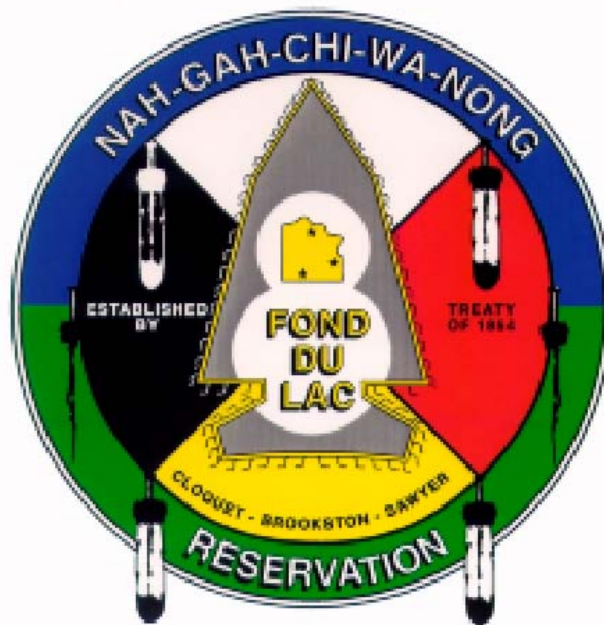


2006 BIG GAME AND FURBEARER HARVEST
RECORD FOR THE FOND DU LAC RESERVATION
AND CEDED TERRITORIES

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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.

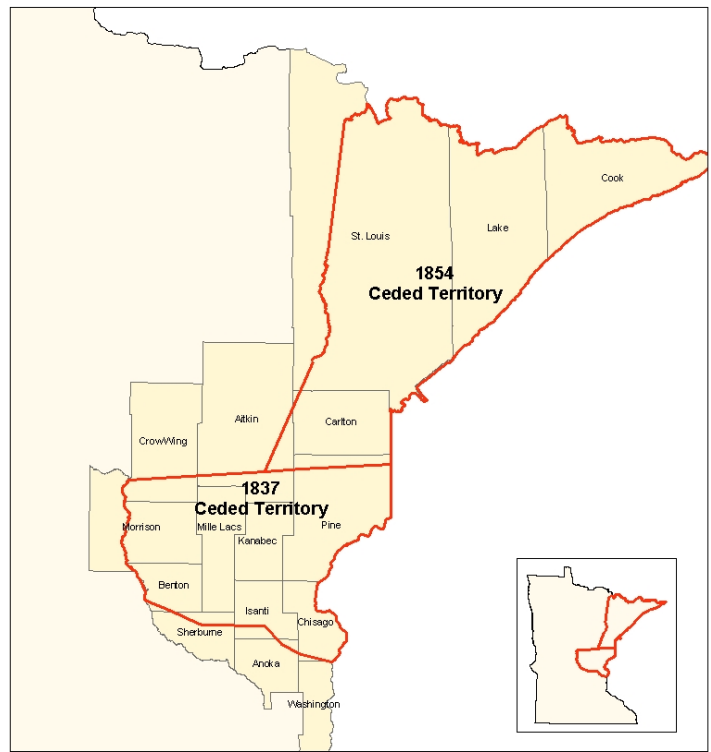


Figure 1. The 1837 and 1854 Ceded Territories in Minnesota.

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.

