

2020 WILDLIFE HARVEST RECORD FOR THE FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA

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INTRODUCTION

This report documents the seasons, limits and harvest of deer, bear, moose, turkey, sandhill cranes, swans 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 FDL 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 FDL developed and implemented the Reservation Conservation Code and in 1988 FDL implemented a conservation code that defined legal methods of take in the 1854 Ceded Territory. The 1854 Code and associated protocols were finalized with the State of Minnesota in December, 2017. The Minnesota 1837 Conservation Code was first implemented in 1997. In 2012, FDL implemented conservation codes for the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan. Seasons and bag limits are determined on an annual basis.

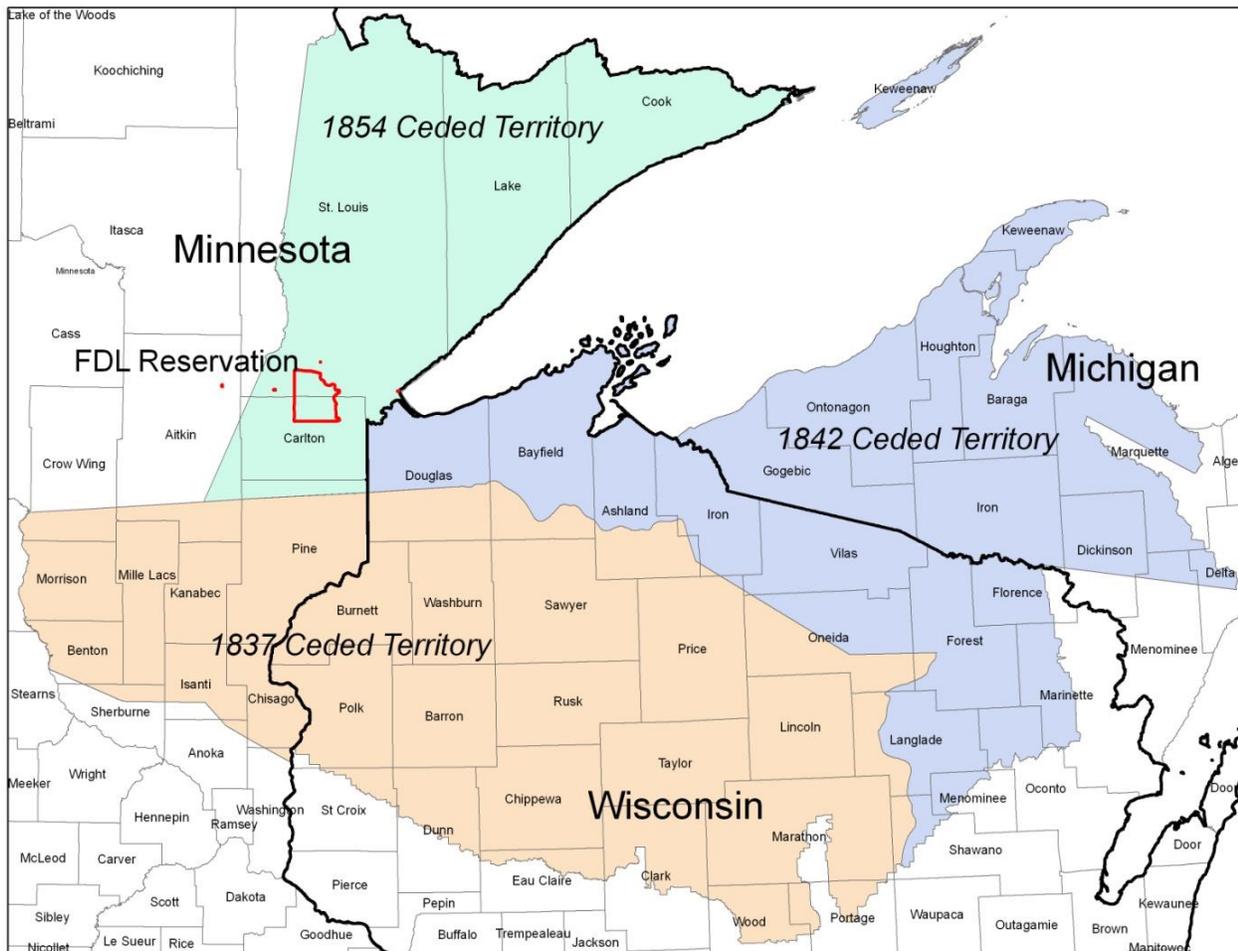


Figure 1. The Fond du Lac Reservation and the 1837, 1842 and 1854 Ceded Territories of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

LICENSES, TAGS AND CARCASS REGISTRATION

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

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. Tags for hunting in the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota were tracked on a shared Excel® spreadsheet hosted by the FDL Resource Management Division (RMD) internal network.

