

2005 BIG GAME AND FURBEARER HARVEST
RECORD FOR THE FOND DU LAC RESERVATION
AND CEDED TERRITORIES

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INTRODUCTION

Under the Treaties of 1854 and 1837 the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (FDL) retains hunting, fishing and gathering rights within the lands covered by these treaties - approximately 8,000,000 acres of northeastern and east-central Minnesota (Fig. 1). In addition, FDL band members hunt, fish and gather on their reservation of 100,000 acres near Cloquet, Minnesota. This report summarizes the FDL harvest of bear, turkey, deer, moose and furbearers in the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories and on the Fond du Lac Reservation.

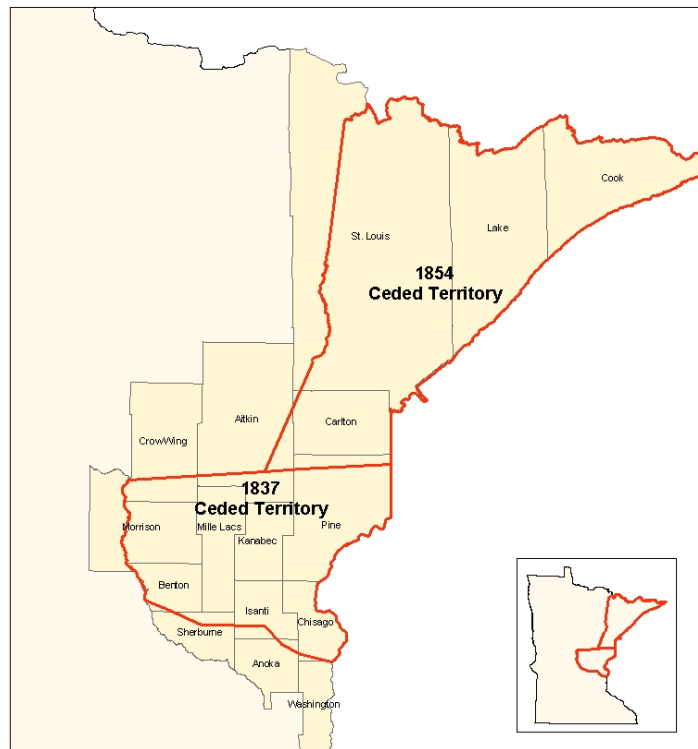


Figure 1. The 1837 and 1854 Ceded Territories in Minnesota

In 1977 the Fond du Lac Band developed and implemented the Reservation Conservation Code and in 1988 the Band implemented a conservation code that defined legal methods of take in the 1854 Ceded Territory. The 1837 Conservation Code was first implemented in 1997. Seasons and bag limits are determined on an annual basis. Band members exercising their right to hunt are required to have a Hunting, Fishing and Gathering License and the proper permits and carcass tags in their possession while in the field.

The FDL Reservation is divided into 6 management units for the purposes of reporting wildlife harvest (Fig. 2). To facilitate sharing of data with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission and to assist the management and enforcement efforts of the FDL Resource Management Division (Division), the location of harvested animals in the ceded territories are referenced using DNR management units. However in the case of moose, FDL has developed their own zone system for the purpose of distributing harvest pressure.

