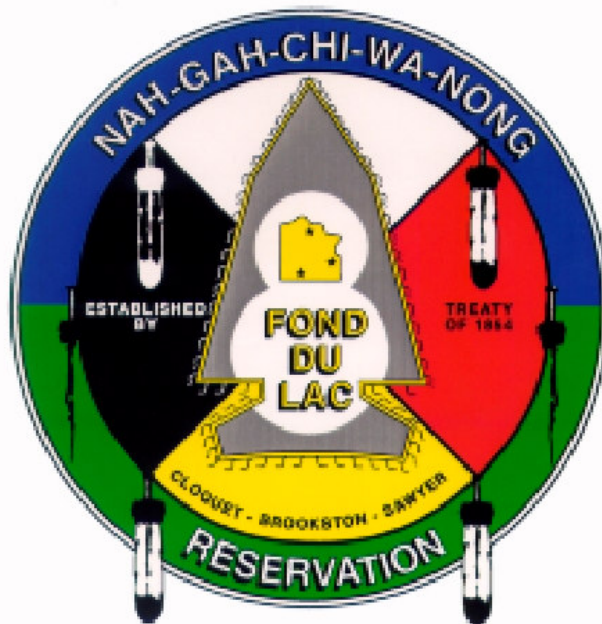


2009 BIG GAME AND FURBEARER HARVEST
RECORD FOR THE FOND DU LAC RESERVATION
AND CEDED TERRITORIES

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Terri Redding, Ellen Bassett, John Smith, Mike Smith, Mark Zacher, Pete Durfee, Josh Whitebird, Darren Seppala, Duane Barney, Bake Evanson, Tim and Phil Whelan, and the personnel at Chalstrom's Bait and Tackle, Country Corner Tavern, Fond du Lac Gas and Grocery, Sawyer Store and the Cotton ICO Store for assisting with harvest registration.

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.

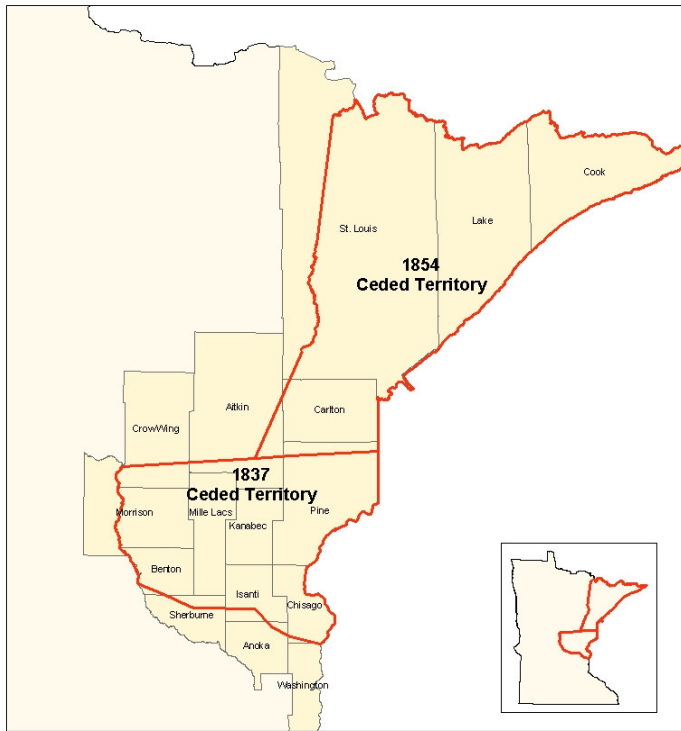


Figure 1. The 1837 and 1854 Ceded Territories in Minnesota.

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 wildlife harvest 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.

