

TRANSCRIPT

Tele-Workshop: Tribal Involvement with Byway Planning

>> So, again, welcome to the Tele-Workshop, Tribal Involvement for Byways. I am pleased to say that we have quite a bit of expertise on the phone. We have Scott Sufficool who's our Tribal Liaison. He'll be facilitating us today. We also have with us Ed Hall III. He's with BIA and Scott will, of course, introduce each of you. We have Pam Ternes and she's joining us for some byway perspectives from North Dakota. We have Virginia Yazzie and she's also joining us for some byway perspectives from Arizona. So, with that, we'd like to turn the call over to Scott.

>> Well, thank you, Chel, and welcome everyone. I appreciate you all taking time today to join us and thank you, Chel, for setting up today's call. I guess just to kind of set the foundation here; one of the goals that both the America's Byways Resource Center and the National Byways Program has set for the last year or so is to try to do tribal outreach in the byways program. And as a result of this, I think we're seeing a growing interest by tribes, and byways either situated next to tribes, who have an interest in tribes and wanting more information and I guess opening dialogue between the two. And so, what we'll do today is try to begin that broader dialogue and we've invited three very special guests in regards to tribal byways to join us and share some of their experiences and their knowledge that will hopefully get many of us who are working on byways or is in the byway field to start thinking about how tribes are going to be able to, you know, certainly enhance or participate and collaborate with the byways work that's going on in the near tribes, or you know, on reservations. And so, with that--I'm actually at home sick today so I'm not going to speak much longer. What I'd like to do is first introduce Ed Hall, Edward Hall III is with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior and he's a transportation specialist. And Ed has been on the transportation field for almost, I don't know how many years, quite a few years. He's one of the original leaders in the byways world in regards to Indian tribes. And so, with that, I'd like to ask Ed if maybe he could maybe start the conversation going and maybe you should go ahead and introduce Pam and Virginia as well.

>> All right. Thank you, Scott. I'd like to thank you for inviting us to have this conversation today. I think it's something that, of course, I feel is very near and dear to my heart, but the role of tribes and tribal communities in the Scenic Byways Program, I think, has always been one of the main elements and hopes that we've always had in regards to a successful and full program. In the years that I've been working, of course, the program has evolved and part of the evolution is the role of tribal governments in the program. The last highway bill provided tribes even greater opportunities for participation in the Scenic Byways Program. But in regard to my own personal history in working with the Scenic Byways Program and tribal tourism development, it's been very interesting to witness the evolution of interest and awareness in regard to what you would call the layers of history of an area and the outreach that is happening from various communities in regard to bringing back some of the historical knowledge about an area that may have been essential historically to them but they don't necessarily have people there at this time who are available to fill in the gaps. I think the history of the United States of course is one of many different layers and the indigenous peoples of the United States are a key component to the landscape of this country. And when people come to visit especially internationally, although it's not limited of course to the international market, but there's very much an interest into those layers of history and the story of the indigenous people. Excuse me. The American Indian community, of course, over time has had many changes and, you know, we just finished the [INDISTINCT] Park bicentennial. I think that was one prime example to showcase, you know, how tribe has moved from their aboriginal homeland or has traversed the landscape and have left behind many different elements of history and have various attachments to the landscape or have, you know, been displaced from areas that are essential to their tribe's story. And I think that when you start looking at the Scenic Byways Program, there's a prime opportunity for the tribes to be able to reconnect and to provide their stories once again. It's also a great opportunity for the byways community to enhance what they have and to enhance the relationships that they have. My focus has been how to do, how to work with tribes in providing them the opportunity to tell their own story, so that we're not necessarily writing or providing an

