



**Department of Transportation**  
**Office of the Secretary**

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September 4, 2020

Rep. Shawn Bordeaux, Chairman  
State-Tribal Relations Committee  
500 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501

RE: Lake Andes flooding

Chairman Bordeaux:

I will not be able to attend the State-Tribal Relations Committee meeting on Thursday. However, I did want to provide you written information regarding the South Dakota Department of Transportation's (SDDOT) involvement with the flooding of Lake Andes.

When water levels of the lake rose to a height that overtopped the state highway (Hwy 18/50/281), SDDOT initiated an emergency project to temporarily raise the grade of the highway to provide continued access to the community of Lake Andes. Shortly after completion of the emergency grade raise another rainfall event overtopped the newly raised roadway. As water receded SDDOT initiated a project to install guardrail to provide protection for vehicles and reopened the state highway once water was below the edge of shoulder. These temporary measures were effective at keeping the highway open through the winter.

As part of the efforts to maintain highway access to Lake Andes, SDDOT also raised the level of the eastern most road providing access from the tribal community to the state highway. SDDOT will also be completing work required to raise 383<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to a level that also ties into and provides additional access to the state highway. All this work is being completed at SDDOT's expense with no funding assistance requested from BIA or the tribe.

In the future SDDOT is planning to flatten the roadway slopes and extend the culverts as part of a future highway project. However, this work cannot proceed until the existing water level recedes.

Hopefully this information answers your questions regarding SDDOT's past efforts and future plans regarding flooding of the state highway near Lake Andes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Bergquist', is written over the printed name.

Darin P. Bergquist  
Secretary