



Think tribally, act locally: Typology of approaches used for tribal tobacco policy work

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Acting Locally - LEECH LAKE

Leech Lake is one of the largest Ojibwe Nations with >10,000 members. The reservation has 11 villages spread out over a large checkered land base, with three rural casinos.

Policy Making Process

- **Formal leadership** – Villages have elected Local Indian Councils plus a reservation-wide elected Tribal Council with some tumultuous turnover and controversy
- **Decision structure** – Members and departments have some access to tribal leadership

Key Local Success Factors

- Coordinators –First coordinator and program supervisor worked closely together – both well-respected tribal members with long-standing commitment to tribal youth. Subsequent staff turnover and lack of support led to less program cohesion
- Training – Initial coordinator participated in training and leadership programs
- Draw on local and cultural knowledge -Coordinators worked with and respected local villages. Strong emphasis on culture and learning's from elders

Local Challenges

- Turnover of staff lost momentum to move toward policy change
- Strong infiltration of Seneca brand cigarettes and tax issue mixed with sovereignty

Advocacy/Policy Gains

Smoke free buffer zone at village community center established by local coalition

Acting Locally - UPPER SIOUX

Upper Sioux is a small tight-knit Dakota community of <500 with a small tract of land and one rural casino.

Policy Making Process

- **Formal leadership** – elected Board of Trustees with stable membership
- **Decision structure** – TTEP coordinator has direct access to tribal leadership

Key Local Success Factors

- Coordinators –Coordinator is a young community member with a passion for addressing tobacco and experience as a casino employee
- Training – Coordinator participated in training and leadership programs
- Draw on social networks –direct access to request policy change

Local Challenges

- Lack of enforcement plan after policy win
- Lack of infrastructure for supervision
- No coalition or outside groups to carry on work or help with advocacy

Advocacy/Policy Gains

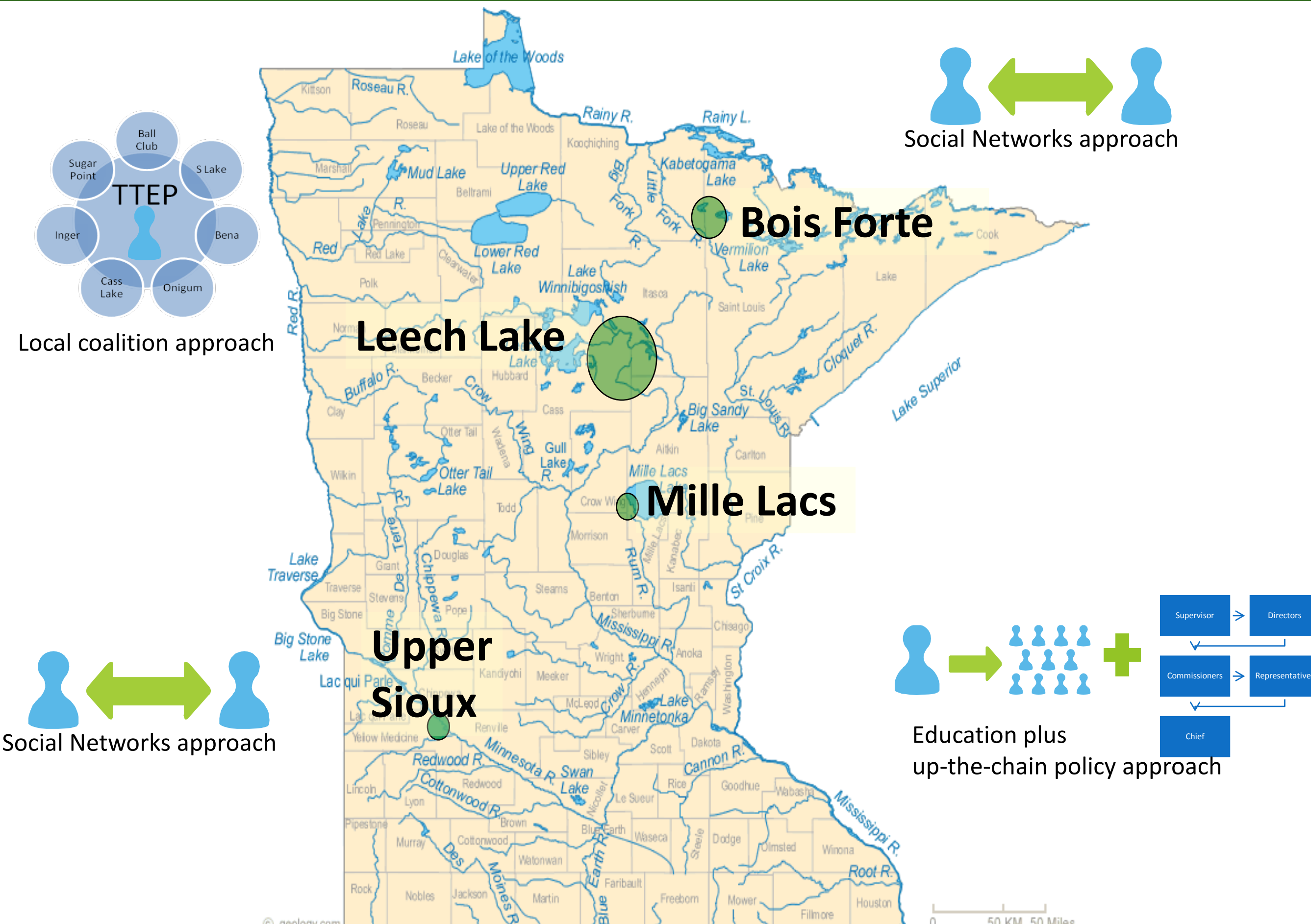
Smoke free buffer zone around all tribal buildings and playgrounds.
Casino restricts smoking for employees, includes E-cigarettes in casino policy