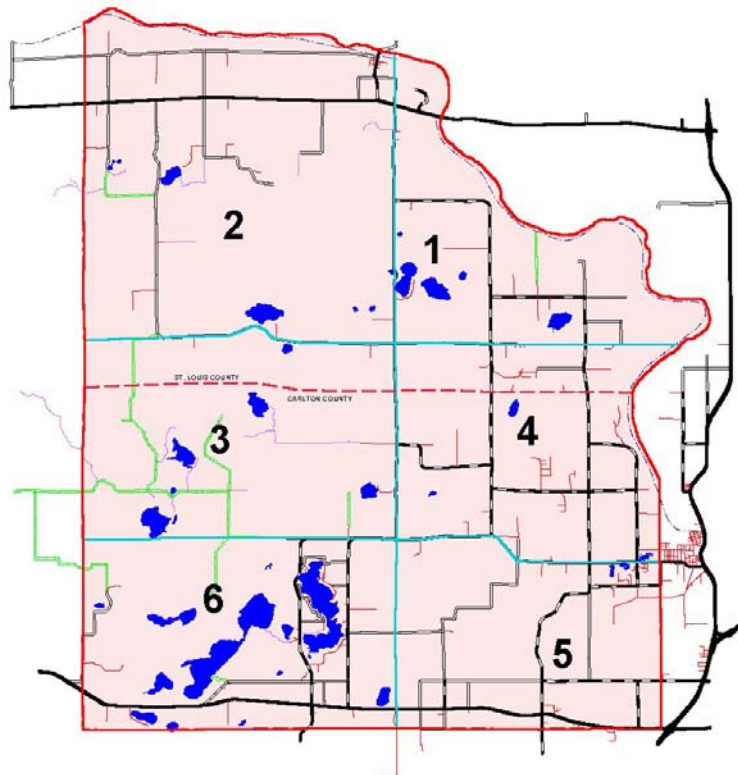


Figure 2 - Fond du Lac Reservation wildlife harvest zones

TURKEY

In 2005 the 1837 turkey season ran from April 9 through May 26 and September 6 to December 31. The 1837 Wildlife Management Plan for 2002-2006 provides for tribal harvest thresholds for each state antlerless deer permit area (Fig. 3) below which the bands need not declare a turkey harvest quota. A single tag was available initially to each FDL member, with additional tags possible following the registration of a bird. Six members requested a total of 8 tags in the spring. Two members requested a fall tag. All birds had to be registered at the Division office. Three birds were taken in the spring from unit 235. The threshold level for Unit 235 was 6 birds. There was no turkey season available to band members in the 1854 Ceded Territory.

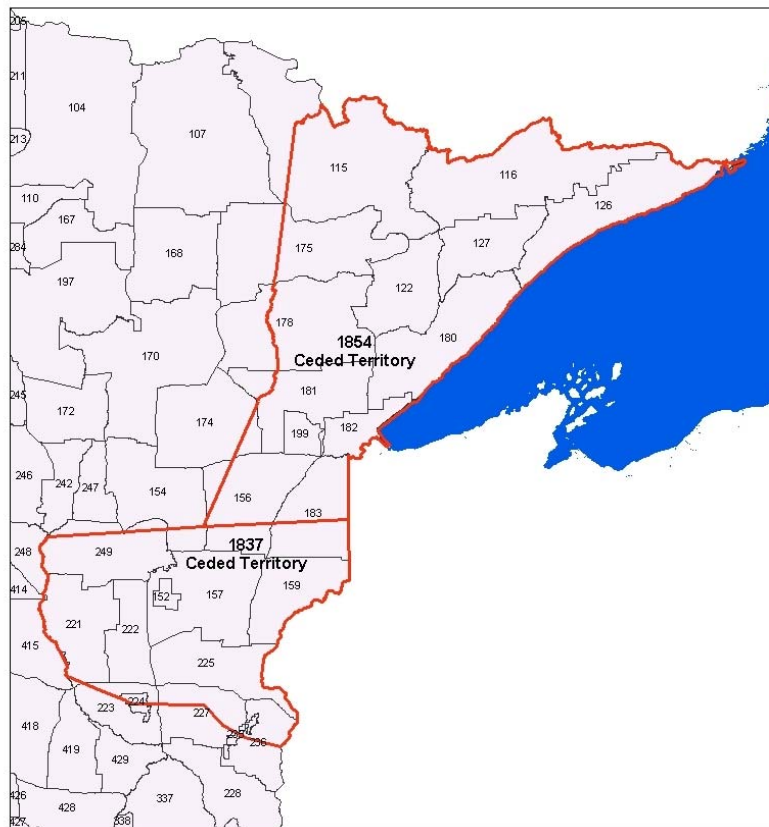


Figure 3. Minnesota antlerless deer permit areas.

BEAR

Ceded Territories

A single bear tag was available to band members to hunt in the ceded territories. Following registration of an animal, a second tag could be obtained. Cubs and sows with cubs were protected from harvest. All harvested bears were required to be registered at 1 of 6 big game registration stations or with a Division wildlife or conservation officer staff member. The 2005 bear season in the 1854 Ceded Territory ran from September 1 through December 1. Baiting was legal from August 18 through December 1. The 1837 Ceded Territory opened on September 1 and ran through November 15. Bait stations were permissible from August 13 through November 15. A total of 35 bears from 2 state management units and an unlimited number of bears from the state's no-quota area were available for harvest under the 1837 Conservation Code. There were no such quotas under the 1854 Conservation Code.

Band members requested 156 bear tags for hunting in their ceded territories. One second tag were requested. One male was registered from antlerless deer permit area 127 in the 1854 Ceded Territory (Fig. 3).

