

2016 WILDLIFE HARVEST RECORD FOR THE FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA

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INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this report is to document seasons, limits and harvest of deer, bear, moose, turkey, sandhill cranes and furbearers by the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (FDL) on their Reservation and the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota where FDL members do the majority of their hunting and trapping. Harvest data from the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan is provided in summary form. More detailed harvest information for the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories is provided by the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC).

Under the Treaties of 1837, 1842 and 1854 the FDL Band retained hunting, fishing and gathering rights on approximately 28 million acres across Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. In addition, FDL members hunt, fish and gather on their reservation of 100,000 acres near Cloquet, Minnesota (Fig. 1).

In 1977 the FDL 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 Minnesota 1837 Conservation Code was first implemented in 1997. In 2012, the Band implemented conservation codes for the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan. Seasons and bag limits are determined on an annual basis.

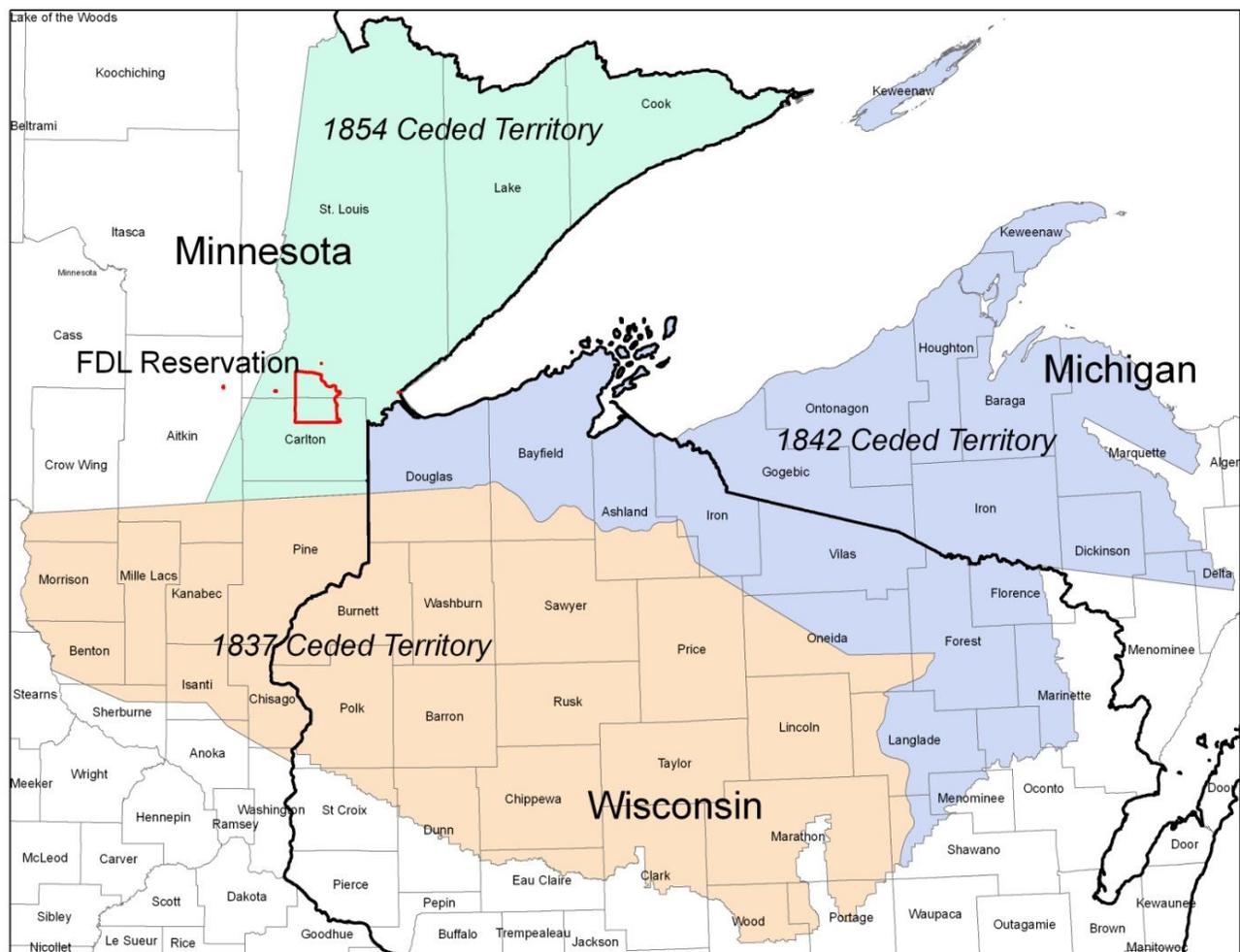


Figure 1. The Fond du Lac Reservation and the 1837, 1842 and 1854 Ceded Territories of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