interpretation on behalf of the community but that we're including and developing the communication so that that story can remain vital and can be attached then to people within the framework of how it's presented. So, you know, even though we may be talking about in some instances historical information, I think it's important for people to understand that Indian country is still a vital part of the fabric of this country and that we have tribal communities still within our country that are continually moving forward. So, I think that this Tele-Workshop is very important because we're providing yet another step in opening up the dialogue so that the tribal communities are seen as important partners. We have today I think two very excellent examples of Tribal Scenic Byways from program directors, Verginia Yazzie from Navajo Nation and Pam Ternes from the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota. I've worked with Verginia for many years. She's been with the Navajo Tourism and then developed their Scenic Byways Program. And of course, Pam has worked with Standing Rock Community College and helped develop their program through the college which is kind of unique. Now, one of the things that we have to keep in mind is the fact that we're working with tribal governments and tribal communities and that how tribes establish and develop their programs or their processes are unique to each individual tribe. And so, it's important to be very respectful and mindful of how you communicate with these tribal communities. I'd like to give Verginia and Pam an opportunity to discuss their programs and their stories in regard to the development of what they have so they'd also like to talk about not just development of byways on Indian lands and Indian homelands, but tribal involvement in scenic byways that are not necessarily, you know, currently crossing tribal lands per se but that they have a tribal story. So, Verginia, I guess, would you like to introduce yourself and tell a little bit about your story?

>> Yeah. Good morning. Again, my name is Verginia Yazzie and I'm with the Navajo Tourism Department. I started the Scenic Byways Program back in I guess, about 1992 and I just kind of proclaimed myself as the coordinator. But what I want to share with you is how we can get the tribal government involved. I know that each tribe is different and therefore their priorities are different and the landscape is different and that would have a big impact on the number of roads that they have on their reservation. And so, I'm going to talk from that perspective. When the scenic byways was established, the tribes also were allocated money for their program, and it was called the Indian Road Program and for the Navajo nation, that's where the scenic byways funds are channeled, and of course, then, they go down to planning and construction. So, there's different layers that you need to go. And for the states that want to involve tribes in their planning for scenic byways, I would think that the best place to start off would be with the Tribal Department of Transportation Development programs and then also with the Tourism. The reason why I say that the DOT program is because that's where the funds are channeled through, and that's part of their responsibility, the Scenic Roads. And as far as Tourism's involvement, well, we look at it, at the Scenic Byway as a product, something that we could develop and market and bring people into our reservation. And even if it's outside the reservation, we can certainly market them and share some of the benefits of the tourism and then I think--so that would be a start. And the next thing is probably is to sit down with the appropriate people from the transportation tourism department, then exchange their goals and what you want for the byways to do and I think, I've noticed that a lot of these scenic byway programs are non-profit. You have a lot of people from the community that just kind of volunteer and are in organizations. The difference with the tribe would be, at least with ours, is that it would be a tribal program that would spearhead the Scenic Byway Program. And I think when we talk about the scenic byways with the tribal leaders, the emphasis would be on the protection and the preservation of those resources along the road and also the culture, and then another big concern would be their economic impact and then, again, like Ed was saying, it's sharing their stories, that they would have an opportunity to tell their story the way they want to and then market that. And as you develop this partnership with the, you know, with the tribes and the government then you could develop a Memorandum of Understanding. A good example for Navajo is with the Vermillion Scenic Byway over in the northwest part of the reservation. I think it was DLM, the Forest Service and the community of Cardona that invited Navajo, and that was like our first involvement with the Scenic Byway. And in establishing that MOU, it outlines the responsibility of, you know, the partners, which is really good because then, we can come back and organize our own task force that could work on those. And so, because within at least with Navajo,

again like I said, it's hard to recruit volunteers, and if we do have volunteers from the community, we need to reward them or keep them going by maybe a stipend so I even out roles and responsibilities for each of the members within our task force. It seems like they get more interested and want to participate. So, I think that would be the best way. Then the tribal person can work closely with the organization and make sure that there are inputs from the government and from the local people. And in developing that organization is where I think tribes would probably need a lot of help, again, with the recruitment and making sure that that organization is sustainable and that there is a lot of training going on. So, just in developing our Scenic Byway Program, these are some of the things that we went through and just didn't really know where we would go with it, but I think we've done a lot of good work. And the other thing is when you establish those MOUs with your partners; I would recommend quarterly meetings with the tribe. Another example of that is working with Cleo Bradford who is with the Four Corners Heritage Council and he has been spearheading and trying to meet with the 3 states that we work with, Utah, Arizona and Colorado, just to get that partnership going and make sure that, you know, we all participate.

>> And New Mexico.

>> Oh, yes. Oh, I'm sorry, yes, definitely in New Mexico.

