

2007 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.

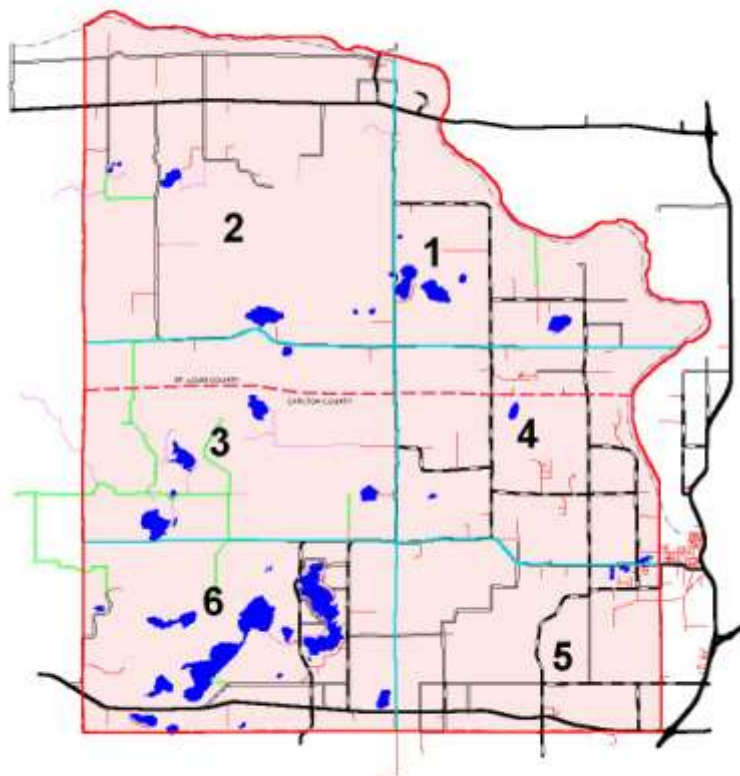


Figure 2 - Fond du Lac Reservation wildlife harvest zones

TURKEY

In 2007 the 1837 turkey season ran from April 14 through May 31 and September 4 to December 31. The 1837 Wildlife Management Plan for 2007-2011 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; however, an administrative error provided band members with two tags. Thirteen members requested a total of 28 tags in the spring. Fifteen members requested 30 fall tags. All birds had to be registered at the Division office. Four birds were taken in the spring from Unit 235 and 3 from 227. The threshold levels for Units 235 and 227 were 8 and 10 birds respectively. There was no turkey season available to band members in the 1854 Ceded Territory or on the FDL Reservation.



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 2007 bear season in the 1854 Ceded Territory ran from September 1 through December 2. Baiting was legal from August 11 through December 2. 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 154 initial bear tags for hunting in their ceded territories. One second tag was requested. One male was registered from antlerless deer permit area 183 in the 1854 Ceded Territory (Fig. 3).

Reservation

The Reservation bear season opened on September 1 and continued through December 2. 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 146 tags and members of other federally recognized bands requested 2 tags. No second tags were requested. FDL members registered 2 female bears from Reservation units 2 and 3 and one male from unit 1. State hunters registered 5 bears from the Reservation - 3 females and 2 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 2007 firearms and archery deer season opened on September 4 and continued through December 31. There were no restrictions on sex of legal deer in either Ceded Territory. Tribal antlerless quotas were dropped in 2007 in exchange for annual tribal harvest thresholds for each state antlerless deer permit area in the 1837 Ceded Territory (Fig. 3).

A total of 480 band members requested 1,697 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 15 deer. The majority of members requested no more than 3 tags. Two individuals requested all 15 available tags. All animals were required to be registered within 3 business days of harvest at 1 of 7 registration stations or with a Division wildlife or conservation officer staff member.

The regular cash prize drawing was continued during the firearms season to encourage hunters to register their animals. Prizes of \$50, \$25 and \$15 were awarded in each drawing. Deer from both treaty areas were eligible for drawings.