Tribal Tobacco Education & Policy (TTEP) Project

Background: The TTEP project is funded by ClearWay MinnesotaSM, a private foundation from the historic MN tobacco settlement. They have provided grants to support full-time staff in four tribal communities to work for the past 2 to 6 years on secondhand smoke policy and advocacy.

Methods: We conducted participatory, collaborative evaluation using mixed methods, including web-based monthly surveys with validation interviews along with annual reflection sessions, to capture the advocacy process from the vantage point of tribes.

TRIBAL TOBACCO POLICY & EDUCATION – LOCAL APPROACHES



WHAT IS "THINKING TRIBALLY"?

For Native people: Change ≠ hope Tobacco ≠ death
Change = trauma Tobacco = healing

All projects and policies must:

Respect – history of trauma and survival, sovereignty and choosing path to change

Restore- traditional tobacco as it is tied to cultural resurgence, hope and healing

Advocacy in Tribal Communities – Different governments/different processes

(-) No media or "outside" advocacy groups

(-) Cigarette taxes a thorny issue

(-) No comprehensive funding

(+) Individual member influence

(+) Social norms reinforce behavior

(+) Cultural tradition



Acting Locally - BOIS FORTE

Bois Forte is a small tight-knit Ojibwe Nation with ~3,000 members of whom about 700 live on the two villages on the reservation lands. It has one rural casino.

Policy Making Process

- **Formal leadership** – elected council with stable membership
- **Decision structure** – TTEP coordinator has direct access to tribal leadership

Key Local Success Factors

- Coordinators –First coordinator was young tribal member, whom the Council supported as a young leader.; the second was a seasoned, well-known tribal member.
- Training – Coordinators participated in training and leadership programs.
- Draw on social networks –Direct access to request policy change

Local Challenges

- Lack of enforcement plan after early policy win.
- Lack of infrastructure for supervision or continued work during staff turnover.
- No coalition or outside groups to carry on work or conduct advocacy.

Advocacy/Policy Gains

Smoke free buffer zone around all tribal buildings
Non smoking requirements for foster homes

Acting Locally - Mille Lacs

Mille Lacs is an Ojibwe Nation of about 4,300 members. The three districts are spread out over the land base. They have two large casinos near Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Policy Making Process

- **Formal leadership** – A highly structured three component government that includes legislative, executive and judicial branches, with frequent turnover in leadership
- **Decision structure** – Strict "chain of command" with approval required at each level

Key Local Success Factors

- Coordinators –Four out of five coordinators were tribal members. One was a seasoned elder who was highly effective with policy and coalition building
- Supervisor support – Same supervisor remained in place and assisted during turnovers
- Training – Coordinators have all participated in training and leadership programs
- Initial focus on education laid the foundation for and matured into policy requests

Local Challenges

- Political turnovers led to changes in health commissioners and slowed progress
- Strong infiltration of Seneca brand cigarettes but tax issue mixed with sovereignty

Advocacy/Policy Gains

Smoke free rules established in housing for elders and in all public health vehicles

Miigwech! Pidamayaye! Thanks!

TTEP COORDINATORS

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