

Transportation

Transportation System

Roadways: Transportation systems are necessary to effectively link people, products, resources and activities, both inside and outside the Reservation. These systems include roadway transportation, public transit, rail and air transportation systems. Considering the rural nature of the White Earth Reservation, transportation systems on and near the Reservation are excellent. The most essential and important of these systems is the roadway transportation network.

The Reservation is served by Federal (36.9 miles), State (130.4 miles), County and Township (967.9 miles), Tribal (84 miles) and forestry roads (569.8 miles).

Regional Transportation networks on and near the Reservation connect businesses and residents to external markets. These systems are adequate given the rural nature of the Reservation.

Even after consideration of all of the road networks, the central and east-central portions of the Reservation still have limited access. Unfortunately, this area contains the majority of the Tribe's land base. This creates significant problems in the effective utilization and development of Tribal lands.

Rail: Unlike many rural areas of Minnesota, the White Earth Reservation continues to have rail transportation access. The Soo Line Railroad currently runs on line north-south along U.S. Highway 59 through the cities of Bejou, Mahnommen, Waubun, Ogema and Callaway. Rail usage averages two to three trips per day. Currently, unit trains can be loaded in the City of Mahnommen at the Farmers Coop Grain Association. The Burlington Northern Railroad Company also has a short length of track in the upper area of the Reservation. The BN railway has no loading points within the Reservation boundaries.

Air: The only airport within the boundary of the Reservation is a grass landing strip just south of the City of Mahnommen along U.S. Highway 59. However, the Reservation is within close driving distance to two regional airports: Fargo (63.1 miles) and Bemidji (32.7 miles). Hector Airport (Fargo) offers commuter flights to Minneapolis/St. Paul and Denver, while Bemidji offers commuter flights to Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Public Transit: Public transit within rural areas presents a difficult challenge, as the operating and capital costs per rider are significant. However, because of the income and poverty status of many Reservation residents, it is often the only manner in which people can access jobs, health services, retail centers and recreational activities. The combination of these factors presents a particular challenge on the White Earth Reservation.

Currently, public transit is offered on a dial-a-ride basis. In August of 2000, a Transit Study was completed which evaluates the public transit service delivery systems on the White Earth Reservation. Additionally, because of the rural nature of the Reservation, fixed route public transit poses significant problems.

Please call Heartland Express 1-218-935-2560 or 1-800-450-1814