

Recognizing Indian Tribes' Religious And Cultural Interests In Tennessee: Facilitated Workshop

December 2005

Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma

Background

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), federal agencies must consult directly with Indian Tribes when considering actions that may affect properties of traditional religious or cultural significance to them.

The Tennessee Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) engaged the U.S. Institute to help them develop a framework for consultation on transportation projects in Tennessee.

The two-day workshop brought together:

- 11 federally recognized Indian Tribes with cultural, historic and religious interests in Tennessee,
- Tennessee Historic Preservation Office,
- Tennessee Historical Commission,
- Tennessee Division of the Federal Highway Administration, and
- Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Highlights/Innovation

- Workshop participants jointly developed a Memorandum of Understanding template to serve as the basis for Section 106 Consultation agreements between FHWA/TDOT and each tribe.
- Tribes have endorsed this workshop as an effective prototype for building productive working relationships between agencies and tribes.



Results and Accomplishments

According to participants, the workshop is bringing about positive change.

- Government-to-Government Relationships
"We are on the right track to establishing a formal government-to-government relationship".
- Establishment of Signed Agreements
"We know how to better draft agreements that will evolve into signed agreements between tribes and the DOT."
- Increased Effectiveness
All respondents to an evaluation survey indicated the workshop will have:
 - A positive impact on their effectiveness in the future, and
 - A positive impact on their organizations' functions in the future.

Credits

Project Partner

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