

Dosha (Hello),

My name is Wendi Wells, "Woman in the Lead", I am Nueta, I am Hidatsa, and I am Sahinish. I am an enrolled member of the MHA Nation, and I reside on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation. My family owns and leases lands to the state of North Dakota for the use and development of HWY 23. I am the successor to these lands and want to ensure the State of North Dakota is upholding its due diligence on highway management with improvements and development.

Fort Berthold Indian Reservation highway inventory includes a total of 1,557.2 miles. The State of North Dakota is responsible for 152.4 miles of roads on the reservation, while county roads (853.4 miles) make up the bulk of highway miles. The BIA owns and maintains roads consisting of 213.8 miles of roads on the reservation. Tribal roads total 28.9 miles, and city roads total 16.7 miles.

**Table 1: NDDOT State Highways within Reservation**

State Highway	Reservation Location	Length
ND 8	Southern Portion	11.1
ND 22	Western Portion	34.8
ND 23	Northern Portion	45.3
ND 37	Eastern Portion	30.2
ND 73	Western Portion	4.0
ND 1804	Eastern Portion	24.1
Total Miles		149.5

The State of North Dakota observed that traffic is heavily influenced by oil and gas development and other related fields. The traffic count in 2016 had an average of 7,085 to about 9,000 vehicles per day traveling on highway 23. This data taken in 2016 was at the height of the boom. But data extracted in 2021 from the State of North Dakota, demonstrates the traffic count of highway 23 to be about 7,125 vehicles per day traveling within the boundaries of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation on highway 23.

When we review and compare large cities such as Bismarck or Dickinson and traffic on interstates in North Dakota such as I94 in Burleigh County we see the traffic of about 7,145 vehicles per day traveling or if we look to the west on I94 in Stark County such as Dickinson we the average 7,700 vehicles. These two cities are highly populated areas, including one being the city of our state capital. Yet highway 23 sees just as much traffic compared to these two cities.

The point of this comparison is that we need this Legislative Management group to consider studying and putting forth funding resources for feasibility studies with the consultation of the Three Affiliated, and its members and landowners which are known as allottees. As well as the Department of Transportation to include safety improvements to State Highways and County Roads.

Highway 23 and Highway 22 need a roundabout or traffic lights to slow down traffic and mitigate risk. I am in support of reducing speeds to 55 mph.

I respectfully ask for your support regarding House Bill 3027.

Respectfully,