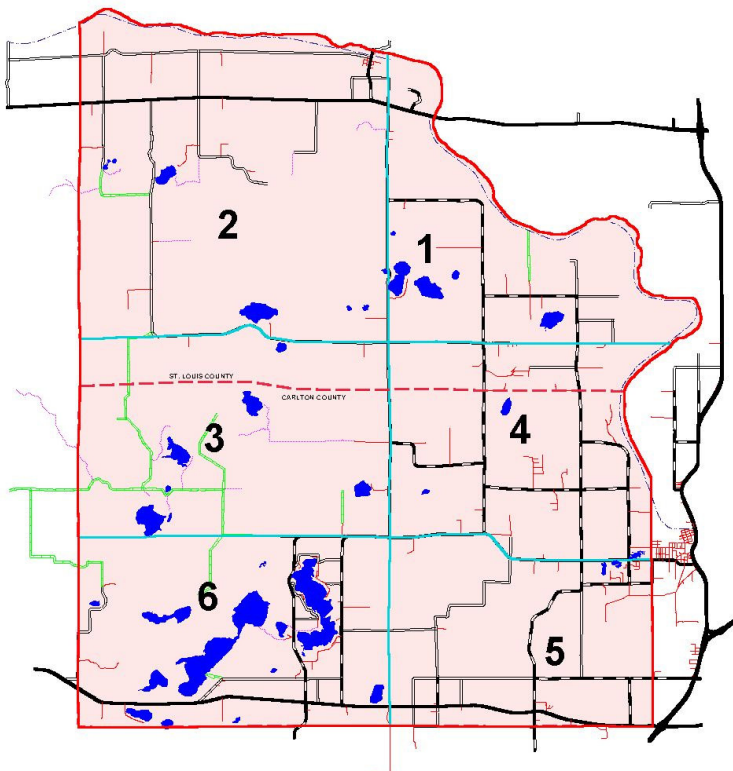


Figure 2 - Fond du Lac Reservation wildlife harvest zones

TURKEY

The 1837 Ceded Territory spring turkey season in 2009 was April 11 - May 28 and the fall season September 8 - December 31. The Reservation and part of the 1854 Ceded Territory were open to turkey harvest during the spring season (Fig. 3). The 1837 Wildlife Management Plan for 2007-2011 provides for tribal harvest thresholds for each state antlerless deer permit area 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. The turkey tag could be used either in the ceded territories or on the Reservation. Fourteen members requested a total of 15 tags in the spring. Twenty-seven members requested 27 fall tags. All birds had to be registered at the Division office. One bird was taken in the spring from Unit 235. There was no fall harvest. The threshold level for Unit 235 was 8 birds.

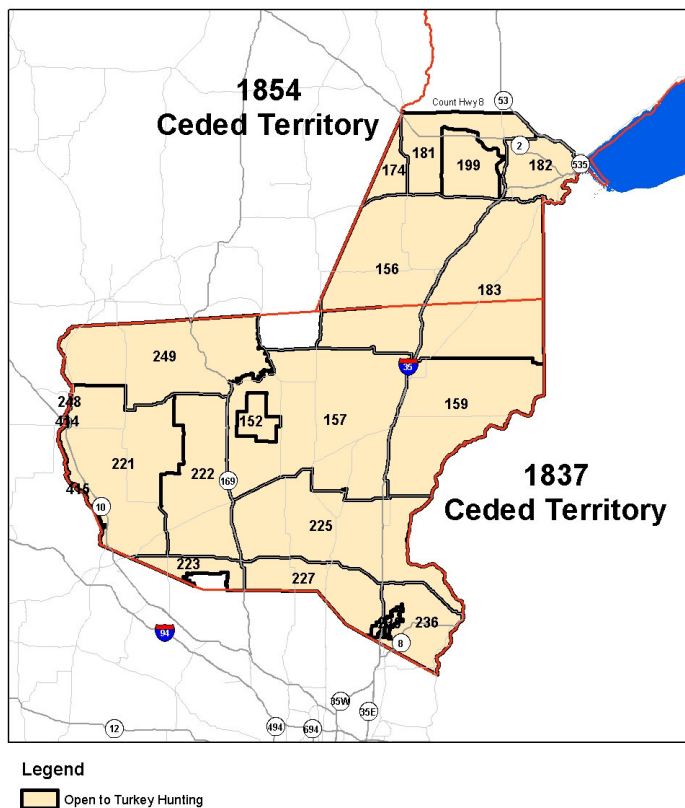


Figure 3. Areas open to Fond du Lac turkey hunting.