RMD maintained a registration station at its office on the FDL Reservation. The remaining brick and mortar registration stations were discontinued by 2018 due to lack of use. Online and phone registration systems were available to FDL members hunting on the FDL Reservation and in Minnesota 1854 and 1837. The phone system was maintained through the FDL Information Technology Division and the online system utilized Google Docs® accessed through links on various FDL webpages. The registered furbearers – marten, fisher, bobcat and otter – could only be registered at the RMD office and moose in 2020 had to be registered by phone directly with the enforcement clerk. A breakdown of how FDL hunters registered other animals in 2020 is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Stations and methods used by FDL hunters in 2020 to register deer, bear, crane, swan and turkey.

	Total Registrations	Percentage of total
RMD Office	32	17%
Online	134	73%
Phone	18	8%
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1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The Native American Game and Fish Applications® (NAGFA) program was utilized to record harvest, license and carcass tag information for FDL members hunting in the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories in Wisconsin and Michigan. Access to NAGFA was available at the RMD office and other tribal offices in the 1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories or phone or online by individual hunters. Hunters harvesting deer in Wisconsin were encouraged to register by phone or online in an effort to slow the transport of carcasses potentially infected with Chronic Wasting Disease.

TURKEY

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The 2020 spring turkey season was April 11 - May 31 and the fall season September 8 - December 31. All areas of the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories were open for turkey hunting (Fig. 2) except for the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge (DPA 224). 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).