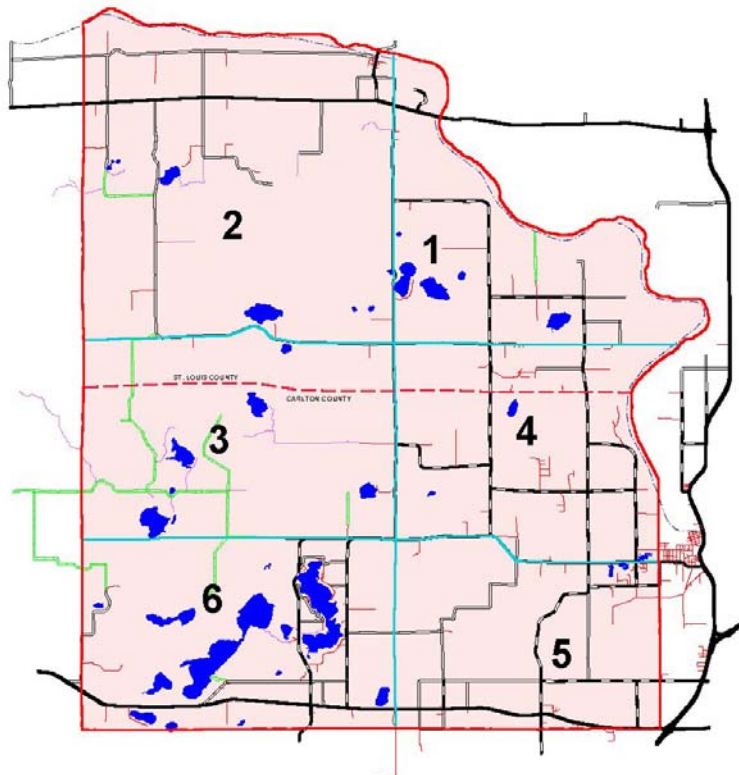


Figure 2 - Fond du Lac Reservation wildlife harvest zones

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 2006 bear season in the 1854 Ceded Territory ran from September 1 through December 3. Baiting was legal from August 11 through December 3. The 1837 Ceded Territory opened on September 1 and ran through November 15. Bait stations were permissible from August 11 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 180 bear tags for hunting in their ceded territories. One second tag was 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 3. Baiting was allowed from August 11 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 162 tags and members of other federally recognized bands requested 3 tags. No second tags were requested. FDL members registered 2 female bears from Reservation units 2 and 3. State hunters registered 8 bears from the Reservation - 3 females and 5 males.

It's generally accepted that many 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 2006 firearms and archery deer season opened on September 5 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 493 band members requested 1,792 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 2006 was 389 animals (Table 1 and Fig. 4). This was an increase from 2005, and about 9% above the previous 5 year average. In addition to the regular hunter harvest, 3 deer were harvested for ceremonies and elders by Division conservation officers.

Table 1. 2006 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	4	0	4	0	8
116	0	0	0	0	0
122	4	0	3	3	10
126	0	0	0	0	0
127	2	0	10	2	14
152	0	0	0	0	0
154	0	0	0	0	0
156	10	0	6	1	17
157	0	0	0	0	0
159	1	2	0	1	4
174	1	0	0	0	1
175	0	0	1	0	2
178	2	0	1	0	3
180	15	2	10	2	29
181	88	21	85	13	207
182	0	0	0	0	0
183	21	3	13	0	37
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 Youth Hunt	2	0	5	1	8
St. Croix State Park	2	2	2	2	8
Wild River State Park	5	2	18	4	29
unknown	6	0	6	2	14
Total =	163	34	164	31	392

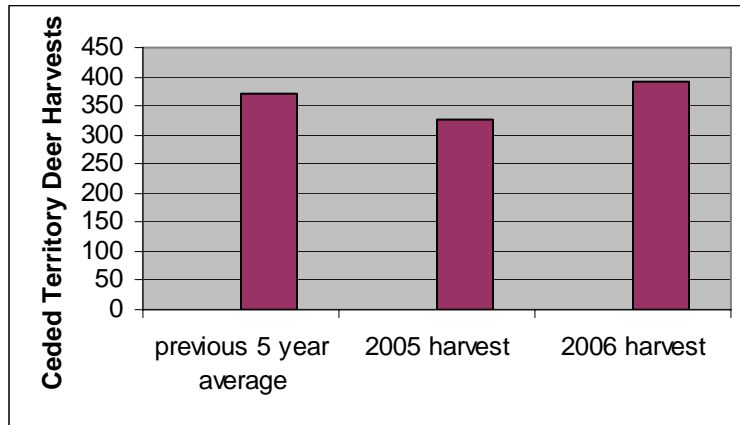


Figure 4. Comparable Fond du Lac Ceded Territory deer harvests.

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.

<u>Registration Period</u>	<u>Deer Harvest</u>
September	40
October	130
November	190
December	29
Ceremonial	3*
Total = 392	

*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.

<u>Area</u>	<u>Adult Buck Harvest</u>	<u>Antlerless Harvest</u>	<u>% Antlerless Harvest Assigned to 1837</u>	<u>Total 1837 Antlerless Harvest</u>
152	0	0	100%	0
156	10	7	22%	2
157	0	0	100%	0
159	1	3	100%	3
183	21	16	42%	7
St. Croix State Park	4	12	100%	12
Wild River State Park	5	24	100%	29
Total =				53

Reservation

The Reservation archery and firearms deer season opened on September 5 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. Eighteen members of

other bands requested a total of 41 tags. A total of 447 FDL members requested 1003 tags. Of that total, 80 were third tags and 32 were fourth tags. As in the ceded territories, a lottery was held at periodic intervals during the season in order to encourage registration.

The 2006 hunter harvest was 136 animals (Table 4 and Fig. 5). In addition, Division conservation officers harvested 1 animal for ceremonial purposes. The majority of the harvest occurred in October and November (Table 5).

