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Standing Rock Tribe, North Dakota and South Dakota officials sign Traffic Safety Agreement

FORT YATES, N.D. – The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and the states of North Dakota and South Dakota signed an historic agreement to work together to improve traffic safety for their citizens.

Officials with the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) and the South Dakota Department of Public Safety affirmed the joint pact agreement with leaders of the Standing Rock Tribe on Monday, Jan. 30, during a ceremony at Fort Yates, N.D.

“Today marks a milestone in our efforts to provide safe roads for everyone,” says NDDOT Director Francis Ziegler. “By working together with these and other partners to make safe driving a priority, we can save lives across both North and South Dakota.”

According to South Dakota Office of Highway Safety Director Lee Axdahl, the document recognizes the benefits that the members of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and all the citizens of North Dakota and South Dakota can realize through enhanced cooperation and partnership among our respective governments to improve traffic safety conditions on public roadways.

North Dakota DOT Director Francis Ziegler and South Dakota Office of Highway Safety Director Lee Axdahl and tribal representatives participated in the ceremonial signing. The agreement symbolizes a common commitment to improve traffic safety on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation.

The agreement envisions culturally appropriate traditional media, social media and local outreach events promoting safe traffic practices and behaviors. A focus will be placed on efforts to increase seatbelt use and reduce the incidence of speeding and impaired driving. State officials will work with the tribe to complete and update a Tribal Strategic Highway Safety Plan aimed at reducing fatal and serious injury crashes on the reservation.

The Standing Rock Reservation is located on both sides of the North Dakota-South Dakota border west of the Missouri River. Fort Yates is the tribal headquarters.