

Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series

4th Stop: How to Start a Volunteer Driver Program

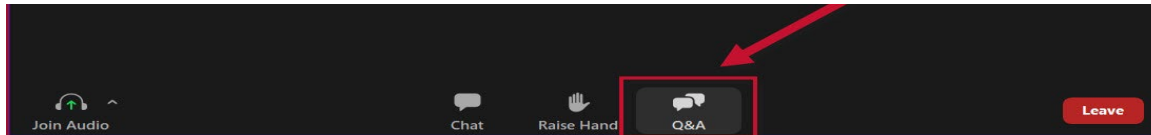
February 17, 2021 | 9:30-11:30 AM

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA)

Welcome! The forum will begin at 9:30.

Housekeeping:

- To view **live captioning**, click the “More” button at the bottom of your screen to select.
- **If you have a question for the speakers:**
 - Use the **Q&A feature** at the bottom of your screen to submit questions at any time. These will be read verbally by the moderator during Q&A time.



- If joining by phone, press *9 to raise your hand. The host will allow you to unmute during Q&A time to ask your question.
- If you have a **tech question** send a Chat to “all panelists.”
- A **video-recording** of this forum will be posted to the event webpage following the event.
- An **evaluation** and a **PDH form** (professional development hours) will be emailed to all attendees following the event.

Previous Stops/Forums

1st Stop: Current State and a Look into the Future of Volunteer Drivers

- 11/18/20 and 140 attended

2nd Stop: Policy Issues and Real Life Stories

- 12/9/20 and 133 attended

3rd Stop: Volunteer Driver Recruitment and Promotion

- 1/20/21 and 112 attended

Forum videorecordings and materials are posted on each event's webpage at:

www.coordinatemntransit.org/events/volunteerdriverforum/2020-21/

Today's Agenda

1. Welcome

Tom Gottfried,
Executive Director,
MCOTA



2. Working Together

Toward a More Age-Friendly Minnesota
Will Phillips,
State Director, AARP
Minnesota