LICENSES, TAGS AND CARCASS REGISTRATION

FDL members exercising their treaty rights 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 Band issues a single license to members which covers all hunting, fishing and gathering activities on the Reservation and in the ceded territories. The Native American Game and Fish Applications® (NAGFA) program was utilized to record license and carcass tag information for FDL members. This enabled license and tag information to be compatible with established GLIFWC procedures while enabling FDL members to cross borders with the same carcass tags.

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The Fond du Lac Resource Management Division (RMD) maintained registration stations at its office on the FDL Reservation, and locally with Country Corner Tavern, Sawyer Store and with RMD wildlife and enforcement staff in the field. In addition, online and phone registration systems were available to FDL members. The phone system was maintained through the FDL MIS Division and the online system utilized Google Docs®. After testing these systems in 2011 with deer, the phone and online systems were expanded to include fall turkey, moose and bear in 2012 and spring turkey and sandhill cranes in 2013. The registered furbearers – marten, fisher, bobcat and otter – could only be registered at the RMD office and moose in 2016 had to be registered by phone. A breakdown of how FDL hunters registered other animals in 2016 is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Stations and methods used by FDL hunters in 2016 to register deer, bear, crane and turkey.

	Total Registrations	Percentage of total
RMD Office	52	28%
Online	87	47%
Phone	22	12%
Sawyer Store	3	2%
RMD field staff	0	0%
Country Corner Tavern	8	4%
Conservation Officers	11	6%
NAGFA	2	1%
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1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

Deer, bear, turkey, fisher, bobcat and otter harvested by FDL members in the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan were primarily registered using the NAGFA system. Access to NAGFA was available at the RMD office and other tribal offices in the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories. Cranes were registered by phone and hunters harvesting deer in Wisconsin were encouraged to register by phone in an effort to slow the transport of carcasses potentially infected with CWD.

TURKEY

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The 2016 spring turkey season was April 9 - May 31 and the fall season September 6 - December 31. Following changes to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) turkey hunting format, all areas of the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories were open for turkey hunting (Fig. 2). Two tags were available initially to each FDL member with additional tags possible following registration of a bird. The tags could be used either in the ceded territories or on the Reservation and birds of either sex could be taken. In an effort to better identify the locations of harvest and the expansion of turkey populations in the 1854 Ceded Territory, birds were registered with reference to the DNR's deer permit areas (DPA) within 3 business days of harvest (Fig. 2).

Twenty-four FDL members got tags for the spring season and 265 members got tags for the fall season. In addition, 14 members of other recognized tribes who reside on the FDL Reservation were issued licenses and turkey tags to hunt on the FDL Reservation. No turkeys were registered during the spring season and three hunters registered a total of 4 hens and a gobbler from DPA 156 and 2 unknown birds from an unknown unit during the fall season.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The spring season was April 13 - May 24 in Wisconsin and Michigan. The fall season was September 6 - December 31. Five FDL members got spring tags and 56 FDL members got fall tags for turkeys; however, no FDL members registered any birds from these Ceded Territories in 2016.

BEAR

Two tags at a time were available to FDL members to hunt bear with additional tags possible after a bear was registered. Tags could be utilized either on the FDL Reservation or any of the ceded territories. An individual hunter's limit was 4 bears. A total of 176 FDL members requested bear tags. Cubs and sows with cubs were protected from harvest.

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The 2016 bear season in the 1854 Ceded Territory and the FDL Reservation was August 27 - December 31. Baiting was legal from August 5 - December 31. The 1837 Ceded Territory season was September 1 - November 15. Bait stations were permissible August 12 - November 15. All harvested bears were required to be registered within 3 business days of harvest with reference to the DNR antlerless deer permit area (DPA) of harvest (Fig. 2).

In addition to FDL members, 8 members of other recognized tribes who reside on the FDL Reservation were issued licenses and bear tags to hunt on the FDL Reservation. One FDL hunter registered 3 bears - 2 males and a female from DPA 127. State-licensed hunters took one male bear from the FDL Reservation.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The 2016 bear season was September 6 - October 31. Two FDL members registered 2 male bears - 1 each from Burnett and Douglas Counties (Fig. 1).