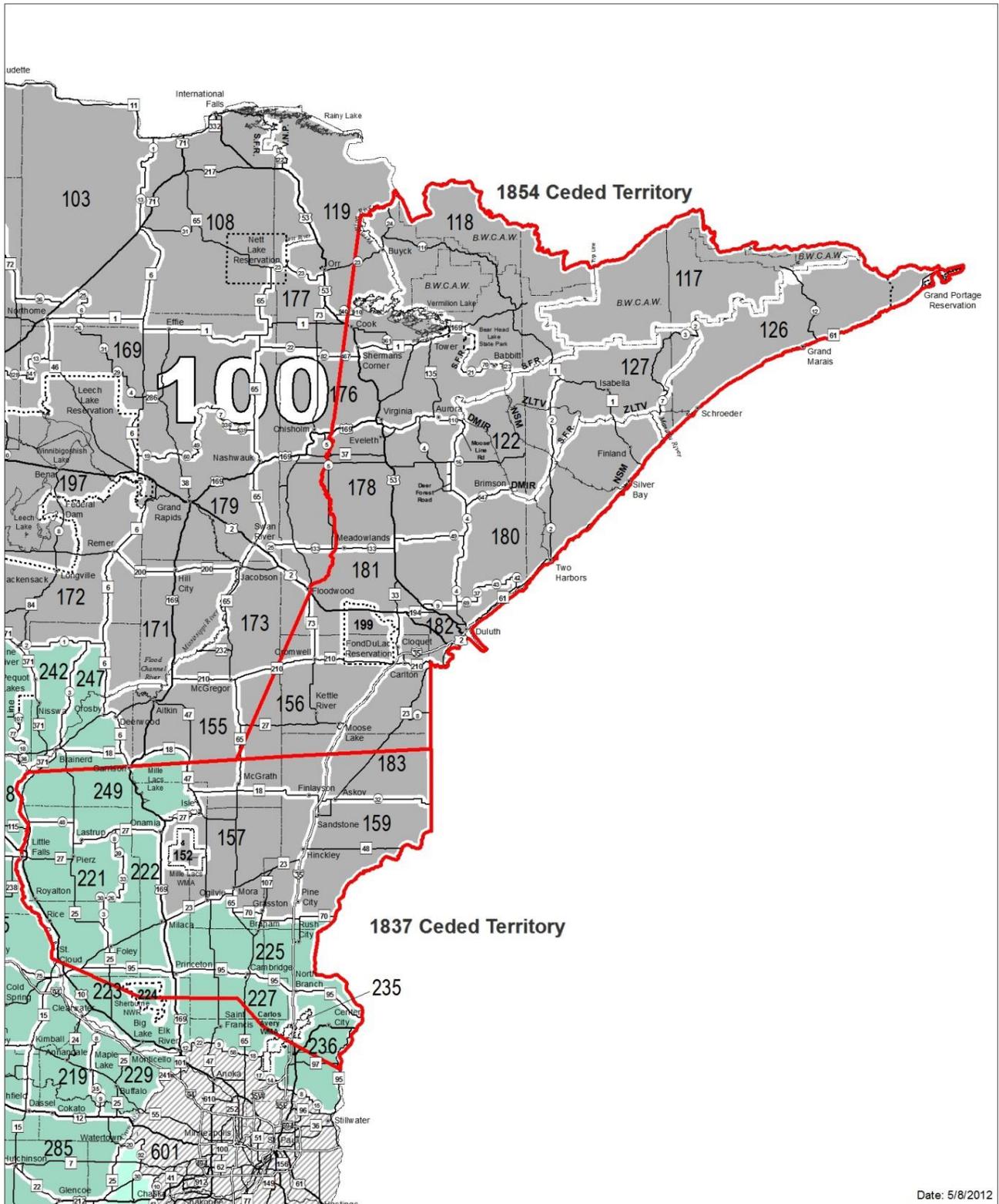


Figure 2. Minnesota antlerless deer permit areas (DPAs) and the 1837 and 1854 Ceded Territories of Minnesota. Permit area 199 is the FDL Reservation.

In 2020, 241 FDL Band members requested tags for the spring and/or fall seasons. In addition, 18 members of other recognized tribes who reside on the FDL Reservation were issued licenses and turkey tags to hunt on the FDL Reservation. No birds were registered during the spring season; but 15 birds were registered by eight hunters during the fall season. Four were registered from DPA 181 and 11 from the FDL Reservation (DPA 199, Fig. 2)

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The spring season was mid-April – late May in Wisconsin and Michigan. The fall season was September 8 - December 31. Four FDL members got spring tags and 32 FDL members got fall tags for turkeys. No birds were registered during the spring season and one gobbler was taken during the fall season from Lincoln County (Fig. 1).

BEAR

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The 2020 bear season in the 1854 Ceded Territory and the FDL Reservation was August 29 – December 31. Baiting was legal from August 15 - December 31. The 1837 Ceded Territory season was September 1 - November 15. Bait stations were permissible August 14 - November 15. 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. Cubs and sows with cubs were protected from harvest. A total of 186 FDL members requested bear tags. In addition to FDL members, 13 members of other recognized tribes who reside on the FDL Reservation were issued licenses and bear tags to hunt on the FDL Reservation. 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).

Two FDL hunters registered two male bears in 2020; one each from DPA 181 and 127. State-licensed hunters took three female and two male bears from the FDL Reservation.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The 2020 bear season was September 8 - October 31 and 20 FDL members received bear tags for Wisconsin and Michigan. Three bears were registered by FDL members; two from Bayfield and one from Burnett Counties.

DEER

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

Four tags at a time were available to FDL members to deer hunt with additional tags possible after a deer was registered. Deer tags could be utilized in either of the Minnesota ceded territories or on the FDL Reservation. There was no individual limit and no restrictions on the harvest of antlered or antlerless deer. Three hundred forty-eight FDL members requested 1443 deer tags. In addition to FDL members, 24 members of other recognized tribes residing on the FDL Reservation were issued tags to deer hunt on the Reservation.

The 2020 deer season was September 8 – December 31 for both Minnesota ceded territories and the Reservation. Deer were required to be registered within 3 business days of harvest with reference to the

DNR's DPAs (Fig. 2). A total of 72 FDL and three members of other bands registered 155 deer from the Reservation and the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota (av. =2.1 deer/hunter, range = 1-15). Of successful hunters 57% registered 1 deer with another 20% of hunters registering 2 deer. The remaining 23% of hunters registered 3-15 deer apiece. Method of take was recorded as seven deer taken with a bow, one with a muzzleloader and the remainder with regular firearms. Method of take was not recorded for two deer. RMD conservation officers did not harvest any deer for subsistence/ceremonial purposes in 2020. A breakdown of FDL Reservation and Minnesota 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territory deer harvest by DPA, 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). Historic FDL deer harvests are provided in Figure 3.

