



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

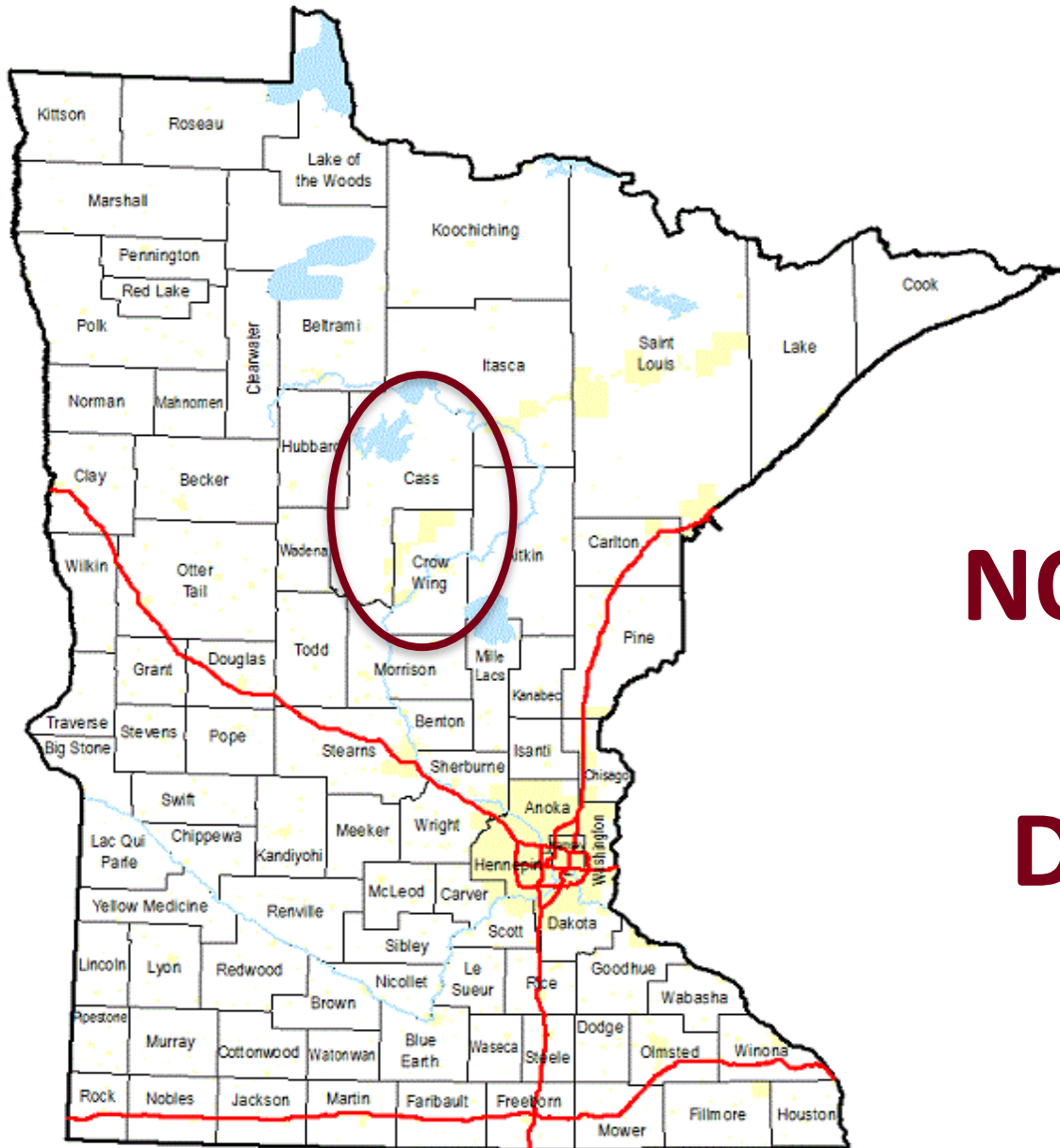
# Seasonal Labor Needs in a Minnesota Destination: exploring challenges and opportunities



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CONFERENCE

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# POPULAR NORTH WOODS AND LAKES DESTINATION

# TWO SURVEYS BETWEEN 2016 & 2018

1. Qualitative view of current/future workforce challenges facing lodging sector in these two counties.
1. Exploration of work campers as a potential labor pool to address workforce shortages.