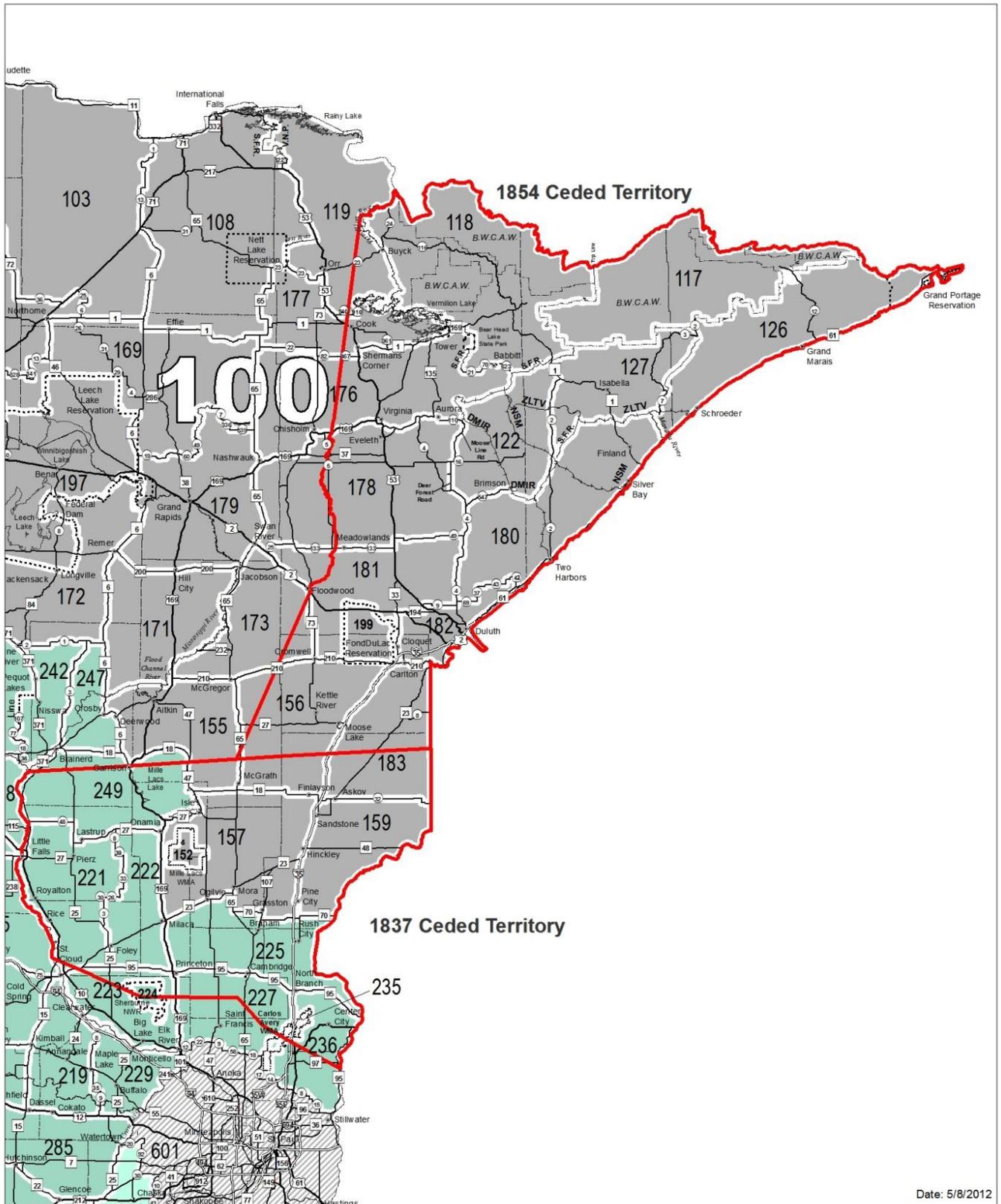


Figure 2. Minnesota deer permit areas and the 1837 and 1854 Ceded Territories of Minnesota. Permit area 199 is the FDL Reservation.

DEER

Four tags at a time were available to FDL members to hunt deer in the ceded territories with additional tags possible after a deer was registered. Tags could be utilized in any of the ceded territories. There was no individual limit and no restrictions on the harvest of antlered or antlerless deer. Approximately 430 FDL members requested 1750 ceded territory deer tags. In an effort to recover the Reservation deer population, band members were limited to only 2 Reservation deer tags with no restrictions on age or sex of deer harvested. Approximately 330 FDL members requested 661 Reservation deer tags. In addition to FDL members, 20 members of other recognized tribes residing on the FDL Reservation were issued tags to deer hunt on the Reservation.

