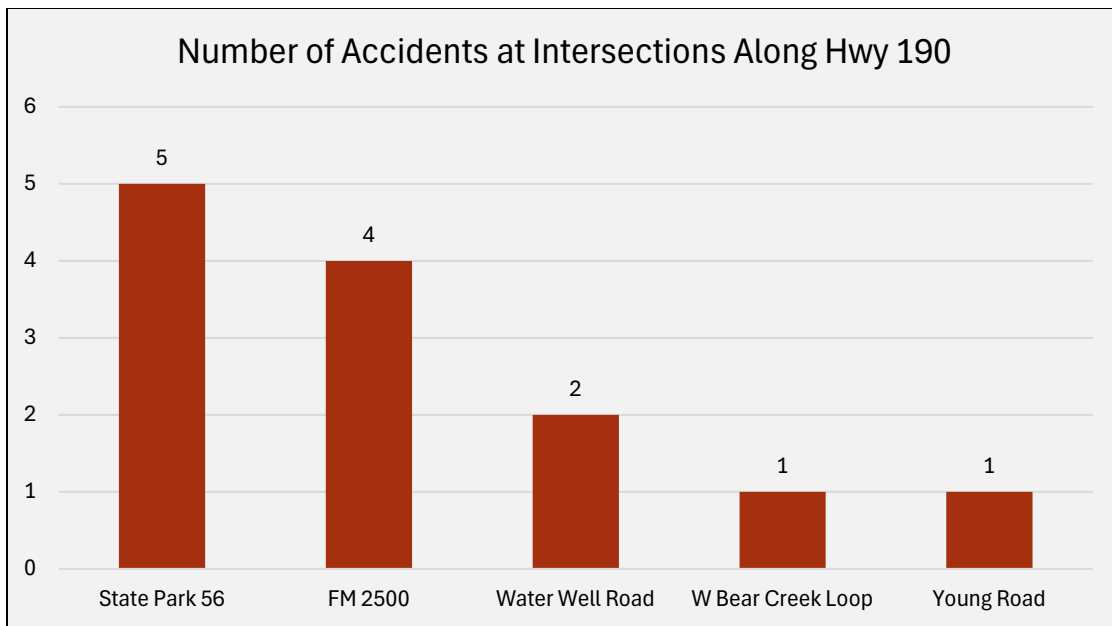


According to the 49 accidents reported by TxDOT CRIS, the first harmful event likely to occur was being struck by another motor vehicle in transport by 65%.



It was also found that 16 of the 49 accidents reported were designated as intersection related. Furthermore, 13 of these 16 intersection-related accidents occurred on US Highway 190 and made up a third of all accidents that occurred on this roadway.





EMPHASIS AREAS

Emphasis Area #1

US Highway 190:



Description:

This roadway has contributed to 74% of all accidents between 2020 and 2024 while being the only roadway with fatalities at 2 fatal accidents and 3 fatalities. This makes US Highway 190 a top priority for safety-related improvements. Majority of documented accidents with injuries on US Highway 190 involve failing to yield right of way, failing to control speed, and faulty lane changing and passing.

Goal:

Discover methods and strategies to reduce accidents on US Highway 190.

Strategies:

- Seek further funding awards from various grants to finance investigations, plans, and projects.
- Consult with transportation professionals to develop solutions.
- Petition TxDOT through accident data presented in this STSP to improve critical safety issues involving this roadway.

Emphasis Area #2

US Highway 190/State Park Road 56 Intersection:



Description:

The intersection between State Park Road 56 and US Highway 190 has been responsible for 5 individual accidents between 2020 and 2024. Both these roadways are the most traveled roads within the ACTT Reservation and the main route to the Naskila Casino, Police Department, and the tribal campgrounds. With the potential of these accidents increasing, this area is in need for safety improvements.

Goal:

Discover methods and strategies to make this intersection safer.

Strategies:

- Seek further funding awards from various grants to finance investigations, plans, and projects.
- Consult with transportation professionals to develop solutions.
- Petition TxDOT through accident data presented in this STSP to improve critical safety issues involving this transition of State Park Road 56 to US Highway 190.

Emphasis Area #3

US Highway 190/FM 2500 Intersection:



Description:

Although the intersection at FM 2500 and US Highway 190 is not as prone to accidents as the intersection at State Park Road 56 and US Highway 190, this intersection is still in need of safety improvements. 4 intersection related accidents occurred here between 2020 and 2024 with one resulting in a suspected serious injury.

Goal:

Discover methods and strategies to make this intersection safer.

Strategies:

- Seek further funding awards from various grants to finance investigations, plans, and projects.
- Consult with transportation professionals to develop solutions.
- Petition TxDOT through accident data presented in this STSP to improve critical safety issues involving this transition of FM 2500 to US Highway 190.

Emphasis Area #4

Local Tribal Roadways:

Description:

Many of the local tribal roadways are underdeveloped with unstable dirt surfacing, poor roadside drainage, and lack of important traffic signs. These conditions have the potential to cause serious injuries if they are left alone, especially as vehicles traveling on these roadways are increasing. Dirt roads are routinely maintained and regraded by ACTT to mitigate the potential of accidents occurring, but this method continues to be costly and must be done excessively at times. Either more sustainable methods need to be developed to better maintain these roadways or permanent low maintenance solutions should be explored.

Goal:

Discover more sustainable methods and strategies to make local tribal roads easier to maintain and develop permanent low maintenance solutions that could be implemented.

Strategies:

- Seek further funding awards from various grants to finance investigations, plans, and projects.
- Consult with transportation professionals to develop solutions.
- Develop a feasibility study that identifies issues and discusses costs of lower maintenance solutions.
- Create a cost-benefit worksheet to identify strategies that will be beneficial.