Reservation

The Reservation bear season opened on September 1 and continued through December 1. Baiting was allowed from August 18 through the close of the season. Band members received one tag initially with a second tag possible upon registration of an animal. Band members requested 139 tags and members of other federally recognized bands requested no tags. One second tag was requested but the harvest record for the first tag was lost. State hunters registered 10 bears from the Reservation - 4 females and 6 males.

It's generally accepted that most bear tags are requested by members because they are free and easily obtained from the Division office. Very few members are believed to actively pursue bears. In addition, many band members are members of the Bear Clan and may feel a spiritual affinity to the bear and therefore an unwillingness to hunt this species.

DEER

Ceded Territories

In the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories, the 2005 firearms and archery deer season opened on September 6 and continued through December 31. There were no restrictions on sex of legal deer in either Ceded Territory. Tribal antlerless quotas were developed for each state antlerless deer permit area in the 1837 Ceded Territory (Fig. 3). A total of 472 band members requested 1,642 deer tags.

Members received the first 1-3 tags at the Division office and subsequent 1-3 tags at the office upon registering 1-3 deer. The

total individual limit was maintained at 15 deer due to continued high deer populations. Deer tags were valid for either ceded territory although only 2 at a time were valid in the 1837 Ceded Territory. The majority of members requested no more than 3 tags. One individual requested all 15 available tags. All animals were required to be registered within 3 business days of harvest at 1 of 6 registration stations or with a Division wildlife or conservation officer staff member.

In 1994 a weekly lottery was initiated during the firearms season to encourage hunters to register their animals. This practice has continued with periodic prizes of \$50, \$25 and \$15. Deer from both treaty areas were eligible for drawings.

The registered hunter harvest for 2005 was 317 animals (Table 1 and Fig. 4). This was a decline from 2004, and about 15% below the previous 5 year average. In addition to the regular hunter harvest, 9 deer were harvested for ceremonies and elders by Division conservation officers.

Table 1. 2005 ceded territory Fond du Lac deer harvest breakdown by sex, age, and DNR antlerless permit area.

Deer Area	Adult Buck	Buck Fawn	Adult Doe	Doe Fawn	Total
115	8	0	4	1	13
116	0	0	0	0	0
122	1	1	1	0	3
126	1	1	1	0	3
127	1	0	2	0	3
152	0	0	0	0	0
154	0	0	0	0	0
156	6	4	4	0	14
157	0	0	0	0	0
159	1	1	0	0	2
174	0	2	1	1	4
175	2	0	0	0	2
178	6	2	3	2	13
180	16	2	11	1	30
181	67	17	75	19	178
182	0	0	1	0	1
183	10	0	3	2	15
221	0	0	0	0	0
222	0	0	0	0	0
223	0	0	0	0	0
224	0	0	0	0	0
225	0	0	0	0	0
227	0	0	0	0	0
235	0	0	0	0	0
236	0	0	0	0	0
249	0	0	0	0	0

Table 1. cont.

Deer Area	Adult Buck	Buck Fawn	Adult Doe	Doe Fawn	Total
St. Croix State Park	4	3	9	4	20
Wild River State Park	7	3	6	4	20
unknown	3	0	2	0	5
Total =	133	36	123	34	326

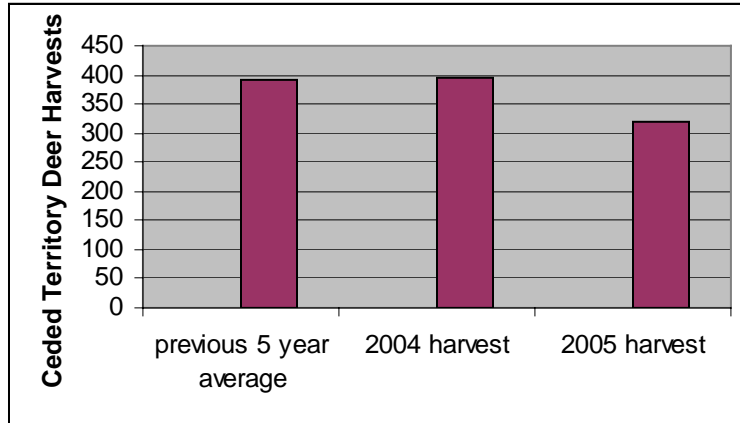


Figure 4. Comparable Fond du Lac Ceded Territory deer harvests.