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The 2016 deer season was September 6 – December 31 for both ceded territories and the Reservation. Deer were required to be registered within 3 business days of harvest with reference to the DNR’s deer permit areas (Fig. 2). A total of 89 FDL and one member of another band registered 173 deer from the Reservation and the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota (av. =2 deer/hunter, range = 1-11). Just under half of all successful hunters (49%) registered only 1 deer with another 26% of hunters registering 2 deer. The remaining 25% of hunters took 3-11 deer apiece. Of the 170 deer where method of take was recorded, 9 deer were taken with a bow, 1 with a muzzleloader and 160 with a regular firearm. In addition to tribal hunter harvest, RMD conservation officers harvested 7 deer for subsistence/ceremonial purposes. The 2016 FDL deer harvest was up only slightly from 2015 (Fig. 3). Likely, a lingering impact from the harsh winter of 2012-13 with its associated deer mortality, was a significant factor. A breakdown of total FDL Reservation and Minnesota 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territory deer harvest by permit area, age and sex is provided in Table 2. The majority of animals were taken from the Fond du Lac Reservation and neighboring permit areas. As in past years, the majority of deer were harvested in November (Table 3).

Table 2. 2016 FDL total deer harvest by DNR antlerless deer permit area, age and sex.

DNR Antlerless Deer Permit Area	Adult Buck	Adult Doe	Buck Fawn	Doe Fawn	unknown	Total Harvest by Permit Area
118	0	1	1	0	0	2
126	0	0	1	0	0	1
127	0	0	0	1	0	1
156	3	11	3	6	0	23
176	0	4	1	1	0	6
177	0	1	0	0	0	1
178	1	6	3	0	0	10
180	2	4	0	2	0	8
181	22	14	6	6	1	49
182	3	2	0	0	0	5
183	6	7	2	0	0	15
199 (FDL Reservation)	20	13	6	2	0	41
225	0	2	0	0	0	2
Wild River State Park	2	9	0	2	0	13
Unknown	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total Harvest	62	74	23	20	1	180

Table 3. FDL deer harvest by month.

Registration Period	Deer Harvest
September	7
October	19
November	127
December	20
subsistence/ceremonial*	7
total	180

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

In 2016 FDL hunters participated in state park deer hunts in the 1837 and 1854 Ceded Territories. These hunts are held to reduce deer numbers and impacts to vegetation inside park boundaries. Details of 2016 season formats for state park hunts are in Table 4. Harvest details from state parks are found in Table 2.

Table 4. 2016 Minnesota state park hunt declarations and participation by the FDL Band.

State Park	Hunt Type	County	Hunt Dates	Available FDL Permits	Permits Claimed
Banning	Firearms-Youth Only	Pine	Oct. 29 - 30	1	0
St. Croix	Firearms-Youth Only	Pine	Oct. 29 - 30	3	0
Tettegouche	Firearms-Youth Only	Lake	Oct. 29 - 30	2	0
Cascade, Judge Magney, Gooseberry Falls, Split Rock, and Tettegouche combined	Firearms	Lake & Cook	Nov. 5 - 20	10	2
Wild River	Firearms	Chisago	Nov. 12 -13	15	11
St. Croix	Firearms	Pine	Nov. 17- 20	20	12
Soudan/Lake Vermillion	Muzzleloader	St. Louis	Nov. 26 - Dec. 11	2	1
St. Croix	Muzzleloader	Pine	Dec. 1 - 4	3	1
Crow Wing	Muzzleloader	Crow Wing	Dec. 3 - 4	2	1
Jay Cooke	Muzzleloader	Carlton	Dec. 5-9	3	3