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 7 big game registration stations or with a Division wildlife or conservation officer staff member. The 2009 bear season in the 1854 Ceded Territory was September 1 - November 29. Baiting was legal from August 14 - November 29. The 1837 Ceded Territory season was September 1 - November 15. Bait stations were permissible August 14 - 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 169 initial bear tags for hunting in their ceded territories. No second tags were requested. No bears were registered from the Ceded Territory.

Reservation

The Reservation bear season was September 1 - November 29. Baiting was allowed August 14 - November 29. Band members received one tag initially with a second tag possible upon registration of an animal. Band members requested 146 initial tags. No second tags were requested. No bears were registered from the Reservation. State bear harvest from the Reservation was unknown, but 416 bears were harvested from the unit incorporating the Reservation and surrounding areas.

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 Ceded Territories, the 2009 firearms and archery deer season was September 8 - December 31. There were no restrictions on the harvest of antlered or antlerless deer in either Ceded Territory. Deer were required to be registered with reference to the DNR antlerless deer permit area of harvest (Fig. 4).

A total of 462 band members requested 1585 ceded territory 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

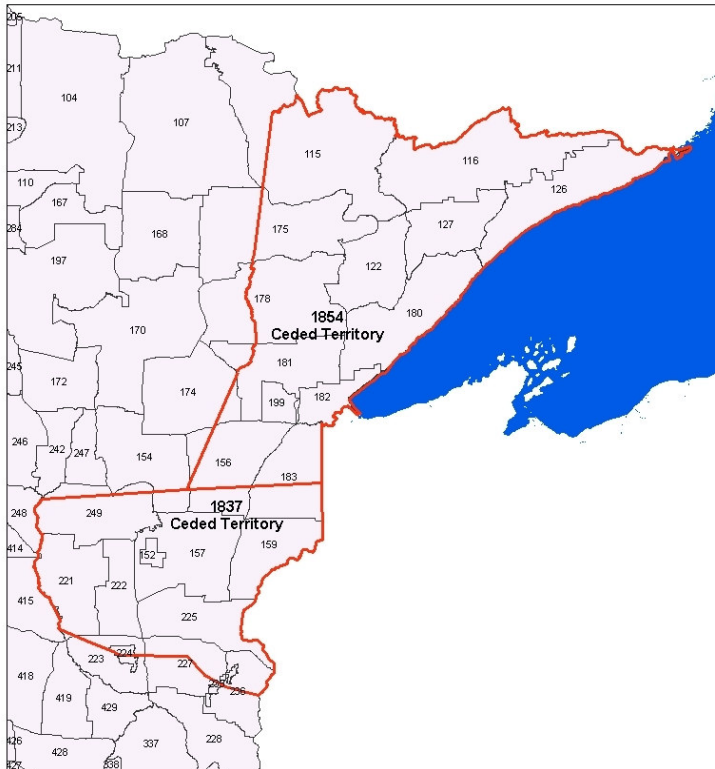


Figure 4. Minnesota antlerless deer permit areas.

only 3 tags. Ninety members registered 1 or more deer and 1 individual 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.

A 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 ceded territories were eligible for drawings.

The majority of animals were taken from permit areas near the Fond du Lac Reservation. Band member harvest for 2009 was 237 animals. In addition to the member harvest, 37 deer were harvested for subsistence/ceremonial purposes by Division conservation officers for a total of 274 deer (Table 1 and Fig. 5). The total was a small

decrease from 2008, and about 21% below the previous 5 year average. 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 1. 2009 ceded territory Fond du Lac deer harvest breakdown by sex, age class, and DNR antlerless permit area.

