

## **STR Staff Notes on Quarterly Reports for Indian Language Preservation Projects**

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### **Crow**

**Project Name:** *Apsaalooke Ammalaau*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far.*
- One project component from the Agreement was inadvertently left out of this quarterly report. It is “(e) Develop an Apsaalooke language website”. The project contact confirms that this component is still part of the project.

**Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far.*
- As regards “(e) Develop an Apsaalooke language website”: They have hired a contractor who has been working on the website for three weeks. They estimate that this component is now “50% complete.”
- After this report was filed, progress was made on “(c) Storytelling Circle by elder mentors”. They have identified the elders who will participate and they estimate that this component is now “20% complete.”

**Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far.*

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:**

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### **Blackfeet**

**Project Name:** *Blackfeet Indian Language Preservation Program*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far* (in that there has been no suggestion of altering its scope).

**Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation: Most activities are 1-4 months behind the Agreement's implementation schedule (Appendix B)
- The detailed narrative portion of the report primarily cited meetings that had taken place and little in the way of substantive progress.
- One of the project leaders writes, as of December 9: "At this point in the project we have not expended any funds to date... We are currently slightly behind our schedule as it states in the proposal. However it is believed that we can overcome this lost time and remain in schedule for the remainder of the project."

**Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation: None of the allotted \$250,000 has been spent thus far, making any assessment of compliance impossible.

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:**

- *The pace of activity in this first quarter is cause for concern.*

<b>Fort Belknap</b>
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**Project Name:** *Fort Belknap Indian Community Language Preservation Program*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: With no activities yet having taken place it is impossible to evaluate if the project is adhering to its original purposes. The project contact, however, states that it is their intent to implement the five components of the Scope of Work as described in the Agreement. That contact person has just been replaced by another.

**Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project is significantly behind schedule.*
- The project has five components. One of the components is described as "5% complete" and the rest as "0% complete".
- The project Application states on p. 6 that, "This project will start January 2014.". But the project Agreement's Implementation Schedule (Appendix B) calls for various activities during October through December of 2013 as well. This contradiction, and the delay in starting this project, were explained by the contact as being the result of November elections that resulted in new leadership and internal disagreements about the priority of this project and about the personnel who should run it.
- The MLP3 advisory board (referred to locally as the Language Preservation Committee) appears to be in the process of asking the Department of Commerce for an amendment to its time line. The contact feels confident that with a boost of FTE this project can get back on schedule.

**Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation: None of the allotted \$250,000 has been spent thus far, making any assessment of compliance impossible.

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:**

- *The pace of activity in this first quarter is cause for concern.*

<b>Fort Peck</b>
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**Project Name:** *Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes Language Preservation Project*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: The report states that the project advisory board might amend the project purpose / scope of work as regards one of its four central activities, described as “(b) Develop Nakona and Dakota vocabulary dictionaries”. The report notes that some dictionaries already exist, and the project contact adds that the board feels that hard-copy dictionaries might not be the best avenue for disseminating the languages. The board will discuss possible “technology applications” instead at its next meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Any desired amendments to the Agreement must be discussed with the MT Department of Commerce.
- STR Staff Observation: The Scope of Work in the quarterly report (as well as the Scope of Work in the Agreement) lack some clarity and transparency. The SOWs do not mention the planned “Language Immersion Camps” which constitute about one-third of this project’s entire budget. These camps are instead described in an appendix to the Agreement and also in the original Application. When asked how/where these immersion camps fit in the SOW per se, the contact stated that the benefit of the camps is “infused throughout” all the components of work—generating information for the language booklets, dictionaries, school curricula, and elder histories. (Staff note: Perhaps the only way to track progress on the Language Immersion Camps is under the “Project Sources and Uses of Funds” line item under the same name. \$83,432 has been allotted for that line item and \$0 have been expended to date.)

**Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears significantly behind schedule.*
- Report states that the project’s “advisory board didn’t get passed in [tribal] council until mid-November.” Tribal elections last Fall contributed to this delay.
- The project contact acknowledges they are behind schedule but states that they are working hard to catch up.

**Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation:
- Only \$500 of possible \$229,100 has been spent thus far, making any assessment of compliance impossible.

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:**

- *The pace of activity in this first quarter is cause for concern.*

## **Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes**

**Project Name:** *SPCC Intensive Salish Language Program*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far, albeit with one amendment.*
- The report states that it is modifying the number of months for classes from 12 to nine “due to delays in receiving funding from the state and the... CSKT personnel regulations for establishing new positions.” The tribe will seek other non-grant monies to enable instruction for the 12 months originally envisioned (thus instruction would continue beyond the September 2014 deadline through to December.)
- The cost savings from the above change allows them to increase the number of language apprentices from four to five.
- The Salish language project is accompanied by an impressive level of detail and documentation. The Kootenai language project has no accompanying documentation or detailed narrative to date.

**Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation:
- The report indicates “0% completion” for the Kootenai language project and “10% completion” for the Salish language project.
- No activities are yet indicated in the Implementation Schedule for the Kootenai language project.

**Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation: None of the allotted \$250,000 has been spent thus far, making any assessment of compliance impossible.

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:**

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## **Northern Cheyenne**

**Project Name:** *Northern Cheyenne [?] Preservation Project Pilot Program*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: The purposes of this project were unclearly expressed and are being unclearly reported.
- For example, the Scope of Work lists four main components.

- The first two are (1) Preserve and protect the language through perpetuity, and (2) rescue the language and culture from extinction. The words preserve, protect, and rescue are indistinguishable and more importantly are immeasurable. Asking for a “percent complete” for these overarching objectives is a misleading exercise. Nor does there appear to have been any attempt to link/correlate those overarching objectives back the project’s activities.
- The next component is (3) Fulfill the contractual obligations with the State of Montana. This should not be listed as a substantive goal: such compliance is assumed and expected by signing the Agreement. The final component is (4) Produce fluent speakers and proficient writers. There is no indication anywhere in the report, the Agreement or the initial Agreement as a target number for *how many* such speakers and writers are expected. When asked, the project contact stated that the goal is “30 more persons” who are fluent in speaking and proficient in writing as measured by getting credentialed by the Office of Public Instruction. This accountability measure is does not appear to be written anywhere.
- The more tangible deliverables are found in Sec. 11 of the report, “Implementation Schedule”. But even in this schedule of activities there is no mention of one big ticket item: the “mobile dictionary application”.
- STR staff has spoken with the Department of Commerce’s MILP3 program oversight person about the formulation and reporting of this project’s objectives.

### **Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project is significantly behind schedule*
- The report indicates “1% completed” for each of the four main components in the project’s Scope of Work.
- It cannot be ascertained from this quarterly report what, if anything, has actually been done so far. *There is no narrative*. There is only the checking of boxes for the implementation schedule—which differs considerably from the schedule milestones set forth in the Agreement (Appendix B).
- The project contact says the late start is partly attributable to have received state monies only in November. I have asked the Department of Commerce’s MILP3 program oversight person about this and am awaiting reply.

### **Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation:
- Only \$5,625 of possible \$250,000 has been spent thus far, making any assessment of compliance impossible.
- Adult immersion camp:
  - \$40,000 for a ~~five-day~~ two-week camp? Can this be better itemized so we can understand how this comes to &50K?
  - What enduring deliverable will emerge from a ~~five-day~~ two-week camp? [Agreement says the “goals of the immersion camp are acquisition of the Cheyenne language, appreciation and enjoyment.”]

- Why does narrative for the camp in the application include: “Every effort must be made to include adult-to-adult conflicts and feuds. A mediation process for such feuds must be established.”
- \$5,000 on preserving and restoring artifacts recovered under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). STR staff has asked the Department of Commerce’s MILP3 program oversight person how this fits under the legislation enacting tribal language preservation.

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:** This project appears to need swift intervention from Department of Commerce’s MILP3 program oversight person.

**Little Shell**

**Project Name:** *Preserving La Lawng Michif, Chippewa, and Cree Languages in Montana: The Little Shell’s Traditional Historic Languages*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far*
- There is detailed narrative for each of the 12 components of the project.

**Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far*
- The 12 project components are, on average, 11.25 % completed. Clearly the remaining quarters will be quite busy.

**Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation: None of the project’s allotted \$250,000 has yet been spent. The project contact notes this in a cover letter, stating that, “As you will see, we have not yet expended any monies. But we are just about to purchase equipment and cover salaries for support staff first pay period. So, we're rolling now.” Although the lack of any expensing thus far might at first seem to be a cause for concern, the report’s detailed narrative clearly shows that activity has been occurring on a number of fronts (and much of that has been in the nature of charting the waters and forming collaborative relationships—not actions that necessarily incur expense other than FTE pay.)

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:**

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**Rocky Boys**

**Project Name:** *Chippewa Cree Tribe Language Preservation Pilot Program*

**Adherence to Project Purposes:**

- STR Staff Observation: *Project appears in compliance thus far*
- There is reasonably detailed narrative for each of the 16 schedule activities of the project.

**Adherence to Time Frame:**

- STR Staff Observation: Most activities are 1-2 months behind the Agreement's implementation schedule (Appendix B)
- The designation of two hires as "temporary" and of two others as still "pending" could be cause for concern.

**Adherence to Funding Parameters:**

- STR Staff Observation: Only \$1,200 of possible \$250,000 has been spent thus far, making any assessment of compliance impossible.

**Other STR Staff Notes/Observation:**

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