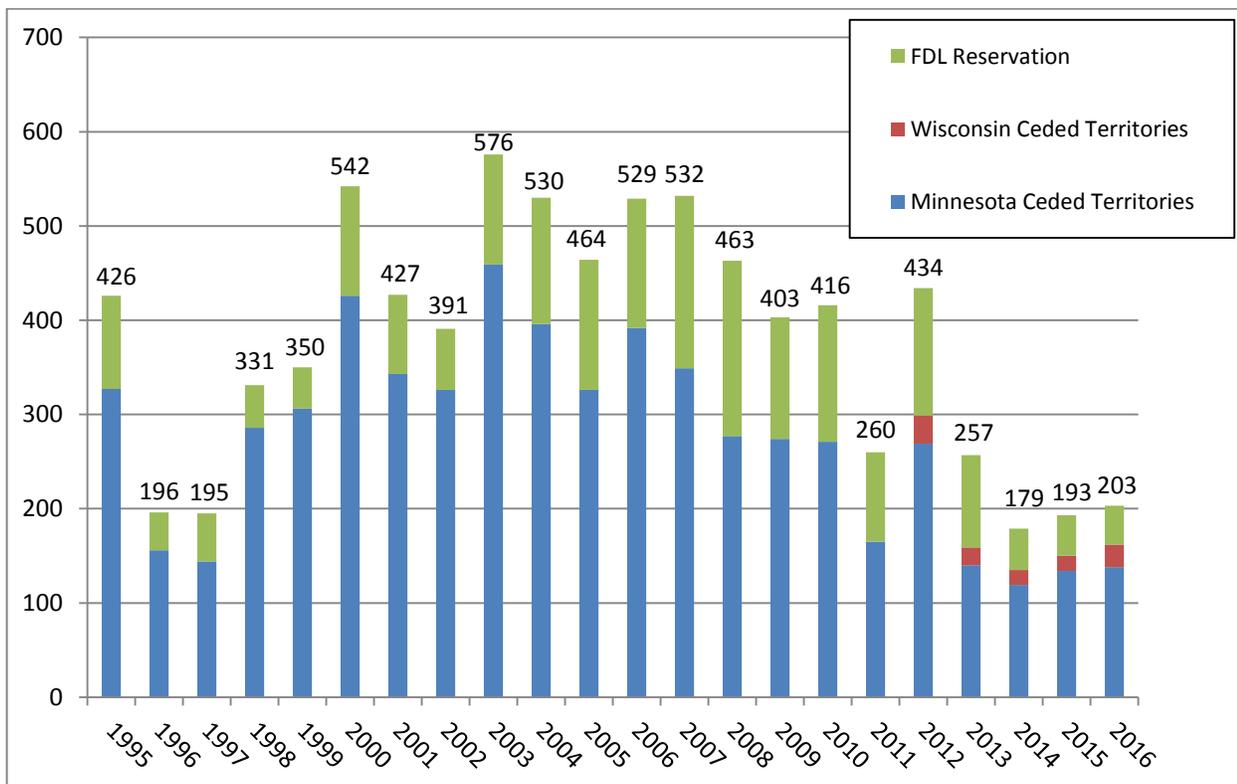


Figure 4. Fond du Lac Reservation and Ceded Territory deer harvests 1995-2016.

The RMD and the Cloquet DNR office continued their cooperation on deer harvest strategies for the Reservation. Predictive models and anecdotal information indicated local deer numbers remained below desired levels so the RMD requested and the DNR agreed to continue their “bucks only” harvest strategy for state-licensed hunters on the Reservation. This strategy allows a state-licensed hunter to take 1 antlered deer. Total 2016 deer harvest by state-licensed hunters on the FDL Reservation was 121 deer; 120 antlered and 1 antlerless deer. It was not clear if the antlerless deer was the result of a registration error or illegal hunting.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The 2016 deer season was September 6 – January 1. Ten FDL members registered 24 deer from Wisconsin; 17 from Douglas County, 1 each from Bayfield and Washburn Counties, 2 from Lincoln County and 2 from unknown counties (Fig. 1 and Fig. 4).

REGISTERED FURBEARERS

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The 2016-17 hunting and trapping season for registered furbearers – marten, fisher, bobcat and otter - was September 6 - March 31 on the FDL Reservation and the 1854 Ceded Territory and October 1 - March 1 in the 1837 Ceded Territory. All 4 species were required to be registered at the RMD office. Five FDL members registered 96 otter, marten and fisher (Table 5 and Fig. 5). No bobcat were registered. One fisher was registered as a roadkill and the remaining animals taken by trapping. Fluctuations in FDL’s fur harvest are as likely due to fur prices and the small number of trappers involved as to changes in furbearer populations. One individual accounted for 93% of FDL’s total registered furbearer harvest. The RMD registers furbearers with reference to the DNR’s antlerless deer PAs (Fig. 3).

Harvest by state-licensed trappers on the FDL Reservation can only be estimated. State-licensed trappers are required to report harvest with reference to township and then a harvest location is randomly assigned within the township. The Reservation touches 11 different townships; however, only 1 township is entirely enclosed by Reservation boundaries. On this basis, the estimated 2016 state-licensed harvest on the FDL Reservation was only 2 bobcats, and no fisher, marten or otter, but the actual harvest may be different.