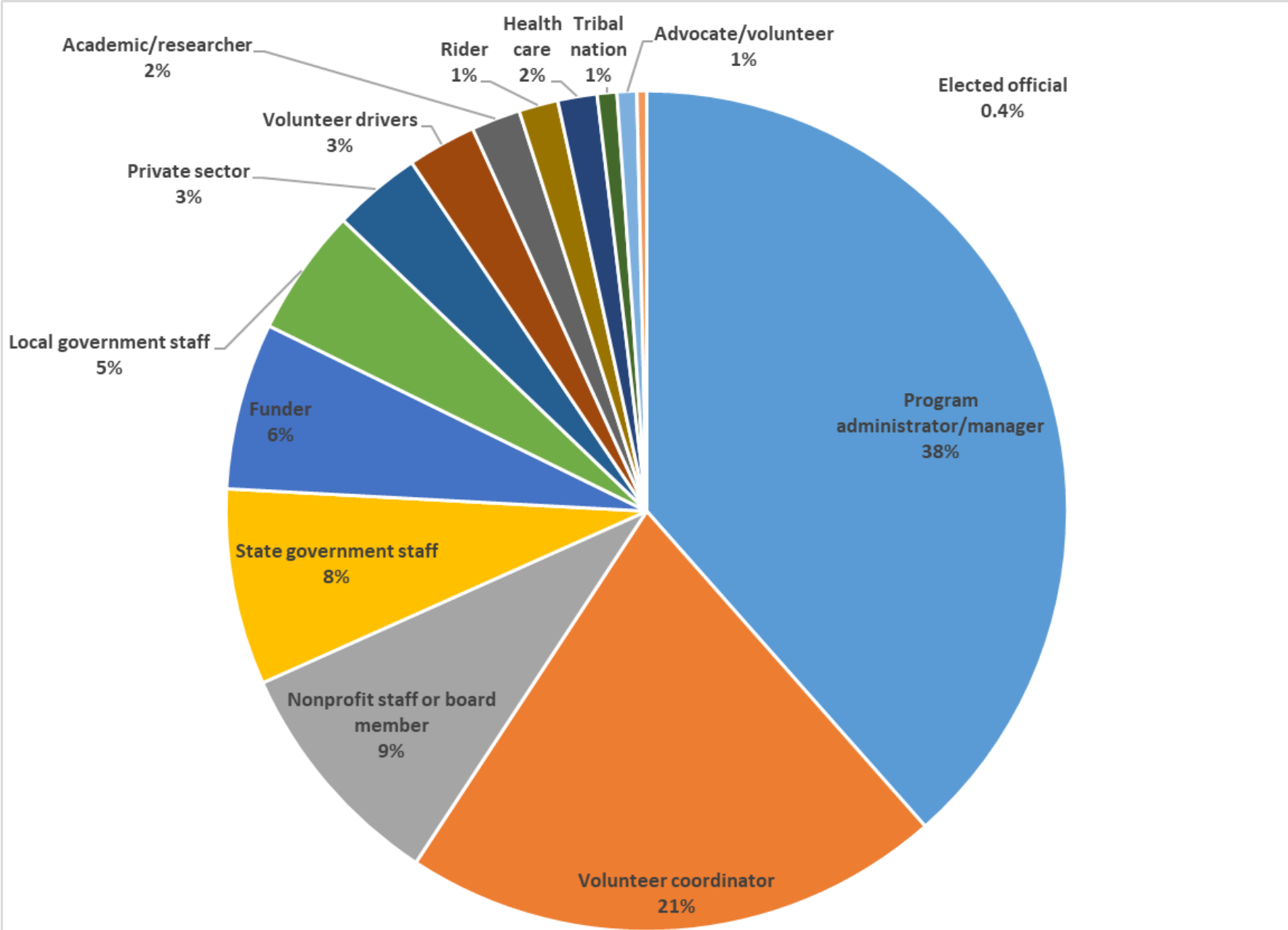


3. How to Start a Volunteer Driver Program

Jennie Rowland,
Transportation Manager, Big
Woods Transit, Bois Forte
Tribal Government



Responses from all series registrants regarding "Primary Role in Volunteer Programs"



Responses from all series registrants: “What area/county/counties does your organization represent? Or if you are a rider, what county/area do you live in?”

Hennepin	27
Dakota	24
Ramsey	24
St. Louis	21
Stearns	21
Pine	20
Mille Lacs	18
Isanti	16
Scott	16
Kanabec	15
Renville	15
Traverse	15
Aitkin	14
Anoka	14
Carlton	14
Chisago	14
Clay	14
Kandiyohi	14
Washington	14
Carver	13

Cook	13
Grant	13
Itasca	13
Lake	13
Morrison	13
Pope	13
Sherburne	13
Benton	12
Douglas	12
Koochiching	12
Meeker	12
Olmsted	12
Otter Tail	12
Stevens	12
Yellow Medicine	12
Crow Wing	11
Rice	11
Todd	11
Wright	11

Big Stone	10
Chippewa	10
McLeod	10
Pipestone	10
Becker	9
Cass	9
Cottonwood	9
Hubbard	9
Jackson	9
Lac Qui Parle	9
Lyon	9
Murray	9
Redwood	9
Rock	9
Swift	9
Kittson	8
Le Sueur	8
Lincoln	8
Marshall	8

Nobles	8
Wabasha	8
Wadena	8
Beltrami	7
Faribault	7
Goodhue	7
Polk	7
Roseau	7
Wilkin	7
Blue Earth	6
Brown	6
Clearwater	6
Fillmore	6
Mahnomen	6
Nicollet	6
Norman	6
Red Lake	6
Steele	6
Waseca	6
Dodge	5

Freeborn	5
Houston	5
Lake Of The Wood	5
Martin	5
Mower	5
Pennington	5
Sibley	5
Winona	5
Watonwan	3



Continued: Responses from all series registrants: “What area/county does your organization represent? Or if you are a rider, what county/area do you live in?”

- **Tribal Nations:**

- Representation across MN counties. Specifically:
 - **Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe:** Aitkin, Crow Wing, Hennepin, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pine, Ramsey, Chisago, Isanti, & Kanabec
 - **Bois Forte Band of Chippewa:** Koochiching & St. Louis
- **Blackfoot / Kootenai / Salish:** Flathead/Glacier County in Montana

- **National:**

- Montana, California, Virginia, New York, Wisconsin, & Washington, DC

Working Together Toward a More Age-Friendly Minnesota

February 17, 2021

Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series

 MINNESOTA

What do older adults want?

8 of 10
ADULTS

age 50 and older want to
stay where they live



**HOME AND COMMUNITY
PREFERENCES SURVEY 2018**

May 2018

AARP RESEARCH | AARP.ORG/RESEARCH | © 2018 AARP. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

AARP
Real Possibilities

Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series

m MINNESOTA

What do 50+ think about where they will live?