Permit Area	Adult Buck Harvest	Buck Fawn Harvest	Adult Doe Harvest	Doe Fawn Harvest	Total
115	1	1	3	0	5
116	0	0	0	0	0
122	3	0	1	0	4
126	0	0	0	0	0
127	0	0	0	0	0
152	0	0	0	0	0
154	0	0	0	0	0
156	6	1	9	0	16
157	0	0	0	0	0
159	2	0	4	0	6
174	0	0	0	0	0
175	0	0	0	0	0
178	4	5	8	2	19
180	7	1	13	2	23
181	52	15	64	14	145
182	5	1	3	0	9
183	6	2	10	3	21
221	0	1	0	0	1
222	1	0	0	0	1
223	0	0	0	0	0
224	0	0	0	0	0
225	0	0	0	0	0
225	0	0	0	0	0
227	0	0	0	0	0
235	1	0	0	0	1
236	0	0	0	0	0
249	0	0	0	0	0
500	3	1	0	1	5
St. Croix State Park	3	1	3	1	8
St Croix Youth Hunt	0	0	0	0	0
Wild River State Park	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	98	30	119	27	274

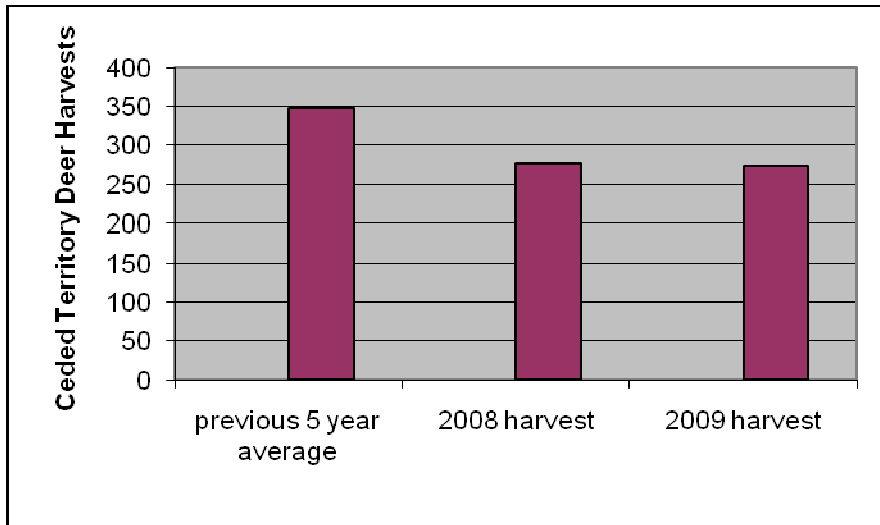


Figure 5. Recent historical Fond du Lac ceded territory deer harvests.

Table 2. 2009 Fond du Lac ceded territory deer harvest registration by month.

Registration Period	Deer Harvest
September	6
October	57
November	144
December	24
Unknown	6
Subsistence/Ceremonial*	37
Total =	274

*Subsistence/Ceremonial deer are taken as needed throughout the year

Reservation

The Reservation archery and firearms deer season was September 8 - December 31. FDL members and members of other federally recognized bands who reside on the FDL Reservation, were allowed up to 6 deer tags valid for either sex and any legal method of take. Three tags were granted initially with additional tags after an animal was registered. A total of 435 band members requested 1,417 Reservation deer tags. Twenty-three members requested all 6 tags. As in the ceded territories, a drawing was held at periodic intervals during the season in order to encourage registration.

The 2009 band member harvest was 119 animals (Table 3 and Fig. 6). In addition, Division conservation officers harvested 11 animals for subsistence/ceremonial purposes for a total of 130 deer. The

majority of the harvest occurred in November (Table 4).

Table 3. 2009 Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvest breakdown by age, sex and management unit.