Table 5. FDL 2016-17 registered furbearer harvest for the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation.

Species	FDL Reservation					Total
	PA 118	PA 127	PA 156	PA 181	(PA 199)	
Marten	65	14	0	0	5	84
Fisher	4	1	4	1	0	10
Bobcat	0	0	0	0	0	0
Otter	0	0	0	0	2	2

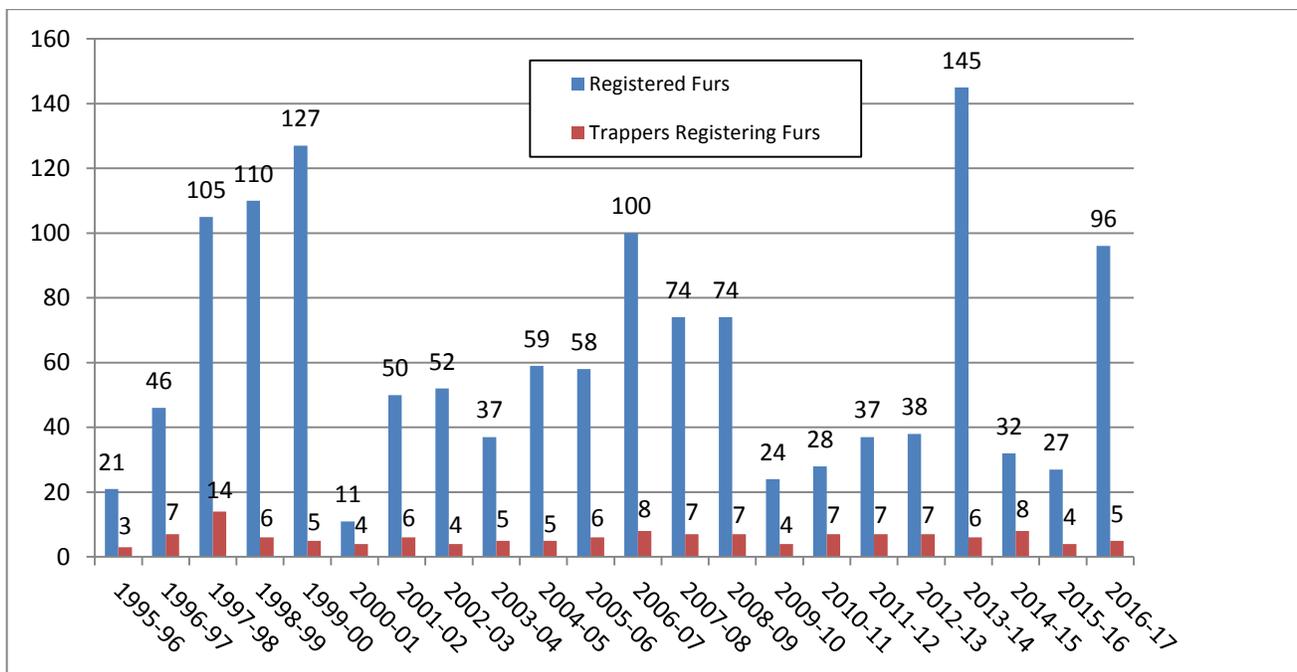


Figure 5. Total numbers of FDL trappers registering furs and their registered furbearer harvest from the FDL Reservation and the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota from the 1995-6 to the 2016-17 season.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

In 2016-17 there were various open and closing dates for the harvest of registered furbearers. Marten are a tribally designated endangered species in Wisconsin and as such there was no marten season in the 1837 or 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin. Three FDL members got carcass tags for bobcat and one did for fisher and otter, but no animals were registered.

SANDHILL CRANES

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota

The FDL Band's 2016 sandhill crane season was September 1 - November 30 in the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota. There was no season on the FDL Reservation. The daily limit was raised to 2 cranes this year with no season or possession limit. Two carcass tags were required before hunting and additional tags were possible following registration of a bird. One hundred seventeen FDL members requested crane tags. Four cranes were registered from permit area 183 (Fig. 3).

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The 2016 sandhill crane season was September 1 - December 31 with a daily limit of 2. No carcass tags were required for cranes, but any birds harvested had to be registered. No FDL members registered cranes from either ceded territory.

MOOSE

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota

After 3 years of electing not to hold a moose hunt the Fond du Lac Band felt moose numbers had stabilized enough to warrant holding a hunt again in 2016. The 1854 Treaty Authority also held a moose hunt, but the State of Minnesota did not.