Source: 2018 AARP Home and Community Preferences Survey: A National Survey of Adults Age 18+



Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series



More communities should be asking questions like these:

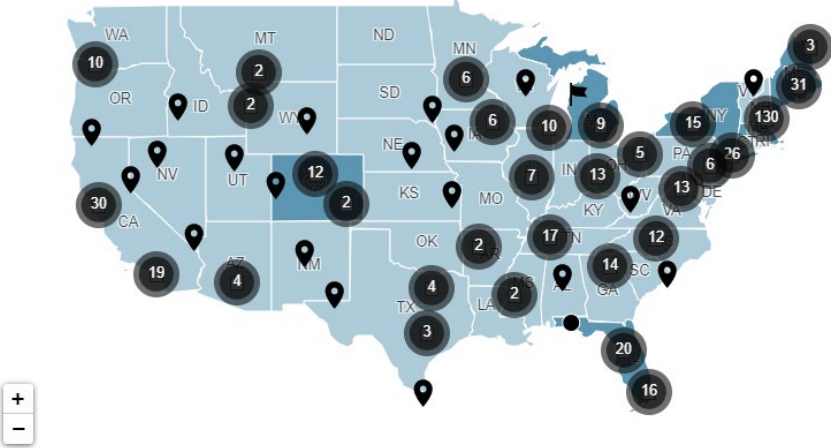
- 1. Are there ways to remain mobile once driving is no longer an option?**
- 2. Are there adequate housing options that are affordable, accessible and varied in type?**
- 3. Is there adequate, safe and accessible public space?**
- 4. Are there opportunities for engagement through volunteerism and work?**

AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

Nearly 500 communities + 6 states

Five-year cycle

Over 100 million US residents live in an age-friendly community



Search for your community at <https://livablemap.aarp.org/>

Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series





Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series



NEWS

Walz wants to make MN nicer for the elderly. He announces Age Friendly council.



BUSINESS

Minnesota takes first steps to become 'age-friendly society' for growing number of seniors

The Governor's Council on an Age-Friendly Minnesota likely will be formed during the first few months of next year to address demographic changes.

By Jackie Crosby Star Tribune | DECEMBER 12, 2019 — 10:13PM



Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series

m MINNESOTA



“Creating a good place to grow old has not been a goal or priority of most of the key decision-makers that shape local communities. But growing the tax base, developing efficient infrastructure, managing community amenities and neighborhood based economic development has been. Understanding how age-friendly communities achieve these goals is the first step in developing the value proposition.”

Ball, Lambert, Lombard, 2015 The Value of Proposition Age-Friendly Communities

Will Phillips, AARP MN State Director
651-726-5641
wphillips@aarp.org

Twitter: @willphillips74

STARTING YOUR OWN VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM

BOIS FORTE BAND OF CHIPPEWA

ZAGAAKWAANDAGO ININIWAG ISHKONIGAN





WHO ARE THE BOIS FORTE PEOPLE?

- The Bois Forte Band of the Minnesota Chippewa is a recognized Indian Tribe under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934.
- We are located in northeastern Minnesota with approximately 3800 members, 800 of which are living on the Nett Lake sector of the Reservation.
- There are 3500 American Indians residing within the Bois Forte Health Services service area.
- We provide transportation, medical, and dental services to all Native and non-Native communities throughout the Arrowhead region of northern Minnesota.

WHY TRANSPORTATION IS CRITICAL?

- Strong infrastructure
- Aging Population
- Returning Veterans
- Rural Isolation
- Economic Depression
- Health Care
- Community Cohesion
- Local Partnerships
- Responsible Stewardship
- COVID pandemic



