The President declared a major disaster for flooding on May 13, 2011. Because of the major disaster declaration, the State will receive Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding to fund mitigation projects statewide to eliminate or reduce future disasters. The State will have approximately $7 million available. Application deadline is April 2, 2012. An applicant briefing will be held January 27, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at the Brown County Emergency Management Office at 25 Market Street, Aberdeen. Representatives of the State Office of Emergency Management encourage floodplain administrators, city/county planners, road and bridge supervisors, rural electric cooperatives, city/county engineers, city/county commissioners, town and township officials, and tribal council members to attend the briefing. Please email or call Nicole Prince, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, if you plan on attending (605-773-3231 or Nicole.Prince@state.sd.us).
I guess if I had to use two words to describe extraordinary work activities at the First District in 2011 they would be “CEDS” and “Redistricting.”

These two words generate specific work activities that only occur every five and ten years, respectively. The First District’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy “CEDS” is reviewed and updated on an annual basis with a major comprehensive review conducted every five years. Counties and communities that utilize voter districts are required to review and amend those voter districts after the decennial Census. This past year the stars aligned, and the First District was tasked with both work activities in the same year.

The newly adopted CEDS is a continuous planning process that involves public (government) and private for-profit and non-profit sectors tasked with identifying short-term and long-term development issues/needs and developing goals, objectives, strategies and projects to address economic development priorities of the region.

As a tool for area leaders, the CEDS offers both insights and information that will improve the odds of economic development success. It is hoped that the CEDS will become a mechanism through which more collaborative and/or intergovernmental work will occur to help overcome community challenges in a way that reduces duplication of efforts and more efficiently addresses community concerns.

The First District will continue to actively pursue partnership-oriented strategies as it works to fulfill the CEDS for several purposes, including: reporting mileage to the Federal Highway Administration, and county auditors, as well as creating county and city maps.

Annually, on behalf of the SDDOT, First District staff contact individuals with jurisdiction over roads and ask for assistance in updating any changes in an effort to keep this roadway information current.

Getting to Know the Staff...Ted Haeder

Todd stopped in my office this morning and told me to write something about myself for the newsletter. Since being born in 1974, growing up near Wolsey, SD, earning a degree from South Dakota State University and spending the bulk of my professional career in the employ of either the state government or a planning district doesn’t seem all that interesting I thought I’d share a story about my (late) Uncle George that my dad told me.

Uncle George, at some point during the nineteen forties, had a mail route, and one day he offered my dad the opportunity to ride along on the route. Dad said that the trip got off to a fairly uneventful start.

At the time and Uncle George was somewhere into his mid-twenties. Dad said that the trip got off to a fairly uneventful start. The back seat contained deliverables for the day. Stacked carefully to keep the wind from blowing them to and fro as the car did not have air conditioning and the windows remained down for the duration of the drive. Nothing seemed out of place except for an overcrowded box of tomatoes in the front seat that shared space between the driver and passenger. There was no radio in the car so Uncle George belted out hymns to pass the time.

Dad only had to wonder why Uncle George had such a large collection of tomatoes for about five minutes – until they met the first car.

As the approaching vehicle drew near, Uncle George gently removed a large, juicy, red tomato from the box. The tomato (large, juicy and red) went out the driver’s side window a moment before the two vehicles passed and exploded on the windshield of the other car. “It made an awful mess,” dad recalled. At the sight of brake lights in the rear view, Uncle George erupted with joyous laughter for a brief moment before speeding away and regaining his place in the third verse of Old Rugged Cross. Dad says he’s never seen anyone get such great enjoyment and satisfaction from the soft glow of brake lights. And they got to see it happen time and again that day because Uncle George was somewhat of an expert at chucking tomatoes into the windshields of oncoming cars. Dad was thoroughly impressed with the uncanny accuracy of it all. “He never missed.”

The rest of that trip went along with deliveries being made and hymns being sung – interrupted only by the occasional roar of brake light induced laughter. To this day, I am thankful that I never had to share the road with Uncle George.

**Annual DOT Roadway Update Underway**

Since 1995, the South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) in cooperation with the South Dakota Planning and Development Districts has been collecting city, county, township and federal roadway information using Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. This information is utilized by the SDDOT for several purposes, including: reporting mileage to the Federal Highway Administration and county auditors, as well as creating county and city maps.

Annually, on behalf of the SDDOT, First District staff contact individuals with jurisdiction over roads and ask for assistance in updating any changes in an effort to keep this roadway information current.

The assistance of county, city and township officials is critical to the accuracy and overall success of the SDDOT public road inventory, and we believe that we will all benefit from this multi-agency cooperation.

**Funding Available for Trails**

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota State Parks Director Doug Hofer announced today that applications are being accepted for grants from the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) for trail projects sponsored by municipalities, counties, state parks, civic organizations or tribal governments.

"Many hiking and bike trails sustained damage due to flooding in 2011," Hofer said. "This grant offers a good opportunity to apply for assistance in repairing those damaged trails."

The Recreational Trails Program provides partial reimbursement for approved trail projects. Eligible projects include constructing new public trails, rehabilitating existing public trails, developing trail-related facilities, and educational programs that specifically address recreational trail issues. The application deadline is Friday, April 13, 2012.

RTP funds come to the state through the Federal Highway Administration, and are apportioned to states by Congress to fund both motorized and non-motorized public recreation trail projects. The amount of funds available is based upon the number of recreational vehicles licensed in each state.