>> Verginia?

>> Yes.

>> This is Scott. This is for the people on the call who may not be familiar. Maybe, you could describe a little about the Navajo Nation and how large of an area we are talking. And for those who are listening, I think Verginia is providing probably the most complicated example of what the Navajo nation as far as the tribe had to do with regard to coordinating with both internally with the tribal government, with the tribal communities, their Federal partners, the 4 states and other byway communities. Maybe, if you could describe kind of the reservation and kind of your homeland that they might contact as well.

>> Okay, I'm. Well our reservation, I can't remember where I put it down. I'll research but let's see. Our reservation is about the size of West Verginia and we're located in the states of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. And we have over close to 200,000 population and we have state roads crisscrossing the Navajo Nation. We have one interstate, that's I-40, and then we have three BIA tribal roads, county roads, private roads. And so we, I guess we function like a state but working with us are 3 different states. It's difficult because right now we've been mainly focusing with Arizona. We follow their procedures on how to establish the Navajo Scenic Byway. For New Mexico, they're kind of doing their thing over there and working, I believe, directly with the community. And Utah, it's been off and on. We work with them and we don't. But like I said, Cleo Bradford, he's trying to get up and organize so we could work more closely together. Our government, it's a three-branch form of government: the executive, judicial and legislative. Under the legislative, we have different divisions and the tourism is a division is under that legislative branch and also the transportation department and their division is Community Development and Transportation. So and then of course, we have the BIA to work with. And we have 101 communities where we call them chapters. So, each of those chapters have their own priorities and just working within the Tourism Department, there needs to be a lot of education going on as to what works [INDISTINCT]. We initiated our community-based tourism. Then, you should definitely go out the area and educate them on that. And also, we have to compete for the dollars because it's a population where we're looking after the needs of the elderly, the school kids and the general public, and the transit system is also under there that you have to compete with, so it's quite complicated. So, in establishing our scenic byway program that's inside the Navajo Nation, what I would like to recommend would be is to get one of the states to be the lead, you know, in their requirements and works to follow through, some of the systems that you need from the state that you can work with. I don't know if that's enough information. Scott?

>> Oh, absolutely. Thank you.

>> Thank you. We'll go to Pam to give an overview of her experience in Standing Rock.

>> Hello everyone. Wow, Verginia, 101 chapters, I thought 8 communities was difficult to deal with. I couldn't imagine. Good morning and good afternoon everyone. My name is Pam Ternes and I'm the Director of the Standing Rock National Native American Scenic Byways. We are an extension of the National Native American Scenic Byways which first originated in South Dakota. There were several tribes through there and then a couple of years ago, in 2005, Standing Rock and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe became an extension of that process. I guess, Ed, I would like to add, you know, I really liked what you said about the evolution and how scenic byways evolved and you know, this becoming a scenic byway, a Native American Scenic Byway has been an opportunity for our tribes to be able to share and promote the importance of our indigenous culture. And that was our primary goal when we first started in the planning process was, you know, we realized that we had so many stories to share and we just didn't have the avenue to do so. And we see Charter buses and they're still doing so. They're coming through on our reservation and they have their own step-on guides and they're telling who knows what kind of stories about our people in our area. I'd like to give you a little bit of background first of all about our byway. We're much smaller than Verginia. We're only the size of Connecticut. We're in a 2.2 million-acre reservation. We are in both North Dakota and South Dakota. We have two counties. We have two counties, one in each state. We have 8 tribal communities that we work with. We're very extremely rural. We do not have near the population that Verginia's tribe has; probably, I think it's between two states, 14, 15 thousand people. Our communities can be anywhere from 40 to 60 miles away from each other so we're very extremely geographically rural. Initially, when we--as Ed had mentioned, our byway organization is a tribal college. There are many reservations in United States that have their own tribal colleges which is a very unique opportunity for those communities. Our college has sought an opportunity to become a byway. However, we knew that our tribe was very resistant to tourism development for a number of reasons. And so I'd like to just mention some of the processes that we used to integrate our tribe in the byway planning process. The first thing that we did was back in, I think it was '97, we met with the senior of two tribal councils to request approval to just first of all just look at the idea of developing a scenic byway plan, what we called a conceptual development plan. When we got the go-ahead from the tribe to do so, and so what we did was we identified individuals from each of our tribal communities. Now, for Verginia, that would be probably impossible but we had representation from each of the 8 communities as well as from other key stakeholders, business owners on the reservation and tribal government officials, and they served as an advisory committee to help us plan, develop a plan. And the first thing we did was we asked the members to participate in some strategic planning to identify strategies so that we could promote tourism and the designation of the scenic byway. The participants also participated in a session that was led by a Native American consultant to address tribal cultural value. For instance, the committee identified that the principles of capitalism and individual gain are not an inherent cultural value. Personal gain is frowned upon particularly if it comes at the expense of the community or disturbs the national environment. And we realized that we had to address these barriers so that we could promote entrepreneurship and tourism development. These barriers were initially addressed by partnering the tribal programs such as the Tribal Business Information Center and other state and county representatives. What we did was we conducted several Native American-based strategic planning sessions, what we called "building circles". We worked with a consultant in developing this planning and we met in several key locations on our reservation and invited the community to attend. We then hosted a reservation-wide tourism summit which we had announced on our local tribal radio station. So it was announced twice. And then after that, we held a series of tourism workshops that we partnered with State and Tribal Tourism officials and the Scenic Byways to share opportunities to community members. And then as we were doing this, we had focused on highlighting Native American values such as respect and honor within these trainings. After we completed the planning process, we presented the conceptual development plan to our tribal council for approval to go ahead and pursue Scenic Byway designation and then we also