The majority of animals were taken from permit areas near the Fond du Lac Reservation. Method of take is not differentiated on registration forms; however, the percentage of members who actively pursue deer with a bow is believed to be quite small. As in past years, the majority of deer were harvested in November (Table 2).

Table 2. 2005 Fond du Lac ceded territory deer harvest registration by month.

Registration Period	Deer Harvest
September	23
October	74
November	191
December	29
Ceremonial	9*
Total = 326	

*Ceremonial deer are taken as needed during the year.

The 1837 Conservation Code provides for a limited tribal quota of antlerless deer based on DNR antlerless permit areas. The boundary line between the 1837 and 1854 Ceded Territories bisects units 156 and 183. A percentage of FDL's total antlerless harvest from those 2 permit areas was assigned to the 1837 tribal quota depending on the percentage of land from those permit areas in the 1837 Ceded Territory (Table 3).

Table 3. 2005 deer harvest in the 1837 Ceded Territory.

Area	Adult Buck Harvest	Antlerless Harvest	% Antlerless Harvest Assigned to 1837	Total 1837 Antlerless Harvest
152	0	0	-	0
156	6	8	22%	2
157	0	0	-	0
159	1	1	-	1
183	10	5	42%	2
St. Croix State Park	4	16	-	16
Wild River State Park	7	13	-	13
Total =				34

Reservation

The Reservation archery and firearms deer season opened on September 6 and continued through December 31. FDL members and members of other federally recognized bands who reside on the FDL Reservation, were allowed up to 4 deer tags valid for either sex and any legal method of take. Two tags were granted initially with additional tags after an animal was registered. Nine members of other

bands requested a total of 18 tags. A total of 433 FDL members requested 961 tags. Of that total, 57 were third tags and 36 were fourth tags. As in the ceded territories, a lottery was held at periodic intervals during the season in order to encourage registration.

The 2005 hunter harvest was 133 animals (Table 4 and Fig. 5). In addition, Division conservation officers harvested 5 animals for ceremonial purposes. The majority of the harvest occurred in November (Table 5).

Table 4. 2005 Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvest breakdown by age, sex and management unit.

Mngmt Unit	Adult Buck	Buck Fawn	Adult Doe	Doe Fawn	Unknown	Total
1	16	2	4	3	0	25
2	26	2	9	2	0	39
3	12	2	8	2	0	24
4	14	2	9	5	0	30
5	4	0	2	0	0	6
6	4	3	0	1	0	8
unknown	7	1	1	0	0	6
Totals =	80	12	33	13	0	138

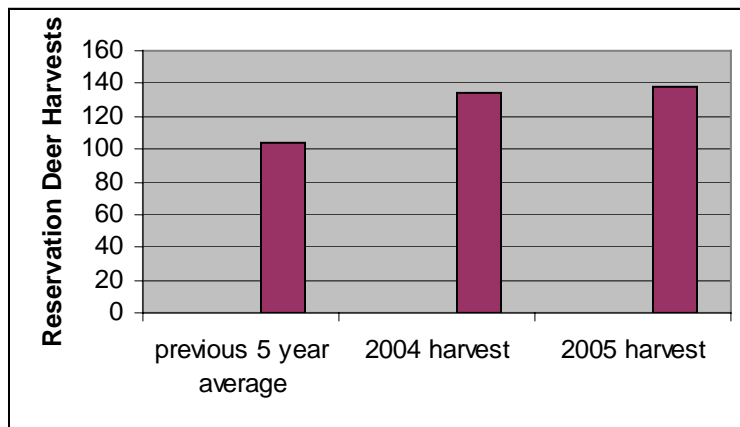


Figure 5. Comparable Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvests.

Table 5. Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvest by time period.

Time Period	Deer Harvest
September	8
October	33
November	74
December	18
Ceremonial	5*
Total = 138	

*Ceremonial deer are taken as needed during the year.

The Reservation's Conservation Committee requested that the DNR allow no more than 150 antlerless permits on the Reservation for the 2005 firearms season. This request was honored. Total deer harvest by state-licensed hunters was 151 bucks and 37 antlerless deer. This level of harvest was similar to previous years.

MOOSE

The 1854 moose season opened on October 1 and ran to December 4. There were no restrictions on the age or sex of a legal moose. The Reservation Business Committee approved the issuance of 83 moose permits through a drawing process to parties of 3-4 hunters for the 1854 Ceded Territory. A total of 91 parties applied for the available permits and 77 permits were claimed. A \$20 nonrefundable fee was required to enter the drawing and a \$50.00 deposit was required for each permit. The fee is intended to encourage only serious moose hunters to apply for a permit and to generate funding for moose related projects. The deposit was refunded upon the registration of a moose or the return of an unused carcass tag. Each permit was valid in 1 of 10 FDL Moose Hunt Zones established by the Division. Each FDL zone conforms to from 2 to 5 state moose zones (Fig. 6 and Table 6).