Table 2. 2020 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	2	0	0	0	0	0
119	1	0	0	0	0	1
132	0	0	1	0	0	1
133	1	0	0	0	0	1
156	3	7	0	1	0	11
176	1	0	0	0	0	1
177	0	1	0	0	0	1
178	1	0	0	0	0	1
181	14	14	2	0	0	29
182	4	0	1	0	0	5
183	0	3	1	1	0	5
FDL Reservation (199)	30	31	19	9	0	89
221	0	1	0	0	0	1
St. Croix State Park	0	0	0	2	0	2
Wild River State Park	4	2	1	0	0	7
Total Harvest	53	64	25	13	0	155

Table 3. Fond du Lac deer harvest by month.

Registration Period	Deer Harvest
September	6
October	47
November	91
December	11
subsistence/ceremonial*	0
total	155

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

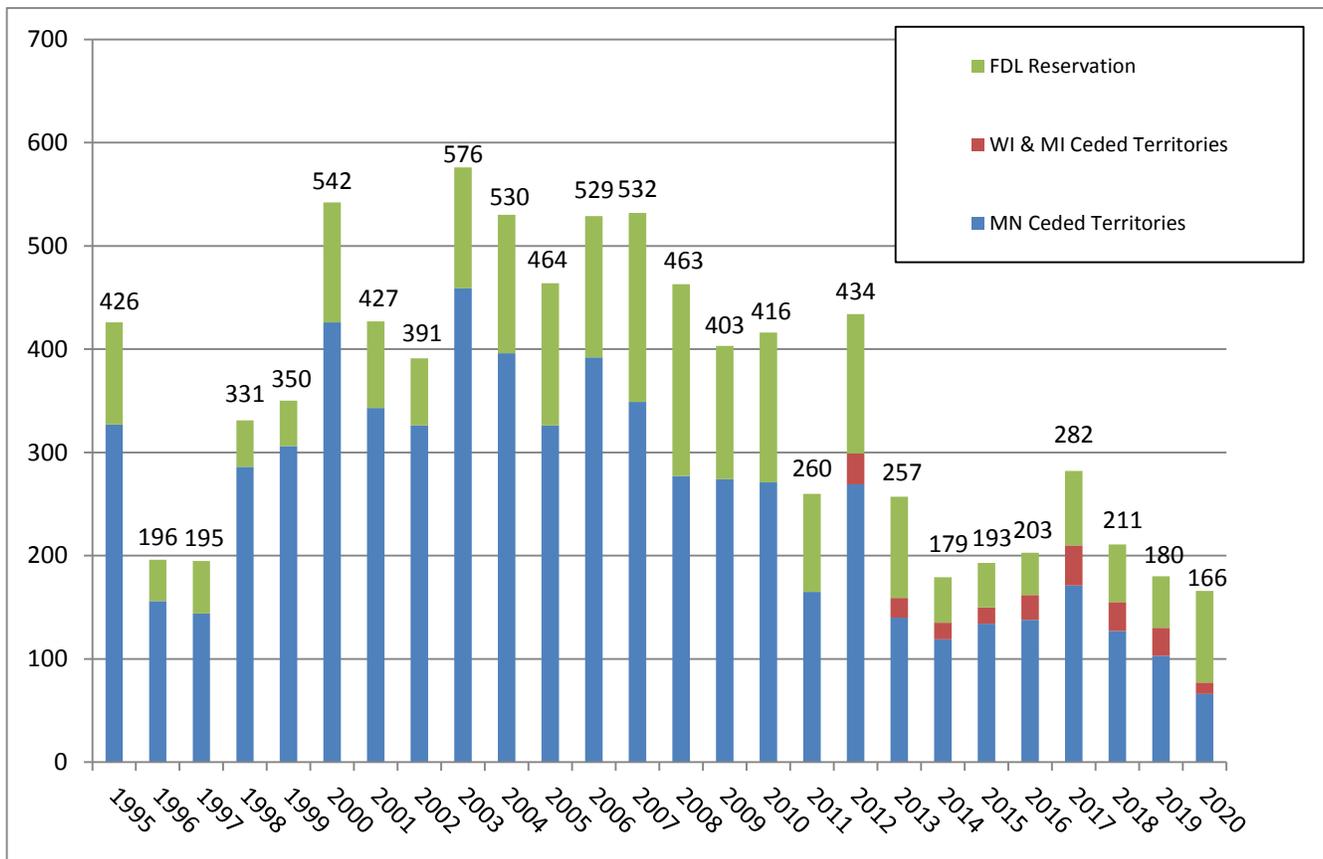


Figure 3. Fond du Lac Reservation and Ceded Territory deer harvests 1995-2020.