asked them at that time if they would designate the Byway organization which was Standing Rock College. I'd like to mention a particular challenge that we had, as I said the tribe was very resistant to tourism development and the most particular--the greatest challenge that we had was trying to bring on board our tribal historic preservation office which is just part of our, one of our tribal programs. Basically, just a little description of our inter-preservation office--here at Standing Rock, their primary focus had always been on pretty much just protection rather than preservation. We do have a lot of historic sites. I guess burial sites. There were a lot of earth lodges, villages here from the original indigenous people. And so they were very focused on the protection of these sites and actually hiding them. And so they were very resistant to the idea of promoting tourism and bringing tourists in, you know, and our idea was that, well the tourists are already coming. They are already coming here and they're telling God knows what kind of stories, you know, and this is an opportunity for us to not only, to share the stories but also to help with the preservation and the protection like Verginia said. That was the key element for our byway. So, starting in 1999 when we were working on the conceptual development plan, we just continued to invite to pitch into the program, to participate and as they said, they were very resistant, they didn't come to our meetings but we just, we persisted. We never quit. We continually sent them letters, gave them phone calls, asked them for their advice step by step as we're first developing the conceptual plan and then developing our quarterly management plan and finally implementing the plan. We just continued to persist in asking them for their advice. And finally in the last couple of years, they have actually become a partner and they are now helping us with our planning and our activities. So, I mean I think that sometimes persistence is a good thing. It's just how you do it: in a respectful way. And I don't have anything else to add to that, Scott, unless you have anything you would else like me to follow up on.

>> Pam, is there, when you did the work on the scenic byway program, did you work through the State of North Dakota or South Dakota or both?

>> So, initially, when we applied for state designation, we did apply through both States. We had to apply in North Dakota and South Dakota. And the same thing for our national designation, we had to submit two applications; one to North Dakota and one to South Dakota. And now what we've been doing for, actually just recently, I had compiled a list of our activities and fundraising that we have done since we started pursuing, first, initially pursuing the byway and educating our community and then once it became a byway. And we had raise over \$800,000 in funds before we even started applying for the National Scenic Byway Funds. There were, you know, there was a lot of planning involved. We did have consultants that helped us along the way whether it was in research, whether it was in strategic planning, training, those different types of opportunities. We--now, currently, the applications when we apply for applications in the National Scenic Byways, we have been submitting them on the North Dakota side. We've been working with the state and what we do is we work with the county on the North Dakota side of our reservation and what we do is a pass-through and basically, we managed the fund. The county doesn't have anything to do with this. They just passed the checks through and it's a pretty good working relationship.

>> Pam, this is Verginia. Do you have any tribal roads designated on your Res?