Wildlife Management Unit	Adult Buck Harvest	Buck Fawn Harvest	Adult Doe Harvest	Doe Fawn Harvest	Total
1	5	2	10	3	20
2	16	2	19	4	40
3	10	2	4	1	17
4	8	2	9	5	24
5	9	0	3	0	12
6	10	1	2	2	15
Unknown Unit	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	58	9	48	15	130

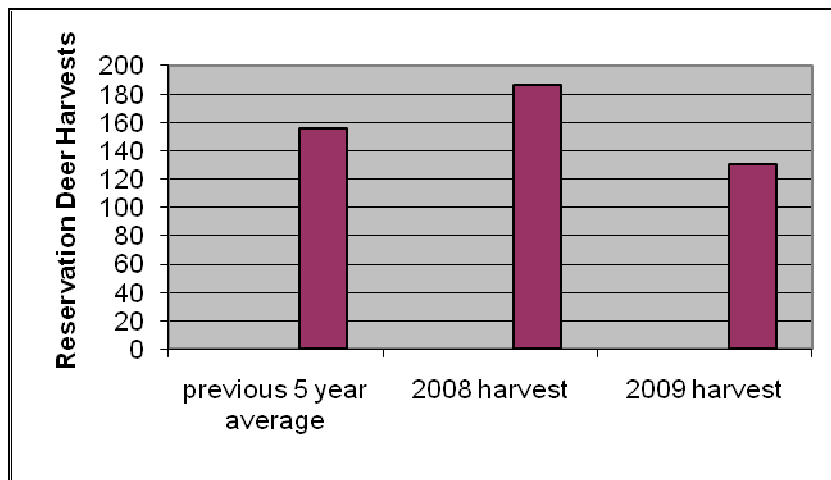


Figure 6. Recent Fond du Lac Reservation deer harvests.

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

Registration Period	Deer Harvest
September	12
October	25
November	71
December	11
Subsistence/Ceremonial*	11
Total =	130

*Subsistence/ceremonial deer are taken as needed throughout the year

The Division and the DNR continue to cooperate on deer management strategies on the Reservation. The Division requested and the DNR agreed to maintain their "managed" strategy for state-licensed hunters on the Reservation. This strategy allows a state-licensed hunter to take up to 2 deer of which at least one must be an antlerless deer. Total deer harvest by state-licensed hunters was 145 adult bucks and 94 antlerless deer.

MOOSE

The Reservation Business Committee approved 3 changes to the 2009 moose season in the 1854 Ceded Territory; the season opened 1 week before the state's season, either sex of moose could be harvested and the number of FDL zones was consolidated from 8 to 5. The 1854 Ceded Territory moose season was September 26 - December 31. Seventy-two moose permits were available through a drawing process to parties of 3-4 hunters for the 1854 Ceded Territory. A total of 75 parties applied for the permits and 68 permits were eventually 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 5 FDL Moose Hunt Zones established by the Division. Each FDL zone conforms to from 4 to 8 state moose zones (Fig. 7 and Table 5).

The 1837 moose season opened on September 8 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 7 registration stations or with a Division wildlife or conservation officer staff member. Antler spread, and the FDL and

DNR moose zones were recorded. In addition, the hunter was required to present an incisor tooth for ageing. Hunters were asked to collect tissue samples from their moose for a moose health assessment project conducted by the DNR in cooperation with the bands. Many band members returned complete or partial health kits.

A total of 28 moose - 7 cows and 21 bulls were registered by Fond du Lac hunters for a harvest success rate of 41%. Changes in the 2009 season likely were the primary reason FDL had its highest moose harvest since 2005 (Fig. 8). In addition, 1 bull and 1 bull calf were taken for subsistence and ceremonial purposes by Division conservation officers.