The 1837 moose season opened on September 6 and ran through December 31. A tribal quota of 5 moose were available for harvest under the 1837 Conservation Code. Fond du Lac made 5 permits available to band members; however, no permits were requested. The lack of interest in 1837 moose permits probably reflects the very low numbers of moose present in that area.

All moose were required to be registered within 3 business days of harvest at 1 of 6 registration stations or with a Division wildlife or conservation officer staff member. Sex, antler spread, and the FDL and DNR moose zones were recorded. In addition, the hunter was required to present an incisor tooth for ageing.

A total of 36 moose (24 bulls, 1 bull calf, 1 cow calf and 10 cows) were registered by Fond du Lac hunters for a harvest success rate of 48%. These figures represented an increase over 2004 (Fig. 7).

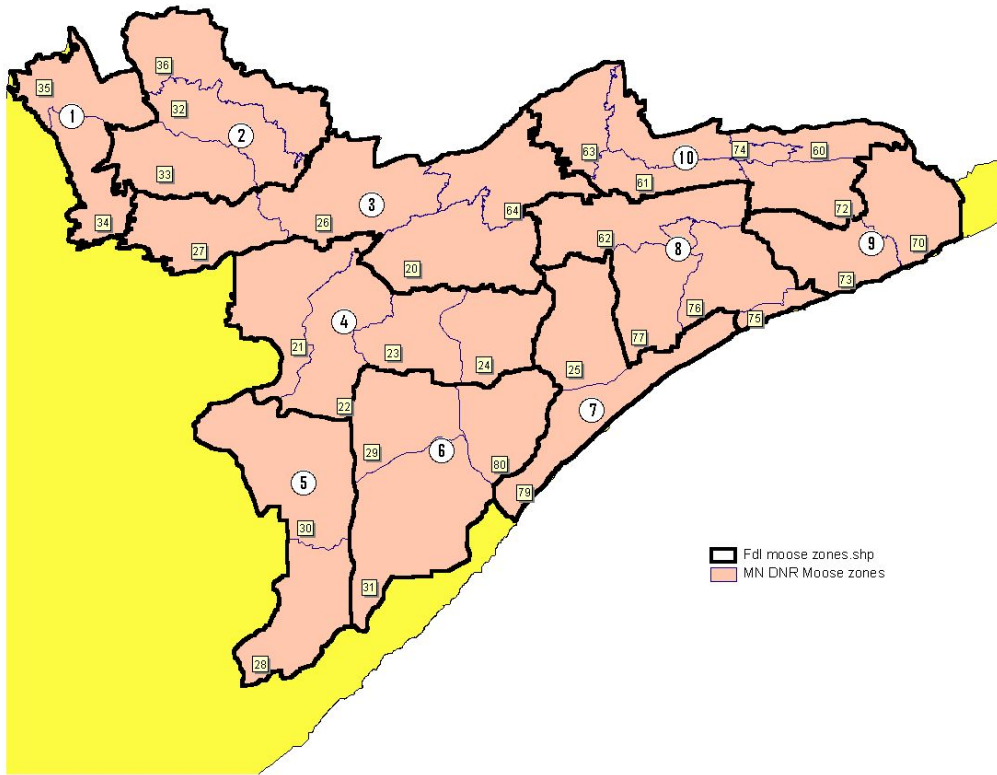


Figure 6. Fond du Lac and corresponding State Moose Harvest Zones.

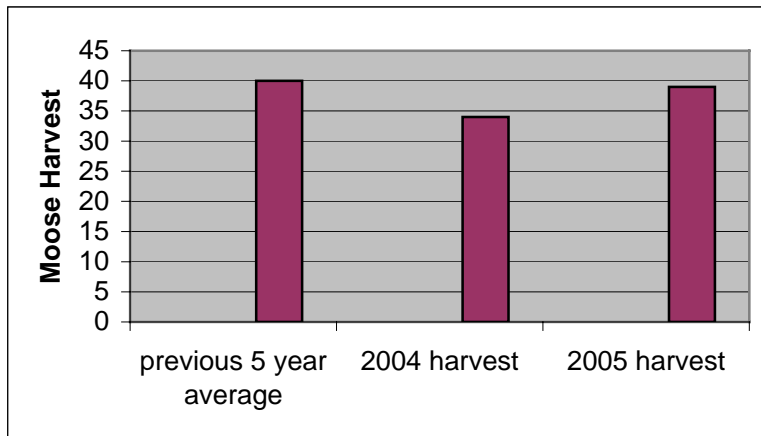


Figure 7. Comparable Fond du Lac moose harvests.