>> Yes, we do. We actually have North Dakota's State, South Dakota State and Bureau of Indian Affairs Roads, tribal roads.

>> Okay.

>> It's a combination. And I think from my experiences, I won't claim to be a road expert but my experiences with both North Dakota and South Dakota and the tribe that they have a really good working relationship when it comes to the road. Oh, I wanted to say, hello, Richard Justice.

>> Hello.

>> This gentleman was one of our consultants when we developed the conceptual development plan. Actually, he went to the tribal council with me and met the first time. We thought we might have a lock of hair lifted for a little while.

>> I was the only non-Indian in the room.

>> But it went very well.

>> It was terrific.

>> Yes.

>> Great. Well, thank you, Pam, for that and as well as Verginia for sharing your experiences and it's very, it's somewhat diverse in regards to, you know, tribal byway development and the processes that you need to go through. Another purpose in trying to share these stories is trying to open dialogue between maybe states, other states that tell you they don't have tribes or had a history of tribes, you can try to get them interested with maybe some information for tribal participation and what that--I mean one of our goals here was just to have some dialogue. And so, maybe Verginia, Ed and Pam, if you'd be open to just opening up the floor for questions and letting people ask you what's on their mind.

>> Hi.

>> Scott? Scott, I just want to recap. This is Pam. I'd like to just recap one area that I might have, as usually, I talk a little fast, but when I talked about, yeah, how we had a Native American consultant sit down with us and identify the issue with the idea of capitalism and entrepreneurship and how, you know, it was important that we tied in the tribal cultural value and I think that would be very beneficial to a community that wants--that is adjacent to a tribe that wants to work with the tribe is that they learn all that they can. If there's someone that could come in and work with your team or your community, to like to learn about the Native American values and what's important and what they need to stay away from, I think that would be the first step--that should be the first step into developing partnership with tribes

>> Pam, I think that's really important. I mean that's kind of, definitely the starting point in regards to what tribes are thinking when they first hear byways or, you know, what that means to the communities.

>> This is Verginia. On the same line, I'm thinking that, I believe that's really important although we're doing that at the tail end. What we've done this after we organized our scenic byway, we did recruit different people from the different department like historic preservation, the health department, safety department, parks and recreation, fishing and wildlife, county, whatever. They became our advisory group and then, so that was our advisory then, for each community that was along the roads that first got designated which is a BIA road and that was designated first by the tribe and then the state and that was prior to when the tribe could designate their own roads. And so, when we did apply for this application, we wanted to do the training like what is interpretive, what does all that mean. And so, the community will be trained on that before they develop their interpretive program. And the one that's really important I think is their resource protection and we had the historic preservation people come in and sit down with us when we wrote the application as to how we want to implement that and one of the emphasis that we put in the application was to make sure that the consultant that was hired to help develop that had knowledge or had worked with the Indian tribes before because prior to 2008, we had to go through the state and then the state had on-call consultants that they worked with to implement these projects for us. So, in all of our projects, we do a lot of training and a lot of community involvement and that's one of the duties or responsibilities of the consultant. By the way, we got, I think we applied for all 8 categories under the scenic byway. We got a grant for establishing our

scenic byway program. We have a marketing, free marketing program grant. We have the interpretive. We have the research. We have safety, recreation, the whole thing, so hopefully, we get the last two. Oh, we got a visit center over in Monument Valley, a \$3.1 million center over there which was also a partnership with Arizona and Utah and others in the area. Then, we're trying to get one going which was an application on March 2008 over at Antelope Canyon near Page, Arizona. So, if they get funded, we'll have two visitor centers up and going.

>> That's really great. That's an incredible story, the work you guys have put in down there in Navajo. Thank you, Verginia. I'd like to ask now. I know that the, all the participants are looking at their roster, either through my experience or exposure that they have been working with tribes or has some stories to tell whatever. So, I'll open it up for anyone who wants to contribute on that end as well as if Verginia and Pam and Ed would like to take some questions and put some inputs.

>> Yes. This is Roberta McLaughlin in the Caltrans in Northern California--a question for Verginia. It sounds like you have a lot of grant experience. One of the issues we still don't have a clear answer on, are those grants given to the tribes directly from FHWA or do you go through one of the state DOTs and have agreements with the state DOTs to get the grant?