# CHALLENGES

- Lack of workers
- Perceived lack of soft skills among potential employees
- Regional transportation
- Housing shortage
- Government benefits and assistance programs
- Substance use

# OPPORTUNITIES

- Seasonal employment needs
- Workforce shortages
- Housing shortages
- Growing size of the work camper population







Photo: ©Explore Minnesota Tourism



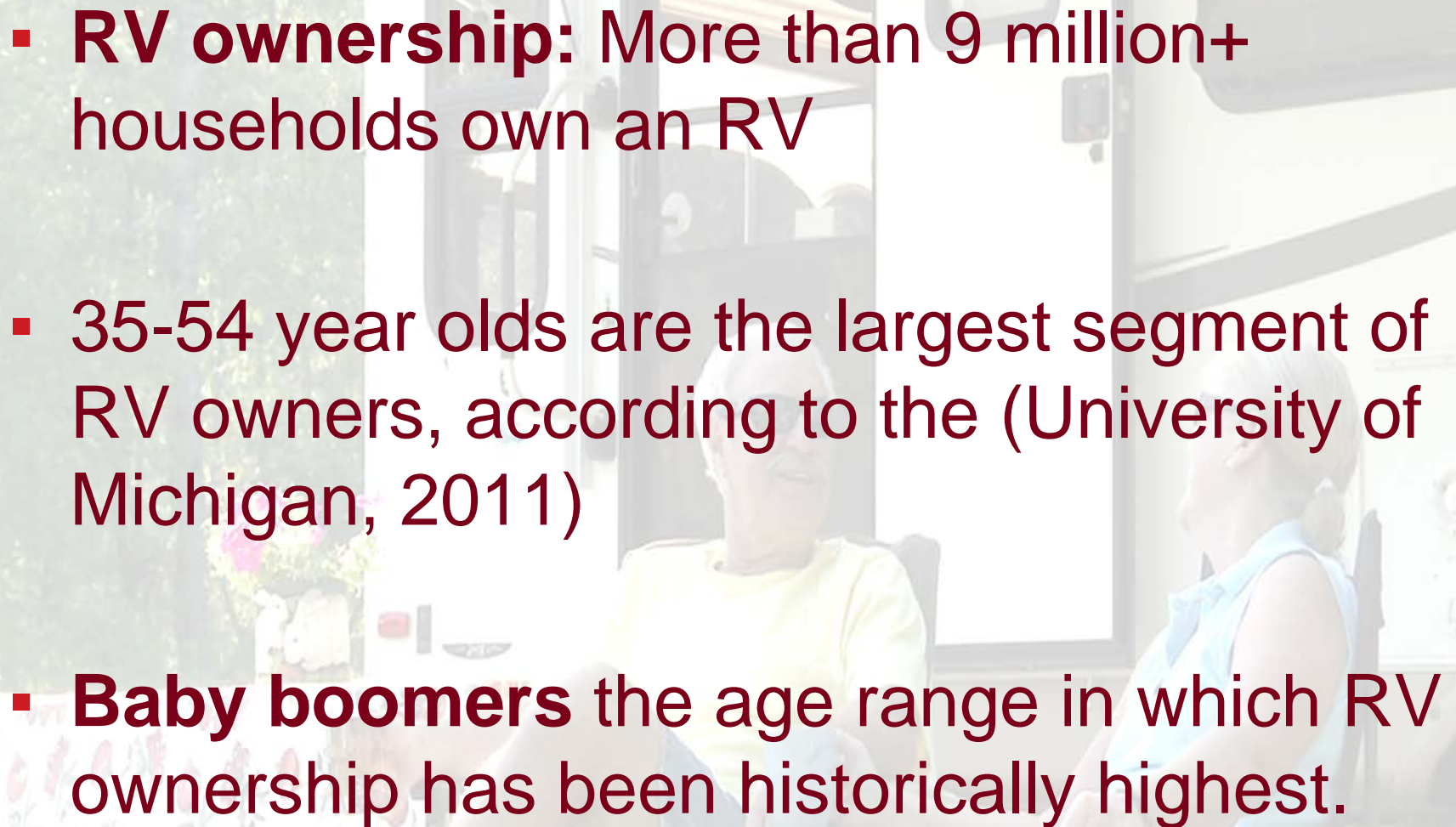
# WORK CAMPER RESEARCH

- Limited research available
- University of Michigan 2011 study most cited
- Recreational Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA)
- Workamper News [www.workamper.com](http://www.workamper.com)
  - 2016 survey
- Washington Post November 12, 2018 Headline:  
**1 million Americans live in RVs. Meet the ‘modern nomads.’**
- [www.thewanderingRV.com](http://www.thewanderingRV.com) guide and blog by millennial couple.



# WORK CAMPERS

- Individuals / couples who live a travel-work lifestyle, moving around the US and working full or part-time jobs as an employee, operating a business, or volunteering.
- Combines elements of the gig economy (short-term or temporary positions filled by independent contract workers)
  - Flexible schedule is flexible
  - Seasonal / limited duration
- Most live in a recreational vehicle (RV) or trailer.

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- A photograph of two women sitting on a porch of a white RV. The woman on the left is wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt and dark shorts, and the woman on the right is wearing a light blue sleeveless top and dark shorts. They are both smiling and appear to be in conversation. The background shows green foliage and the side of the RV with a window and a door.
- **RV ownership:** More than 9 million+ households own an RV
  - 35-54 year olds are the largest segment of RV owners, according to the (University of Michigan, 2011)
  - **Baby boomers** the age range in which RV ownership has been historically highest.

RVIA, 2019)





# Lifestyle



# WORK CAMPERS

- What's the experience in your state?
- Opportunities / Constraints?





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Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>

# Thank you!

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