Table 6. 2005 Fond du Lac moose hunter harvest breakdown by zone, age and sex.

FDL Zone	FDL Permits	Corresponding DNR Zones	Bulls	Cows	Calf
1	6	34	0	0	0
		35	$\frac{1}{1}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{1}{1}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
2	7	32	0	0	0
		33	0	0	0
		36	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
3	5	20	0	0	0
		26	0	0	0
		27	0	0	0
		64	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
4	8	21	1	0	0
		22	1	0	0
		23	0	0	0
		24	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
5	7	28	0	0	0
		30	$\frac{3}{3}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{3}{3}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
6	12	29	1	2	0
		31	2	1	0
		80	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{2}{5}$	$\frac{1}{1}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{4}{4}$	$\frac{5}{5}$	$\frac{1}{1}$
7	7	25	5	0	0
		79	$\frac{1}{6}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{6}{6}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
8	8	62	0	0	0
		75	0	0	0
		76	2	1	1
		77	$\frac{0}{2}$	$\frac{0}{1}$	$\frac{0}{1}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{1}{1}$	$\frac{1}{1}$
9	9	70	0	2	0
		73	$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{2}{4}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{4}{4}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
10	7	60	0	0	0
		61	0	0	0
		63	0	0	0
		72	2	2	0
		74	$\frac{0}{2}$	$\frac{0}{2}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
		Harvest =	$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{0}{0}$

In addition, 2 adult cows and 1 adult bull were harvested for elders and ceremonial purposes by Division conservation officers.

The average age of adult bulls harvested was 3.3 years (N = 22, Range = 1-9). Rounded to the nearest inch, the average antler spread was 42" (N = 22, Range = 18"-54"). The average age of adult cows was 3.3 years (N = 13, Range = 1-11).

FURBEARERS

For the 2005-2006 trapping season 6 FDL band members registered 58 fisher, marten, bobcat and otter pelts (Table 7). This harvest is approximately equal to last season's harvest and above the previous 5 year average (Fig. 8). Most animals were harvested between November and February, however; no month was recorded for a large number of animals. No furbearers were harvested by firearms this past season.

The Division registers furbearers using the DNR's antlerless deer permit areas (Fig. 3). All harvest this past season took place either on the FDL Reservation or in the 1854 Ceded Territory. Permit Area 199 equals the Reservation.

Table 7. Fond du Lac registered furbearer harvest for the 2005-2006 season.

	Female Fisher	Male Fisher	Female Marten	Male Marten	Unk. Otter	Female Otter	Male Otter	Female Bobcat	Total
PA 127	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
PA 156	2	3	0	1	0	2	1	1	10
PA 180	0	0	9	16	0	1	0	0	26
PA 181	3	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	15
PA 199	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Total Harvest	5	7	16	23	1	3	1	2	58

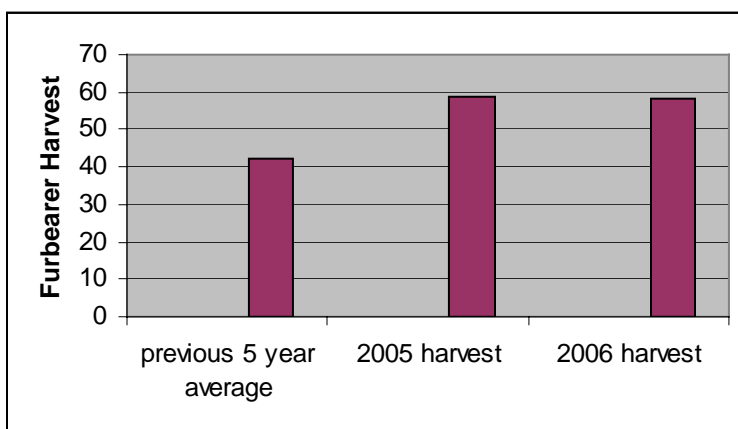


Figure 8. Comparable Fond du Lac registered furbearer harvests.