>> When we first applied, that was back in 2002 up to 2007, we went through the state. We got designated a state and all the funds were channeled through there and then we entered into MOU with the state to go ahead and transfer or match funds to them. For 2008, we submitted directly to the Feds, so then, we will have to enter into an agreement with the Feds when we receive our 2008 funds.

>> Okay, thank you. That clears up a little bit. And then, I think, what I'll do is I'll follow up and see if maybe I can talk to your state coordinator and find out how they do that. So, Caltrans is still trying to struggle how to earn some agreement with the tribe. So, it looks like you can do it both ways. Thank you.

>> Okay. Just let me just elaborate a little more on that. Because of the sovereignty immunity issues, the first grant that we got was in 2004. We just barely got that that MOU or RIGA, Inter-Government Agreement, signed by our--by the nation, just Monday so it is a lengthy process. But, hopefully now that the other grant will just, you know, be signed a lot quicker than that.

>> Well, that's interesting. Okay. We'll keep that in mind. It sounds like you got a lot of good projects going on. Thanks for your input.

>> Uh-huh.

>> This is Michael Worth with Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway. Excuse me. I'm going to go along with Roberta a little bit and the question I have to whoever can answer it is, can a Native American Indian tribe file for grants independently on a non Native American-designated Scenic Byway? And what I'm getting at is that we have a scenic byway that has already been designated as All-American Road and I want to find out if our Native American Indians are able to file directly with HWA on this or bypass the state?

>> This is Verginia. I might be able to answer that. Are you saying that the road is on the reservation but not a tribal road?

>> No.

>> But then--

>> No. As far as I know, it's not on a reservation.

>> Okay. My understanding from talking to Cindy was that if the road, if it's a county road or a state road that is on the Navajo Nation, then the tribe can go ahead and designate that road in partnership with the state or county.

>> You know, if I might just interject myself. This is Cindy. I was just actually listening on the call but I thought maybe I could maybe bring a little bit to the table but it is a complex issue. Could I just ask that you repeat the question one more time?

>> Okay. Can a Native American Tribe file for grants independently on a non-Native American-designated scenic byway?

>> Well, the way I would approach it is no different than we would view any other project sponsor. And that said, they put together an application that is directly connected to the byway; sustainability of the intrinsic qualities and connect it to the visitor experience; and also, work to gain community support and in essence, draw in other stakeholders as part of the process, then, I don't see it as being any different than anyone else who would like to put a project together along a byway. Now, I think the added thing that you're asking is, "Can they deal directly with the federal highways administration is opposed to going through the state?"

>> Yes.

>> They do have that option. And I think that the best way to look at that is, "What is the best way to approach the project?" You know, we do have project sponsors that might be state entities that usually go to federal agencies or--you know, money is allocated differently based on the project. And if it makes sense and does it make sense for a tribe to deal directly with the federal highway administration based on the project itself and the stakeholders and the goals of the project? It may make sense to do that. It may make more sense to go through the state's DOT but tribes do have both options.

>> So, what you're telling me then is that on a scenic byway that has already been designated All-American Road that our Native American tribes can file directly without going through the state and without working with anybody else?

>> No, I didn't--I don't think I said that.

>> Oh.

>> I said as a project applicant, they have to--everyone has to work together along the byway. If there is no clear relationship to the byway itself, the byway entity, clearly, if it's a state-designated byway or it's a federally-designated byway, there are other stakeholders involved. And if it's inconsistent with all other activities going on the byway itself, then it's not going to look like a good application. And in that sense, so there is no distinguished--I would--we would not make the distinction between a tribe and any other project applicant that would be expected to do the same thing. Nobody should be kind of working independently from any byway organization or, you know, something that's contrary to the quarter management plan if it's for the byway itself. However, in terms of how the money flows, and really, it's all about that, a tribe does have the right to deal directly not bypassing the State of California or State--I'm not really looking at it in that sense.

>> Yes.

>> I would think that, basically, what you're talking about, you would be a partner. It's just really the ultimate vision on how you want the money to flow. I hope that clears it up a little bit anyway.

>> Craig, American Heritage of the South Dakota DOT, was the roading question on or off the reservation?