In 2020 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 2020 season formats for state park hunts are in Table 4. Harvest details from state parks are in Table 2.

Table 4. 2020 Minnesota state park hunt declarations and participation by Fond du Lac.

State Park	Hunt Type	County	Hunt Dates	Available FDL Permits	Permits Claimed
Banning	Firearm - Youth Only	Pine	Oct. 31-Nov. 1	1	0
St. Croix	Firearm - Youth Only	Pine	Oct. 31-Nov. 1	2	0
“North Shore Parks” - Cascade, Judge Magney, Gooseberry Falls, Split Rock, and Tettegouche combined	Regular Firearm	Lake & Cook	Nov. 7 - 22	10	2
Wild River	Regular Firearm	Chisago	Nov. 7 - 8	20	21
St. Croix	Regular Firearm	Pine	Nov. 19 - 22	20	12
Soudan/Lake Vermillion	Muzzleloader	St. Louis	Nov. 28-Dec. 13	2	0
St. Croix	Muzzleloader	Pine	Dec. 2 - 6	5	1
Crow Wing	Muzzleloader	Crow Wing	Dec. 5 - 9	2	0
Jay Cooke	Muzzleloader	Carlton	Dec. 5 - 9	5	1

The FDL Reservation Business Committee, with input from the RMD and the Conservation Committee recommended the Reservation be “bucks only” for state-licensed hunters in 2020. The perception was FDL hunters would stay closer to home and work harder to harvest a deer during the COVID-19 pandemic. The DNR agreed to implement this strategy. With the exception of hunters over 84 years old or residents of Minnesota veteran’s homes this strategy limits state-licensed hunters to a single antlered deer. Total 2020 deer harvest by state-licensed hunters on the FDL Reservation was 99 deer; 91 antlered and 8 antlerless deer. It’s not clear if the 8 antlerless deer were mistakenly registered as coming from DPA 199 or if they were taken illegally or legally by residents of veteran’s homes or by hunters over 84 years old.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

The 2020 deer season was September 8 – January 3. In order to encourage FDL hunters to keep deer harvested in Wisconsin or Michigan ceded territories in those states, FDL RMD issued carcass tags marked as “FDL WI&MI Deer” These tags were not available at other GLIFWC stations in Wisconsin or Michigan. Thirty-three FDL members were issued tags either by FDL or other GLIFWC stations. Six FDL members registered 11 deer from Wisconsin; two from Burnett County, eight from Douglas County and one from Lincoln County (Fig. 1 and Fig. 3).

REGISTERED FURBEARERS

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota and the FDL Reservation

The 2020-21 hunting and trapping season for registered furbearers – marten, fisher, bobcat and otter - was September 8 - March 31 on the FDL Reservation and the 1854 Ceded Territory and October 1 - March 31 in the 1837 Ceded Territory. All 4 species were required to be registered at the RMD office. One FDL member registered 2 female bobcats from DPA 181 (Fig 2). Fluctuations in FDL’s fur harvest are more likely due to fur prices and the small number of trappers involved than to changes in furbearer populations. In addition, its

likely interest in trapping is fading amongst FDL members as well. Historic FDL registered fur harvest is in Figure 4. 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 one township is entirely enclosed by Reservation boundaries. On this basis, the estimated 2020 state-licensed harvest on the FDL Reservation was eight bobcat, two fisher and eight otter, but the actual harvest may have been different.