The registered hunter harvest for 2007 was 344 animals (Table 1 and Fig. 4). This was a decrease from 2006, and about 8% below the previous 5 year average. In addition to the regular hunter harvest, 5 deer were harvested for ceremonies and elders by Division conservation officers.

Table 1. 2007 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	6	1	6	1	14
116	0	0	0	0	0
122	1	1	1	1	4
126	1	0	0	0	1
127	1	0	0	0	1
152	0	1	1	0	2
154	0	1	0	1	2
156	5	3	6	2	16
157	0	0	0	0	0
159	1	0	0	0	1
174	0	0	0	0	0
175	2	1	3	2	8
178	2	1	3	0	6
180	7	3	3	1	14
181	80	28	75	17	200
182	3	0	1	0	4
183	13	2	9	1	25
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	1	1	1	5
St. Croix State Park	3	5	6	1	15
Wild River State Park	4	6	3	2	15
unknown	12	1	2	1	16
Total =	143	55	120	31	349

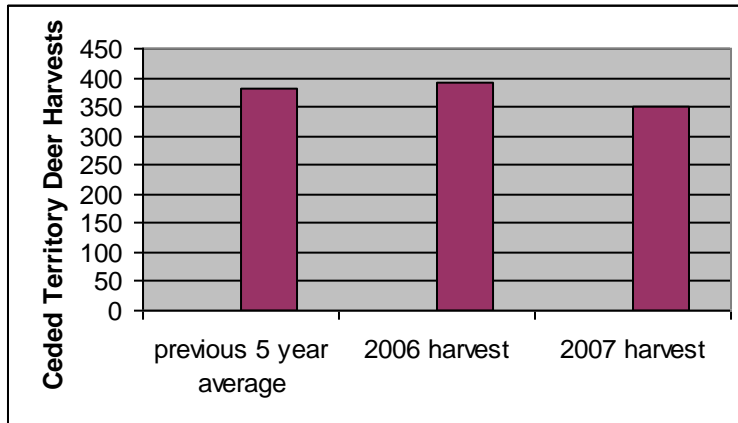


Figure 4. Comparable Fond du Lac Ceded Territory deer harvests.

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. 2007 Fond du Lac ceded territory deer harvest registration

by month.

Registration Period	Deer Harvest
September	20
October	72
November	203
December	48
Ceremonial	5*
Unknown	1
Total = 349	

*Ceremonial deer are taken as needed during the year.

Reservation

The Reservation archery and firearms deer season opened on September 4 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. 10 members of other bands requested a total of 22 tags. A total of 434 FDL members requested 865 tags. Of that total, 61 were third tags and 28 were fourth tags. As in the ceded territories, a drawing was held at periodic intervals during the season in order to encourage registration.

The 2007 hunter harvest was 171 animals (Table 3 and Fig. 5). In addition, Division conservation officers harvested 12 animals for ceremonial purposes. The majority of the harvest occurred in October and November (Table 5).

Table 3. 2007 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	2	16	1	0	37
2	30	8	18	2	0	58
3	13	2	15	10	0	31
4	14	3	5	1	0	23
5	3	0	4	0	0	7
6	4	2	8	3	0	17
unknown	3	2	3	2	0	10
Totals =	85	19	69	10	0	183

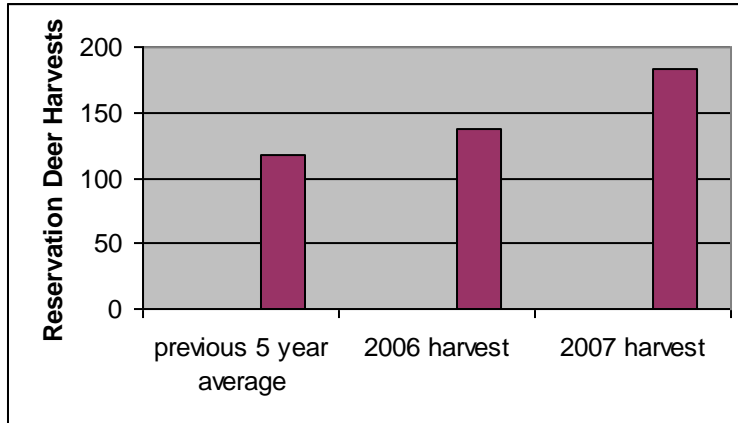


Figure 5. Comparable Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvests.