>> It's not on a reservation that I know of. Okay, we're a dual-state byway. Oregon is a state byway. We're Oregon and California and we have a lot of Native-American Indian Tribes. In California alone, we got 26 recognized and unrecognized tribes along the scenic byway. As far as reservation, as far as I know, we are not on any reservation. And the designation for the scenic byway was All-American Road was designated 2002, and it was not a Native American Indian-designation byway.

>> Well, this is Ed Hall with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

>> Sure.

>> I think the question is a very valid question and the issue is really what we're looking at in regard to who are the identified stakeholders in the byway, what is the--what are the layers of interpretation that are being presented along with the intrinsic values identified, and how do we broaden the playing field here if for instance--and this happens in many byways where the original designation or the original story's, scene's intrinsic values were one thing but they've discovered or have come to understand that there's another component in that there's tribes that has something significant in association with the landscape, with the area and would like to include that into the thread of the presentation of the byway. And what that would essentially entail is inviting the tribe to be a stakeholder and include them in the quarter management plan, update the quarter management plan to address that issue, and then to work with the tribe to help develop that interpretation because, you know, I don't think, number one, anybody could just go out and do some kind of overlay, independently, on a state highway that they don't have authority or jurisdiction over. But I would think that it would be incumbent upon everybody, all the partners, to look at avenues to work together and to find the best means of, you know, presentation and application. So, you have, you know, if you find that you have tribes that have a significant story or a significant piece to share to be a part of the byway, then you have avenues to gain funding. I mean you then work with the tribe to develop that component in your quarter management plan and the state and or the tribe can apply for funding to support the development of that interpretation. But I would think they have to go hand in hand, you know, so that it's a little bit more seamless and, you know, it makes sense.

>> Ed, I'll agree with you on your comments there because that is actually not an issue we are looking at, our tribes with open arms, basically. But the question came back to is that if I--if we have, along the scenic byway, if we have all the different tribes found directly with federal highways and not going through the state's coordinator on this, then, how do we know what's going on? We really don't. And then is it all within our quarter management plan? Does it give a better visitor experience or is it just a whole bunch of different entities filing for grants as they so chose and doing projects that are not uniform across the whole byway? And that's kind of where I'm going on this one.

>> Well, it'd be hard to figure out what kind of projects could be done unless there are, like, independent CD's or books or something that add another layer of interpretation. I mean, obviously, on the byway itself, within the, you know, the jurisdictional area where you could put signage or do improvement or anything like that, those types of project would have to go through the state. So...

>> Okay. You settled my question.

>> Okay, you know.

>> That's a perfect answer. Another question I have for you if you don't mind is, can you give me a good definition of Indian Country?

>> Okay.

>> Or can you send me to a location that would have a good definition of Indian Country?

>> Mike, we can deal with that after the conference. Sander can help you with that.

>> Okay.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you. That's all. Thank you very much.

>> Well, this is Scott and we have five minutes left, I think, if I'm not mistaken. Chel, let me know. And to kind of finalize some of the questions or the comments you have and reactions and then we can close up. Chel, are you there?

>> I am here. In fact, I had a caller on my end, John Holland, are you still on the line?

>> Oh, this is Gayle. I was hoping John was on the line. And it sounds like people are saying goodbye. I would like to make a comment, may I?

>> You are welcome to make a comment. Please do.

>> Thank you. I've so value this particular phone call and I also value all the work that's going on in the last short year I've been on board. I was lucky enough to meet with Scott face to face. He actually saved us by just mentioning one word different in an interpretive project that's going on the byway. It was brilliant. And he used the word--discover the river and he said, "Do you really think that a white man did this? It's probably that we might want to think about the Native American may have had a part of this story." We all laughed and we were so appreciative and John Holland is the leader of this sign, this particular signage interpretive project that's moving along. We couldn't do it without our Native American folks and I would like to just remark on the dialogues that just happened and I would just simply like to change the word "through" to the word "with." If we all mark together what the state coordinator done to our Native American byway coordinators having that Pam and Ed and the rest, and Verginia throughout the year, I am more than thrilled to kind of stay aggressive. Everything that's going on, be it in another state or "corner's area," we're always on a learning curve and I'm hoping, and if anyone else is on the line that our Four Corners state byway coordinators will be at least checking dates with Verginia hopefully, at the end of this next month. There's a Grand Circle Association meeting. So that's a big mouthful but I just don't want you folks to stop talking and letting us listen. It's so valuable and I'd love to hear--another conference call might be coming up in the next couple of months on this type of thing.