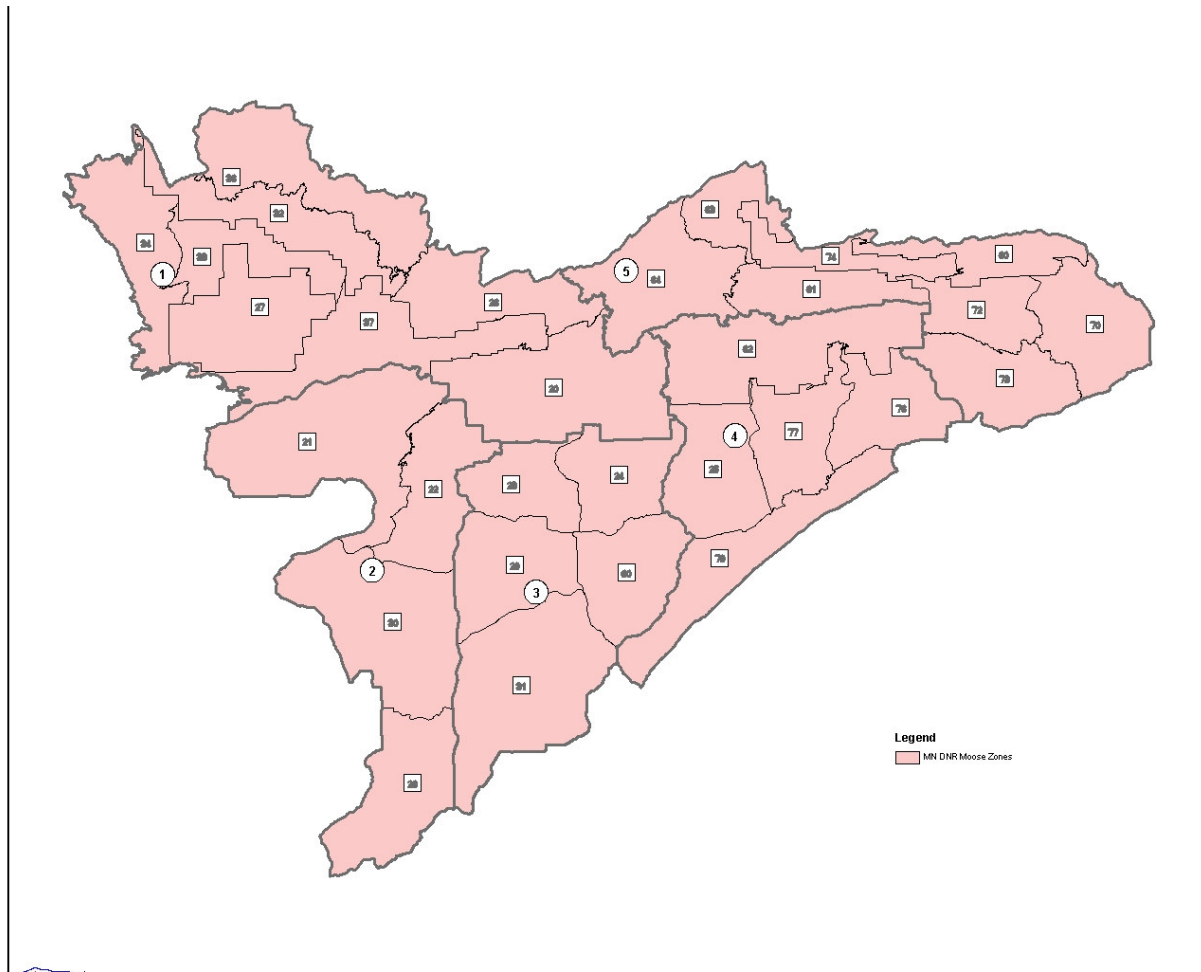


Figure 7. Fond du Lac and corresponding State Moose Harvest Zones.

Table 5. 2009 Fond du Lac moose harvest breakdown by FDL and state zone.