Table 4. Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvest by time period.

Time Period	Deer Harvest
September	24
October	58
November	72
December	17
Ceremonial	12*
Total = 183	

*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 145 bucks and 54 antlerless deer.

MOOSE

The 1854 moose season was September 29-December 31. In response to declining moose numbers, harvest was limited to antlered moose only. The Reservation Business Committee approved the issuance of 70 moose permits through a drawing process to parties of 3-4 hunters for the 1854 Ceded Territory. A total of 81 parties applied for the available permits and 70 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 8 FDL Moose Hunt Zones established by the

Division. Each FDL zone conforms to from 2 to 8 state moose zones (Fig. 6 and Table 5).

The 1837 moose season opened on September 4 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 20 bull moose were registered by Fond du Lac hunters for a harvest success rate of 29%. This continues the trend of declining harvests and success rates for moose hunters in recent years (Fig. 7). In addition, 1 bull was harvested for elders and ceremonial purposes by Division conservation officers.

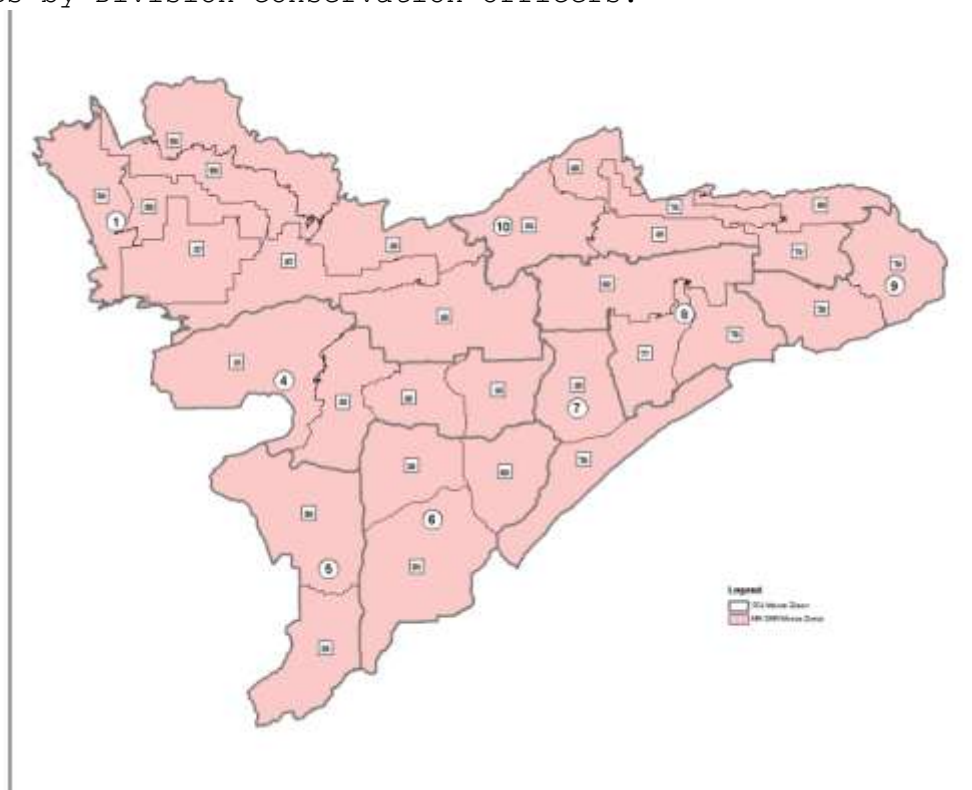


Figure 6. Fond du Lac and corresponding State Moose Harvest Zones.