>> Well, Gayle, thank you for your comments. I certainly think that there's many ways we can continue this conversation. It's an important one to have. Does anybody else have questions for Ed or Pam or Verginia or Scott?

>> I agree. This is Katie with the Yurok Tribe.

>> Okay.

>> I wanted to just ask a question about the previous call for the Volcanic Scenic Byway. And that is, is there a reason why the tribes couldn't apply independently and yet still coordinate with the state scenic

byway coordinator? Because I think one of the issues that arises in terms of applying the funding is an issue of sovereignty and tribes want to act independently but that doesn't mean they can't coordinate.

>> Katie, this is Roberta in Caltrans. Are you still there?

>> Yes.

>> We--you know, the coordination is happening and we've worked with you folks as well--

>> Right. No I was, I was addressing the issues raised by the folks in the scenic, the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway.

>> Right.

>> Because it sounds like--

>> We have Sandra as well.

>> Uh-hmm.

>> Where is it? I'm here with Sandra Rivera. And, and there is not an issue with applying independently and oftentimes the tribe will come to us with their ideas for us to say, "Yeah, that will work," or "Maybe, we can look at this, or maybe you need to interpret this." And we did some of that work with the Pit River Tribe and unfortunately they did not proceed with their application, but the first thing that they were going to attempt was an interpretation plan of the things that they wanted to interpret along the All-American Road. And, so I think it's happening. Our issue though is the administration of the funds. That seems to be giving us a little heartache here in Caltrans, on how we administer the funds once the grant is awarded. And that seems to be the bigger issue for us right now. But in dealing with the Corot...

>> Curut.

>> I'm sorry. The issue was the designation of the road way. And it wasn't a national scenic byway. It was a forest-service scenic byway. And I think there's some--with dealing with FHWA directly; there were some issues there because they weren't aware of the national designation of the area that you folks are dealing with. And so, one of our concerns is, with dealing with FHWA directly, they still need to come back to the local coordinator to verify whether the road qualifies for national scenic byway funds. And that, that's where we ran in to some road blocks. Does that make sense?

>> Yeah. It was not my impression that--if it's a reservation road, I don't believe they need to come back to the local coordinator. If it is a state or federal road, I believe they do. Is that correct, Cindy?

>> Yes, that's correct.

>> Just, Virginia, I would you like to make a comment on that. I would really encourage tribal people to work with your state coordinators because they've got a lot of expertise in there already. Kathy Knatt was just great. I mean we just love working with her. She has a lot of expertise in the area and helped us. So, I think in developing that partnership, it's so important whether it's the US Forest Service or whoever, I think that it's good to have that partnership in there and work with them even though if it's just a tribal road that you wanted to get designated. It's a good idea to work with the coordinators.

>> I agree with you a hundred percent, Virgie. I think it's a way the coordination and collaboration is framed that's important so it doesn't become seeking approval. It becomes working collaboratively together.

>> Right.

>> I think it's that government-to-government relationship that tribes are sensitive about.

>> This is Pam and I agree with that too, Verginia. I think it's really important that you work in partnership with the tribe and the DOT. They have provided invaluable assistance to me, even just the knowledge that they provide is co-beneficial.

>> Well, this is Scott. I think that we're going to have to close this call today. I mean I think the idea that we may be kind of planning for a future cause, I think, is a great idea, and I think Thelma needs to kind of work on that. And I want to pass over to Chelle to maybe post this if we can. I'd like to thank the guests, Verginia, Ed, Pam for joining us as well as all the people that took time around their schedule today to be involved and to expand our dialogue that we've had. Chelle, can you--

>> Thank you everyone for joining us and just a reminder, there is an online discussion forum already on bywaysonline.org and if you want to continue the conversation, by all means, use the discussion forum and we'll get busy and put another Tele-Workshop up in the next couple of months. Thank you very much everyone.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.