Fond du Lac Zones	Corresponding State Zones	Permits Available	Adult Bulls	Adults Cows	Bull Calves	Cow Calves	Total Harvest
1	20	5					
	26						
	27						
	32						
	33					1	1
	34					1	1
	36						
	37						
2	21	11					
	22		1			1	
	28		1			1	
	30		1			1	
3	23	18					
	24						
	29		2			2	
	31		1			1	
	80		5	1		6	
4	25	18	4	3			7
	62						
	77		1			1	
	76						
	79						
5	60	20					
	61						
	63						
	64						
	70		4	1	1	6	
	72		1			1	
	73		1			1	
	74						
Total		72	22	7	1	30	

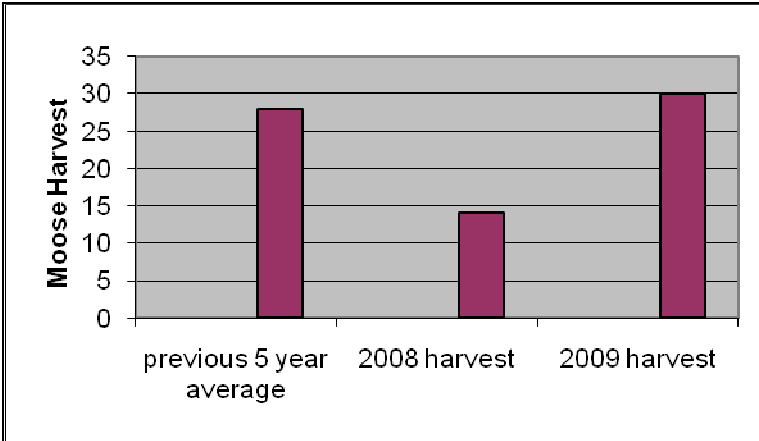


Figure 8. Recent Fond du Lac moose harvests.

The average age of adult bulls harvested was 5.3 years (N=20, Range = 2-10). Rounded to the nearest inch, the average antler spread was 42" (N = 21, Range = 26-60"). The average of adult cows was 6 years (N=6, Range = 1-11).

FURBEARERS

For the 2009-2010 trapping season 4 FDL band members registered 24 fisher, marten, bobcat and otter pelts (Table 6). This harvest is 32% of last season's harvest and lower than the previous 5 year average of 73 (Fig. 9). Most animals were harvested in December, with a few from January - March. No furbearers were harvested by firearms this past season. Fluctuations in FDL's fur harvest are more likely due to fur prices and the small number of trappers involved than in furbearer populations. The Division registers furbearers using the DNR's antlerless deer permit areas and FDL Reservation harvest units (Fig. 2 and Fig. 4).

Table 6. Fond du Lac registered furbearer harvest for the 2009-2010 season.

Harvest Unit	Female Fisher	Male Fisher	Female Marten	Male Marten	Male Otter	Female Otter	Unknown Otter	Female Bobcat	Male Bobcat	Total
FDL 1										
FDL 2		1					2			3
FDL 3	1									1
FDL 4										
FDL 5										
FDL 6										
122										
127										
156		7		2						9
159	4									4
174										
180										
181			1		1	1		2	2	7
Total=	5	8	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	24

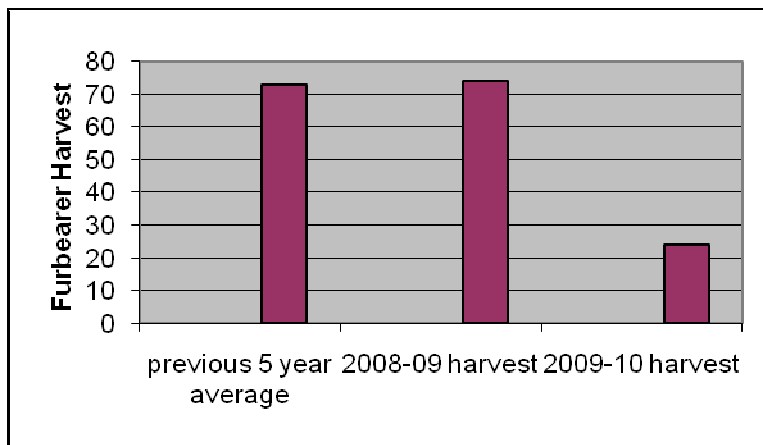


Figure 9. Recent Fond du Lac furbearer harvests.