WHERE WE ARE

MILEAGES

- Nett Lake to Virginia – 62 miles
- Nett Lake to Vermilion – 57 miles

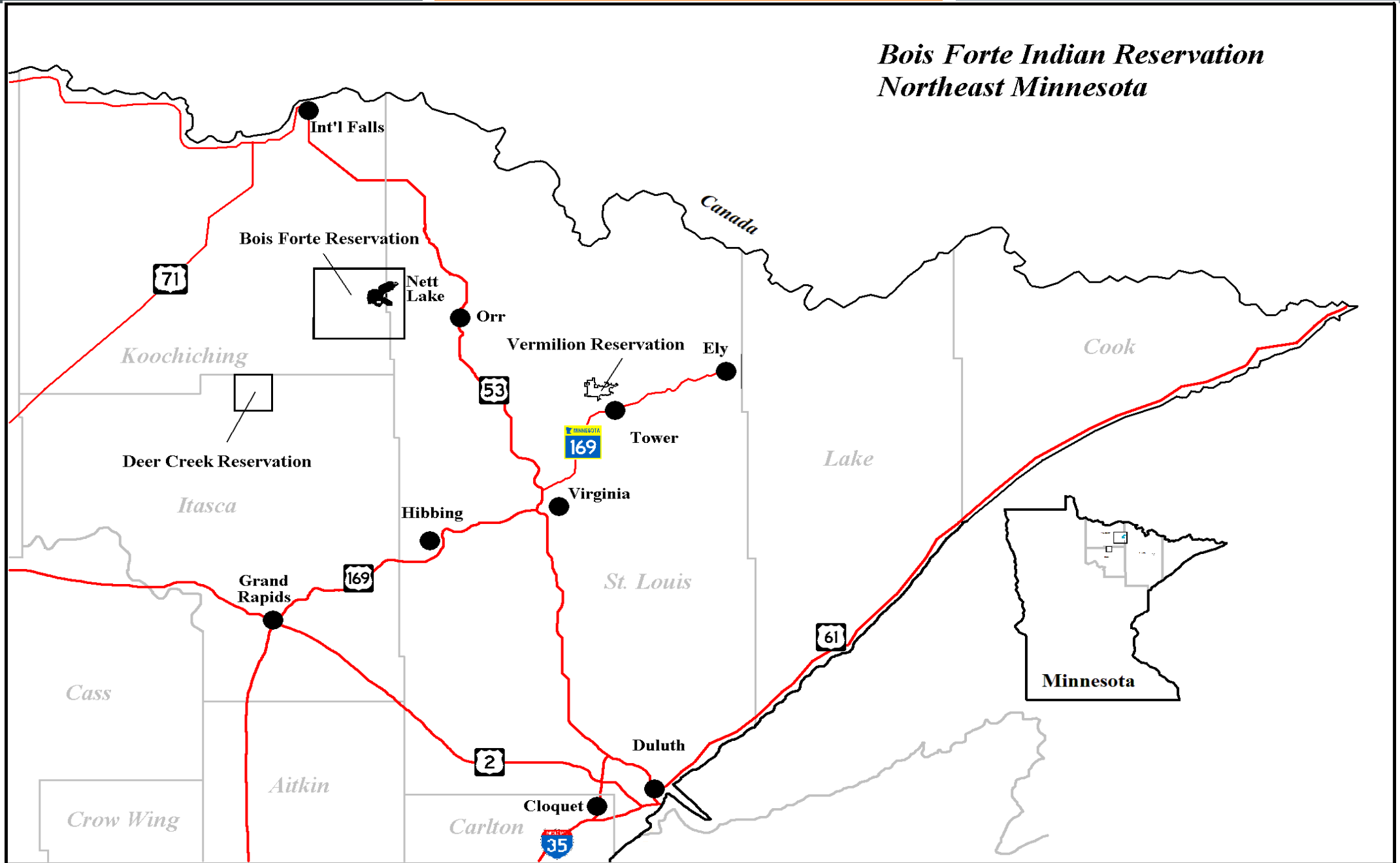
- Vermilion to Virginia – 26 miles
- Nett Lake to Duluth – 126 miles



WHERE ARE WE LOCATED?

- There are three primary non-contiguous geographic sectors of the Reservation. Nett Lake where the government buildings are located, Vermilion where Fortune Bay Resort Casino is located, and Deer Creek which has no services.
- In addition to being geographically divided, this northern Minnesota area is rural and extremely isolated and economically depressed. There is one road in and one road out.
- The travel time to medical, employment and social services is one hour or more in any direction. Even though we do have a clinic in Nett Lake and Vermilion most prescriptions and all referrals for testing and specialists go out to other locations.

*Bois Forte Indian Reservation
Northeast Minnesota*



SERVICE AREA-THE ARROWHEAD REGION OF NORTHERN MINNESOTA

- We operate all our public transportation programs out of the village of Nett Lake, MN which is located on the Nett Lake sector of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Reservation.
- The following map is a close representation of our service area which encompasses approximately 10,000 sq. miles
- We are the only public transit/NEMT/volunteer driver programs operating in this area and we dovetail our services with our neighbors as much as possible. We provide connections with Arrowhead Transit and with Jefferson Lines.
- Our demand service covers door-to-door transportation to all the small towns throughout this region for Native and non-Native communities.