Fond du Lac's 2016 moose hunt was limited to a bulls only format. Season dates were Sept. 24 to Dec. 31 or until FDL's self-imposed harvest limit of 28 bull moose was reached. The RMD retained 3 bulls for subsistence and ceremonial needs and the other 25 bulls were made available to the general FDL hunting population. Hunters were required to provide mobile phone contact information to the RMD and moose were required to be registered within 24 hours of harvest by calling a phone number provided by the RMD.

Fifty parties of 3-4 individuals applied for the 50 available permits. Permits were not restricted by area or zone; however, only those portions of the 1854 Ceded Territory previously zoned by the DNR for moose hunting were open (Fig. 6). A \$25 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 returned following registration of a moose or the return of an unused tag. FDL did not make any 1837 moose permits available in 2016.

FDL's general moose season closed after 21 days when the harvest limit of 25 bull moose was reached on Oct. 14. The remaining unsuccessful parties were contacted by text and individual phone calls. In addition to moose taken by general FDL hunters, 2 bull moose were taken by RMD conservation officers for subsistence and ceremonial needs. A breakdown of FDL's 2016 moose harvest by zone and historic moose harvests are below (Table 6 and Fig. 7).

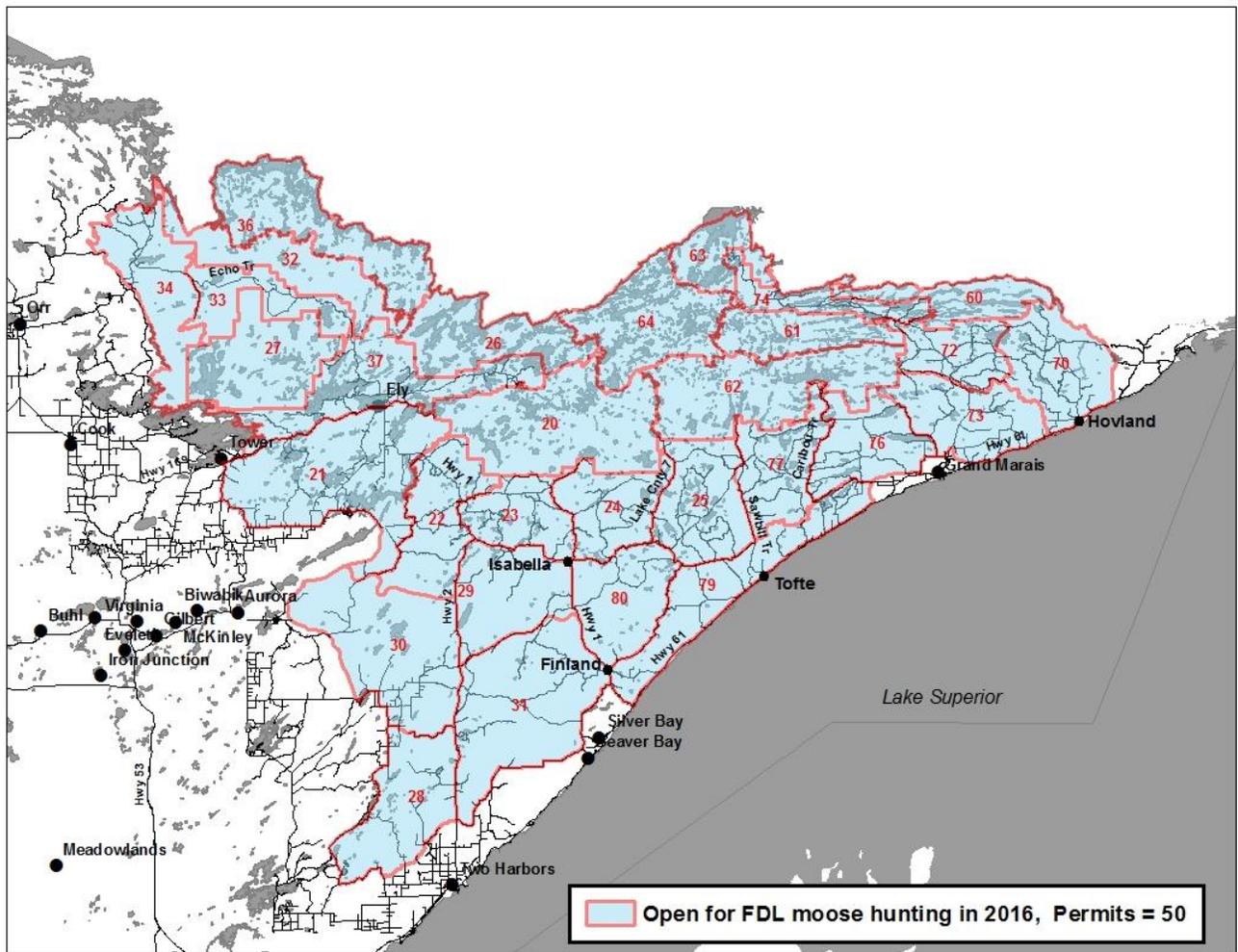


Figure 6. Area opened for 2016 FDL moose hunting in the 1854 Ceded Territory.

Table 6. Fond du Lac 2016 moose harvest by DNR moose zone

	Zone 24	Zone 25	Zone 29	Zone 31	Zone 70	Zone 72	Zone 73	Zone 76	Zone 77	Zone 80	Total Harvest
Bull											
Moose	3	5	1	2	1	7	1	2	2	3	27

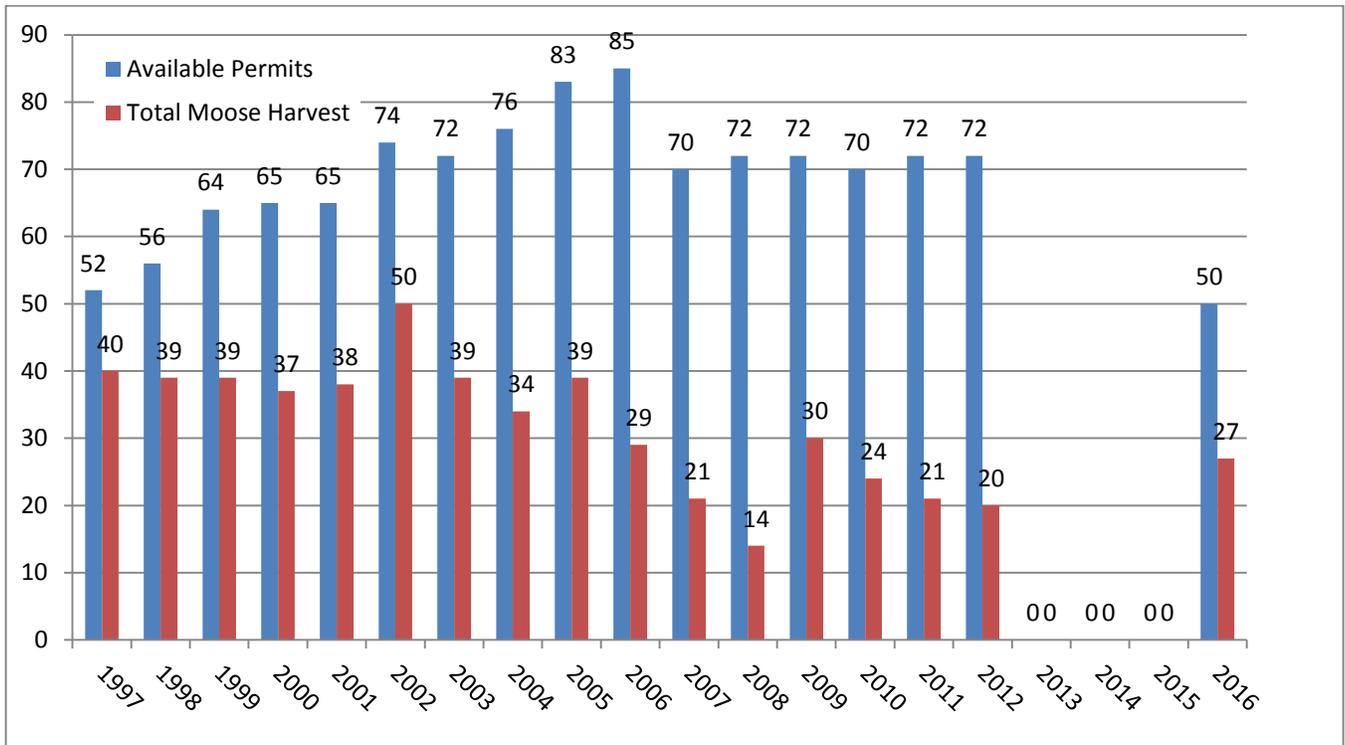


Figure 7. Fond du Lac total moose harvest and number of permits available 1997-2016.

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