Table 4. 2006 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	18	7	12	6	0	43
2	17	6	14	0	0	37
3	8	2	6	0	0	16
4	10	4	5	0	0	19
5	8	0	6	1	0	15
6	2	0	1	0	0	3
unknown	1	2	1	0	0	4
Totals =	64	21	45	7	0	137

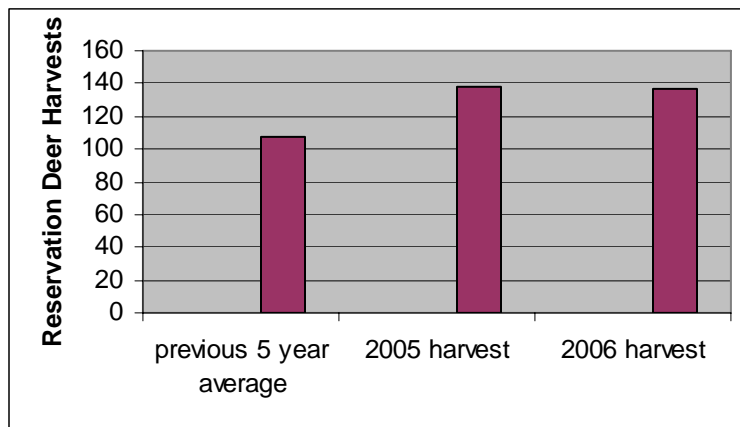


Figure 5. Comparable Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvests.

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

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Deer Harvest</u>
September	20
October	48
November	57
December	11
Ceremonial	1*
	<u>Total = 137</u>

*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 119 bucks and 68 antlerless deer.

MOOSE

The 1854 moose season opened on September 30 and ran to December 3. There were no restrictions on the age or sex of a legal moose. The Reservation Business Committee approved the issuance of 85 moose permits through a drawing process to parties of 3-4 hunters for the 1854 Ceded Territory. A total of 85 parties applied for the available permits and 81 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 27 moose (22 bulls, 1 bull calf, and 4 cows were registered by Fond du Lac hunters for a harvest success rate of 33%. These figures represent the lowest success rate and among the lowest total harvests since FDL members began exercising treaty rights (Fig. 7). In addition, 1 adult cow and 1 adult bull were harvested for elders and ceremonial purposes by Division conservation officers.

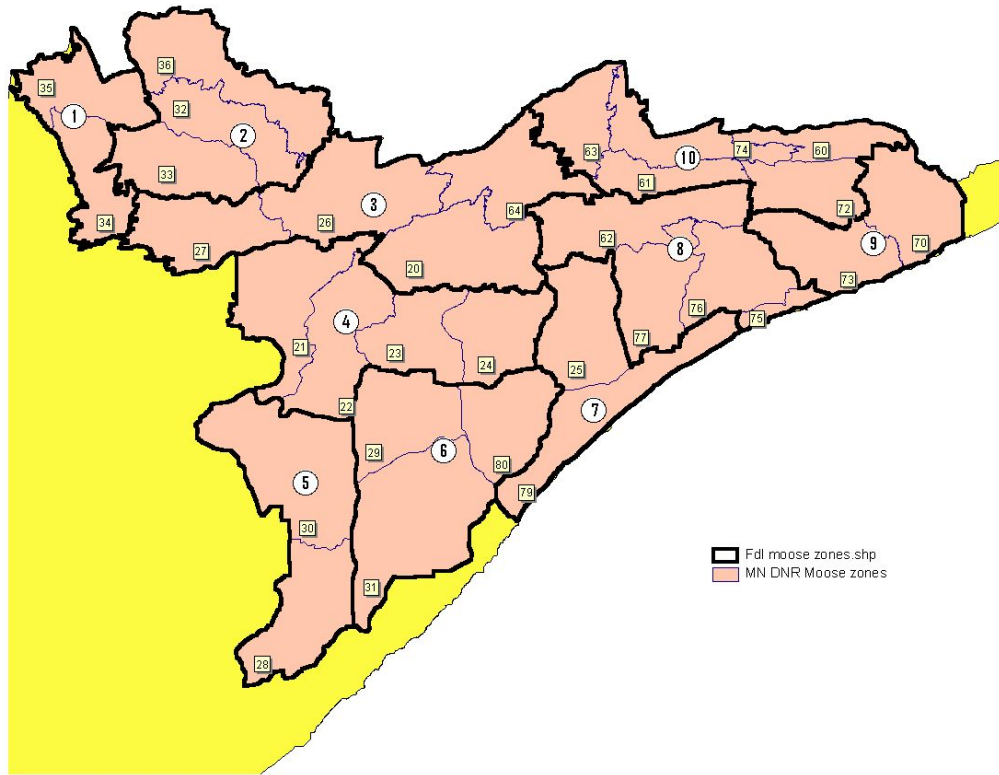


Figure 6. Fond du Lac and corresponding State Moose Harvest Zones.