BIG WOODS TRANSIT – CURRENT SERVICES

- We run two commuter routes from Tower to Nett Lake and three commuter routes from Nett Lake to Fortune Bay Resort Casino every day.
- We have shopping routes from Nett Lake to Virginia 6 days per week and from Vermilion to Virginia 3 days per week.
- Pre-COVID we also provided services to the Adult Day Centers and Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Center which will hopefully resume in the future.
- Free food shelf and cultural event transportation monthly
- ...and of course, BINGO.

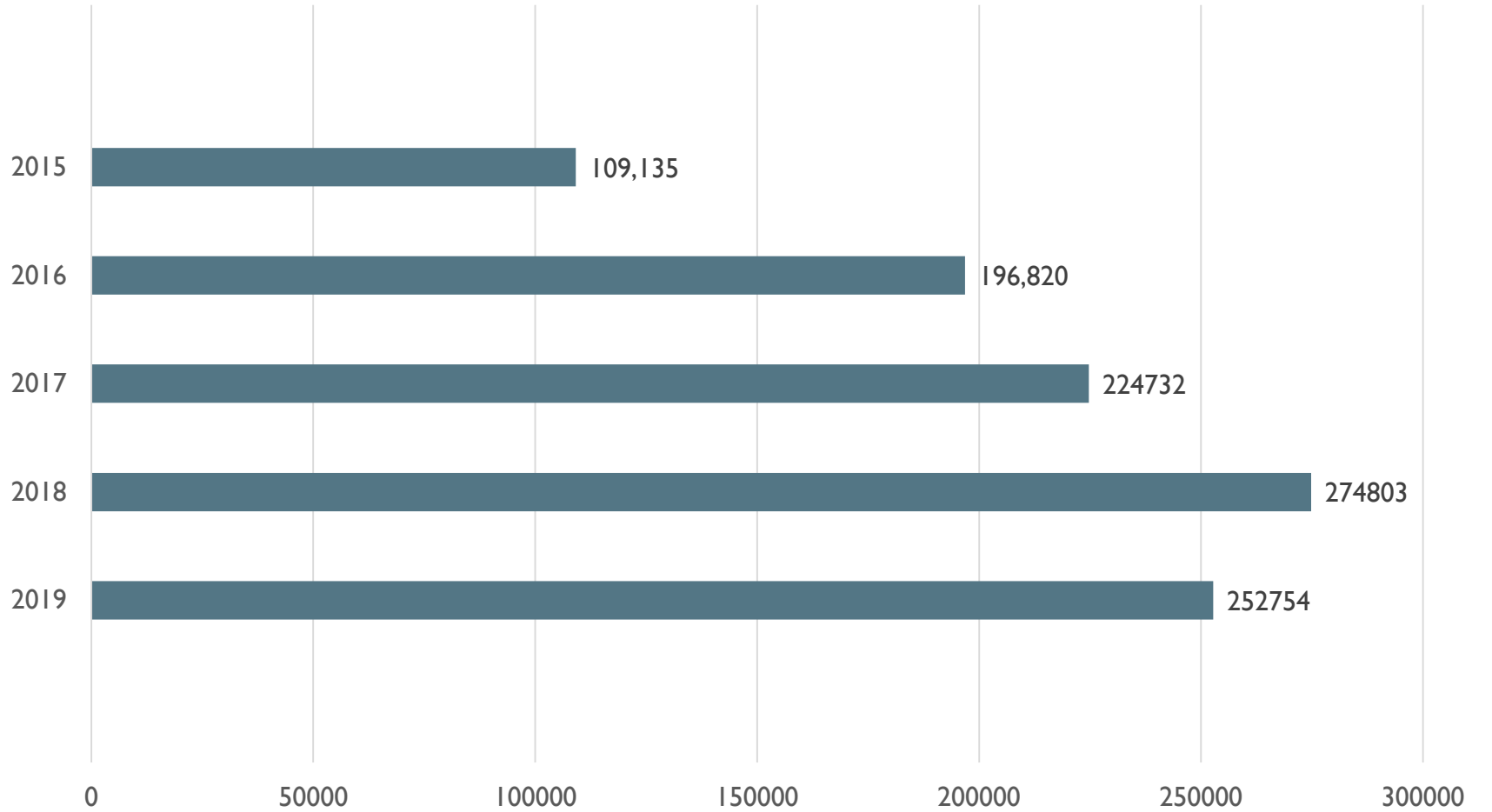


NATIONAL TRANSIT DATABASE (NTD) ANNUAL STATISTICS

- The following several slides show the data reported to the NTD annually.
- We have only listed to 2019 as that was the last “normal” year of data collection with 2020 having the government shutdown and 2021 with the COVID pandemic.
- Total mileage for public transit services are 252,754
- Total hours of service 13,119
- Total passenger rides given were 28,156
- As the only public transit providing services in this area the charts show a steady increase in community participation as more people experience the convenience of demand response transit.