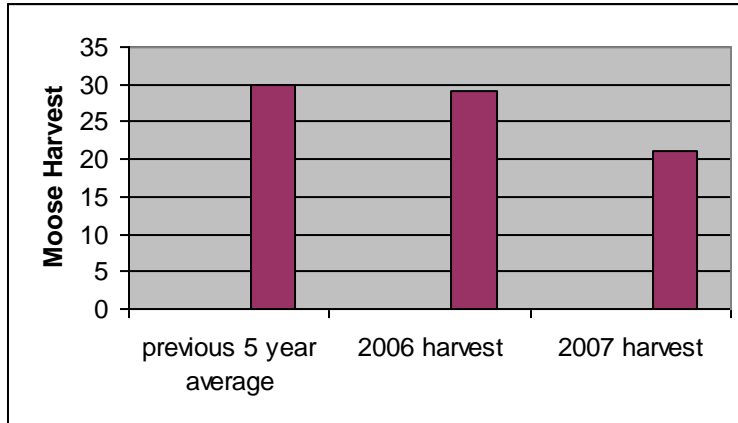


Figure 7. Comparable Fond du Lac moose harvests.

Table 5. 2007 Fond du Lac moose harvest breakdown by FDL and state zone.

FDL Zone	FDL Permits	Total FDL Harvest	Harvest in Corresponding DNR Zones	FDL Harvest
1	5	2	33 34	1 1
4	8	1	24	1
5	7	2	30	2
6	13	7	29 31 80	2 1 4
7	8	3	25	3
8	10	1	77	1
9	10	4	70 73	2 2
10	9	1	72	1

The average age of adult bulls harvested was 3.6 years (N = 21, Range = 1-7. Rounded to the nearest inch, the average antler spread was 40" (N = 17, Range = 17-54").

FURBEARERS

For the 2007-2008 trapping season 7 FDL band members registered 74 fisher, marten, bobcat and otter pelts (Table 6). This harvest is below last season's harvest but above the previous 5 year average of 61 (Fig. 8). The number of trappers registering pelts was 7 and the 5 year average for trapper numbers is 6. Most animals were harvested in November and December, with a few in January, 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	1	0	4	9	0	0	0	0	14
PA 127	0	1	8	8	0	0	0	0	17
PA 156	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
PA 180	0	0	4	8	0	0	0	0	12
PA 181	0	2	10	9	0	0	1	0	22
PA 183	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
PA 199	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	6
Total Harvest	4	4	28	35	1	0	1	1	74

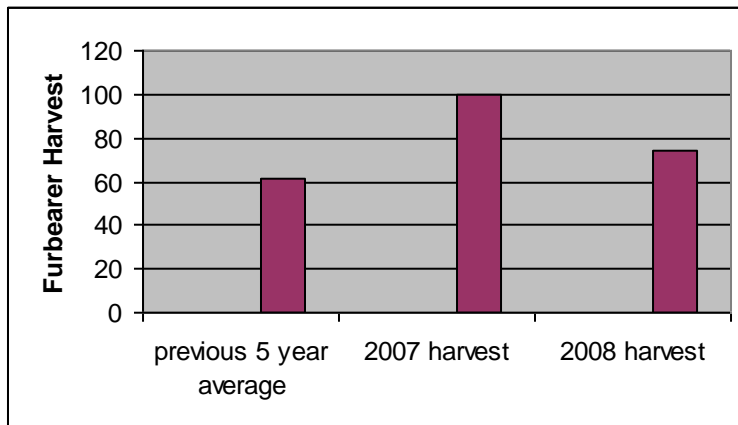


Figure 8. Comparable Fond du Lac registered furbearer harvests.