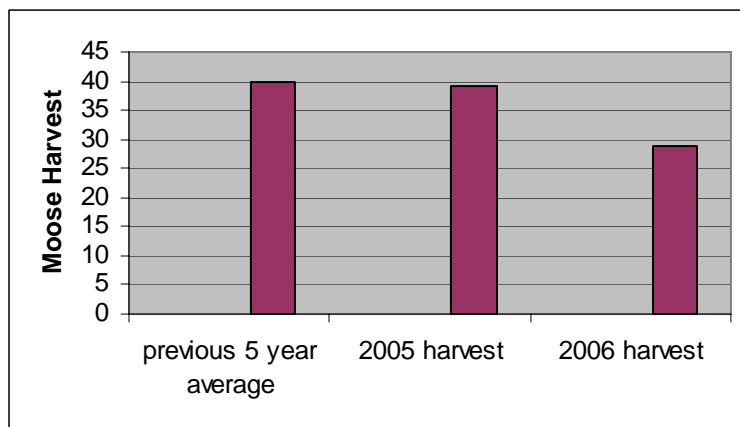


Figure 7. Comparable Fond du Lac moose harvests.

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	1	1	1
		35	0	0	0
		Harvest = $\frac{1}{1}$	$\frac{1}{1}$	$\frac{1}{1}$	
2	7	32	0	0	0
		33	0	0	0
		36	0	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	0	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{0}{0}$			$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
4	8	21	0	0	0
		22	0	0	0
		23	0	0	0
		24	3	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{3}{0}$			$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
5	7	28	0	0	0
		30	3	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{3}{0}$			$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
6	15	29	1	0	0
		31	2	0	0
		80	3	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{6}{0}$			$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
7	8	25	3	0	0
		79	0	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{3}{0}$			$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
8	10	62	0	0	0
		75	0	0	0
		76	2	0	0
		77	1	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{3}{0}$			$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
9	10	70	2	2	0
		73	0	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{2}{2}$			$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
10	9	60	0	0	0
		61	0	0	0
		63	0	0	0
		72	2	2	0
		74	0	0	0
Harvest = $\frac{2}{2}$			$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	

The average age of adult bulls harvested was 4.8 years (N = 21, Range

= 2-11. Rounded to the nearest inch, the average antler spread was 41" (N = 22, Range = 27"-57"). The average age of adult cows was 6.8 years (N = 5, Range = 3-9).

FURBEARERS

For the 2006-2007 trapping season 8 FDL band members registered 99 fisher, marten, bobcat and otter pelts (Table 7). This harvest is almost twice last season's harvest and the previous 5 year average (Fig. 8). An improved market demand for furs and higher pelt prices probably helped fuel the higher harvest. Higher FDL harvests mirrored higher harvests by state trappers as well. Most animals were harvested between November and January, with a few in February and March. 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	Female Otter	Male Otter	Female Bobcat	Male Bobcat	Total
PA 122	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	4
PA 127	1	1	4	23	1	2	0	0	32
PA 156	0	0	2	3	1	1	0	0	7
PA 180	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PA 181	0	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	7
PA 199	6	3	10	6	0	0	2	3	30
Unknown									
Unit	3	4	5	4	0	2	1	0	19
Total									
Harvest	10	9	25	42	2	5	3	3	99

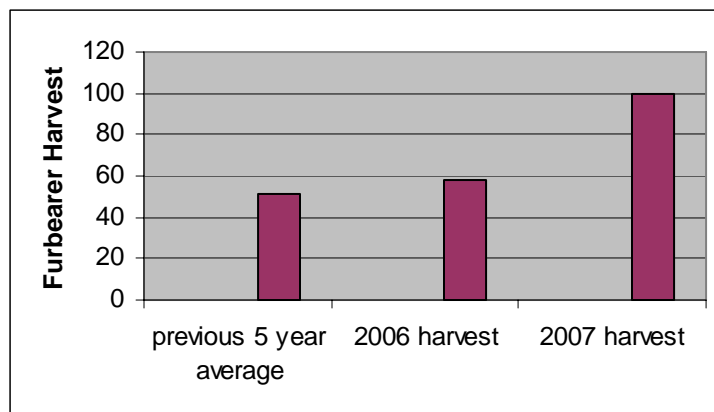


Figure 8. Comparable Fond du Lac registered furbearer harvests.