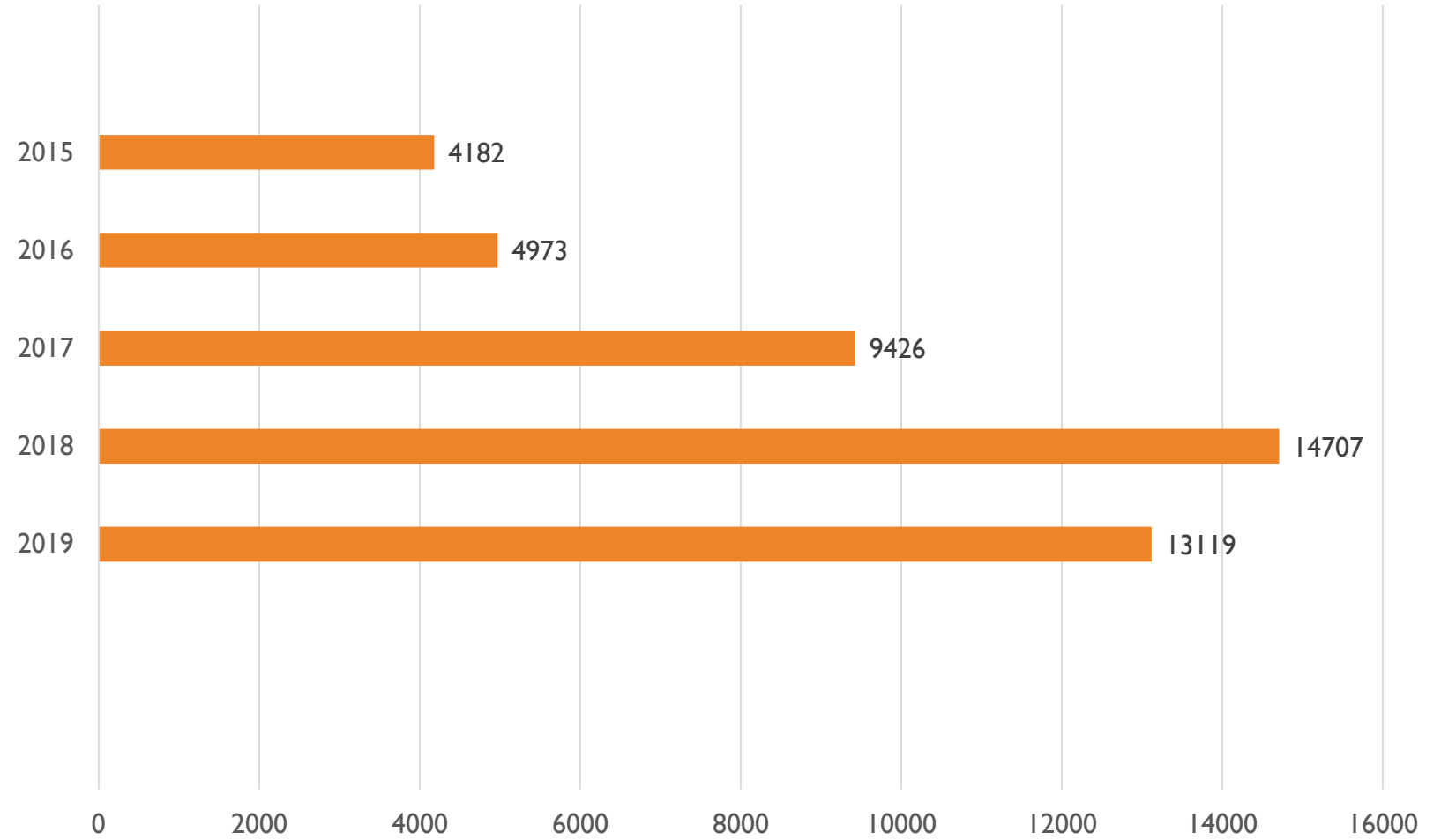
NTD MILEAGE

Total Mileage



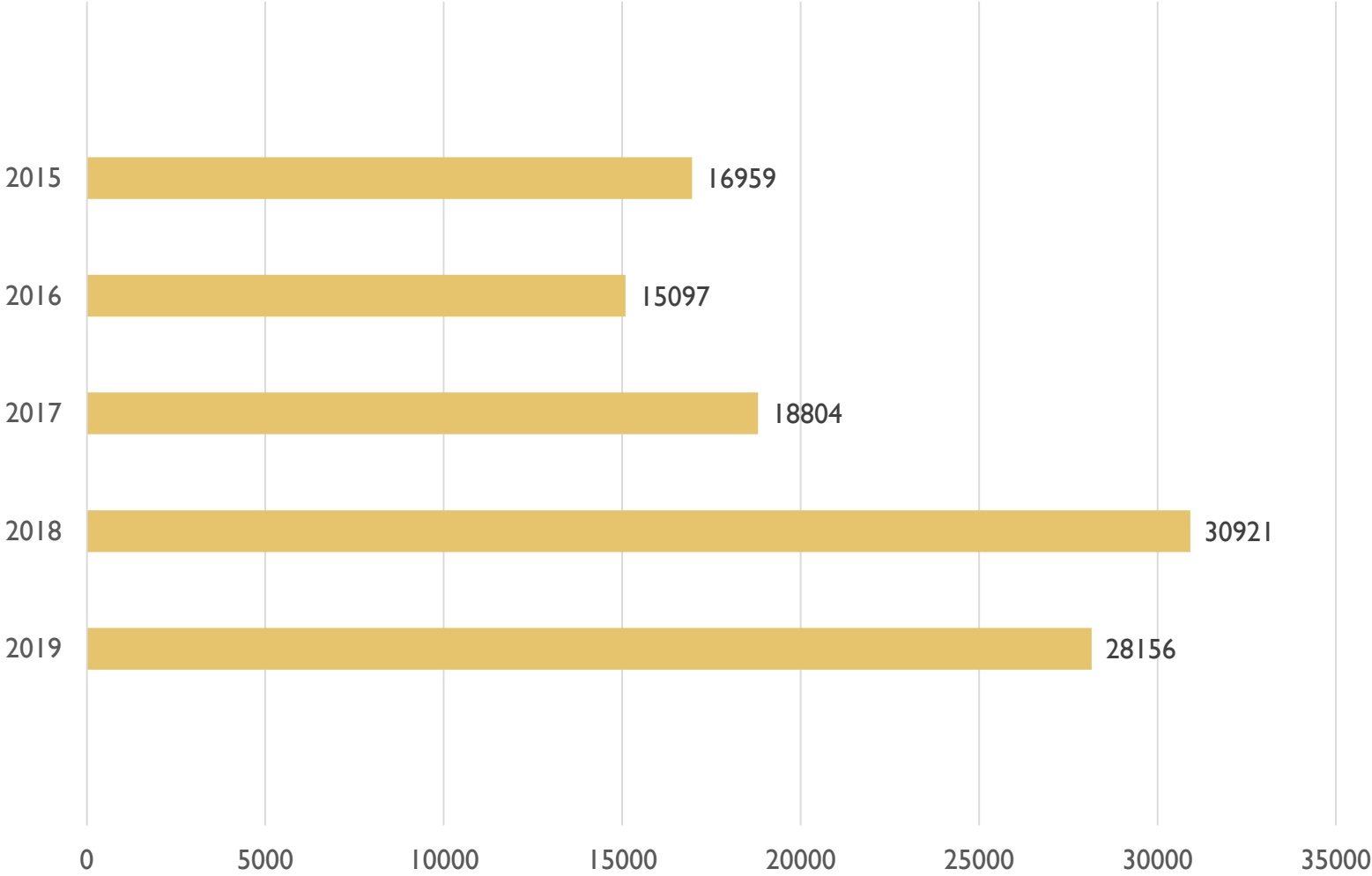
NTD HOURS

Hours of operation



NTD TRIPS

Passenger Trips



LOCAL WILDLIFE



CHALLENGES

- Arrowhead Region
- **RURAL**, remote, isolated, economically depressed
- Veterans-growing numbers
- Elders-aging population
- Youth-barriers to education & employment
- Health-costs, distances, hospital readmission



COMMUNITY SURVEYS – PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL

- We talked to our communities
- We talked to our different departments
- We consulted the heads of the programs
- We gathered data
- Of all this information the one comment that started the entire change was, “...of all the medical rides requested only 50% of those rides are provided. Of the 50% some rides never show up and other drop our Elders off in another town and forget to come back for them.”



RTCC

- The knowledge that the need was so high for the transportation services and they were not being met was the impetus that propelled us to “just flip the switch” and go live.
- The community research had been done but to break into the billing /reimbursement payment systems was still unknown.
- As a voting member of the Regional Transportation Coordination Committee (RTCC) I as able to bring forward to the council some of the unsolved issues for discussion and access the body of knowledge.



CONSULTANT

- When we went live, we posted flyers for volunteer drivers and received immediate responses. That told us the need was high on both sides of the issue.
- We met and opened conversations with our Health & Human Services program and they have hired a consultant whose knowledge has been instrumental in finding our way through the land of billing.
- Even though we had not actually been reimbursed for a single ride to date, Elaina Seep has helped compose a MOU and contract to be submitted to St. Louis County as we speak.



POLICIES

- After reviewing current programs doing this service and reviews of the product of the service others provide, we wanted to do better. A higher quality product provided to our community by our community.
- First, we eliminated all the rules. That eliminated confusion with convoluted pricing and regulations for both the volunteer and the participant.
- Any question we always err on the side of the participants, NOT on the side of the program. This is a person focused service.
- We standardized everything and wrote it down as policies as questions arose.



FUNDING

- We had to start somewhere and so I started with FTA and was able to received authorization from my FTA grants manager in writing to use our 5311c Formula Funding to pay mileage to our volunteers at the GSA per diem rate.
- Arrowhead Agency on Aging for our region and the RTCC were very supportive knowing the coverage we were giving to the gap in services, especially to our Elders. AAA has supported our program with two grants to date.
- We have yet to receive a single insurance payment for services. It has been a long road, but our consultant and our new contract will hopefully open those doors.
- The consultant's contact information will be found at the end of the power point.

NEXT...NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION (NEMT)

- Wii-doo-kaa-ge, Helping Others in the Ojibwe Language
- We competed and were successful for a grant to purchase 4 NEMT mini-vans with one wheel chair position. They were ordered last week.
- The new post-COVID world of transportation; more individual rides, less large group rides.
- These vans will be used to transport individuals who are in need of wheel chair accommodation.
- They can be driven by one of our staff drivers, they can be checked out by an Tribal Government insured employee, and/or checked out by a member of the public.
- Persons will be required to complete a defensive driving course, show proof of a valid drivers license and proof of valid insurance. The will receive the van clean and with a full tank of gas and will be expected to return it in the same condition.



2021

- Public transit and self-sufficiency
- Diversifying funding sources
- Housing shortages & homelessness
- Youth employment & education
- City planning for non-Native communities
- Emergency preparedness & evacuations
- Health & Human Services
- Workforce Center & Colleges
- Dialysis & health care & hospital readmission rates





THANK YOU - BOIS FORTE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Jennie Rowland

Transportation Manager –

Big Woods Transit, BF Volunteer Driver Program, Wii-doo-kaa-ge Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
(NEMT)

5344 Lakeshore Drive

Nett Lake, MN 55772

218-757-3261 ext. 1201

218-248-0264 cell

jrowland@boisforte-nsn.gov

CONSULTANT

Elaina Seep, CEO & Project Lead



Aniwahya Consulting Services

Email: elaina.seep@aniwahya.com

Phone: 608.301.5197

Cell: 608.228.5913

Building sustainable programs in Native American Communities

Visit us on the web at Aniwahya.com



THE HEALING DRESS

- My daughter and I.
- We are both Jingle dress dancers.
- In our culture the Jingle dress is a healing dress.
- We are called to dance in ceremonies.
- I match my personal cultural values with my professional program management.
- I have living culture.

Q&A

Questions?

- Use the Q&A feature at the bottom of your screen to submit questions.
- If joining by phone, press *9 to raise your hand. The host will allow you to unmute during Q&A time to ask your question.
- Unanswered questions and their responses will be posted on the event webpage with the slides and videorecording.

www.coordinatemntransit.org/events/volunteerdriverforum/2020-21/feb17

Wrap Up

- Thank you for attending!
- An electronic evaluation will be emailed shortly.
- Contacts: Tom Gottfried tom.gottfried@state.mn.us,
Jennie Rowland jrowland@boisforte-nsn.gov, Will Phillips wphillips@aarp.org

Next forum:

Wednesday, March 17th

9:30 – 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Central Time

5th Stop: Person-Centered, Cultural Diversity, and Equity Training

Note: Your registration is effective for all forums. No need to register again.

More information: www.coordinatemntransit.org/events/volunteerdriverforum/2020-21/