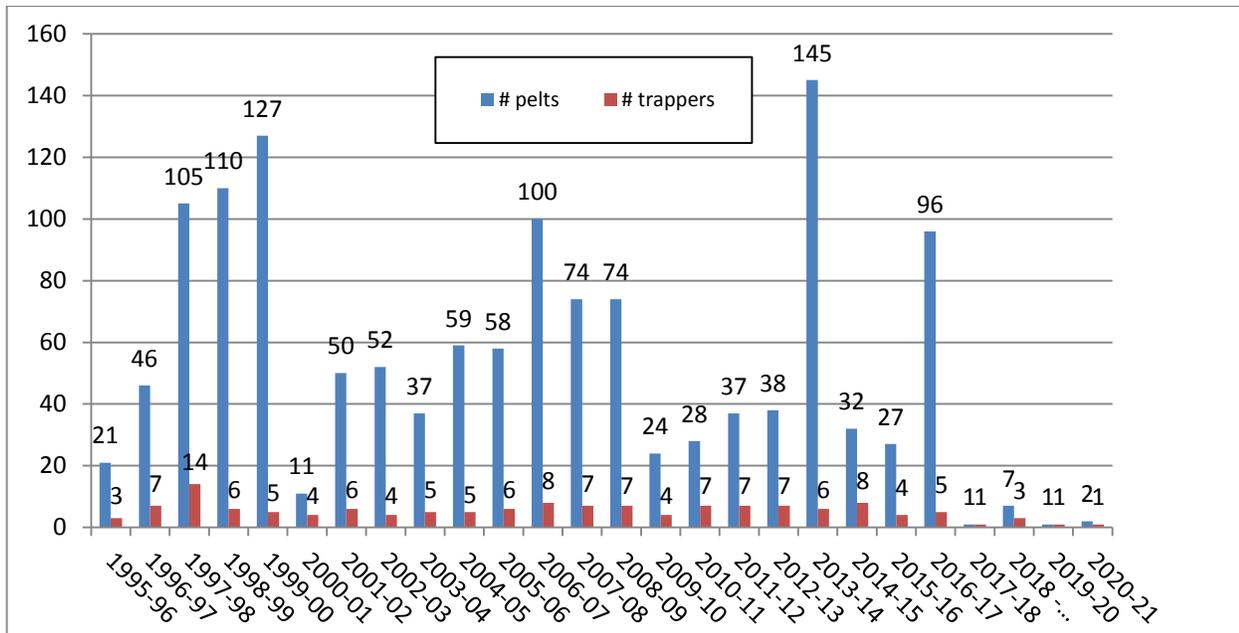


Figure 4. Total numbers of FDL trappers registering furs and their registered furbearer harvest from the FDL Reservation and the 1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota from the 1995-96 to the 2020-21 season.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

In 2020-21 there were various open and closing dates for the harvest of registered furbearers – marten, fisher, bobcat and otter. Three FDL members got carcass tags for bobcat, fisher and otter, but no animals were registered.

SANDHILL CRANES AND SWANS

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota

The FDL 2020 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 two cranes with no season or possession limit. Carcass tags were required before hunting and additional tags were possible following registration of a bird. One hundred thirty-one FDL members requested crane tags. Two members registered five cranes from DPA 183 (Fig. 2).

The 2020 swan season was September 1 – November 30 and only the FDL Reservation was open to their harvest. Band members could receive two carcass tags at a time with additional tags possible following

registration of each bird. Either trumpeter or tundra swans could be taken. One hundred two FDL members and eight members of other bands requested at least one swan tag. Seven trumpeter swans were registered by one tribal hunter.

1837 and 1842 Ceded Territories of Wisconsin and Michigan

Swans and sandhill cranes were available for harvest in the ceded territories of Wisconsin and Michigan; however, no harvest was reported by FDL members.

MOOSE

1854 and 1837 Ceded Territories of Minnesota

Fond du Lac’s 2020 moose hunt was limited to 30 bull moose based on the estimated moose population size and protocols agreed to with the Minnesota DNR. Season dates were Sept. 26 to Dec. 31 or until FDL’s harvest limit of 30 bull moose was reached. The RMD did not retain any moose in 2020 for subsistence or ceremonial purposes. 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.

Sixty-five parties of 3-4 individuals applied for the 60 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. 5). 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 2020. The 1854 Treaty Authority also held a moose hunt in 2020, but the State of Minnesota did not. FDL’s season closed after eight days when the 30th moose was registered. Before all the hunters could be notified, a 31st moose was registered. A breakdown of FDL’s 2020 moose harvest by zone and historic moose harvests are below (Table 6 and Fig. 6).

Table 6. Fond du Lac 2020 moose harvest by DNR moose zone

	Zone 24	Zone 25	Zone 29	Zone 30	Zone 31	Zone 34	Zone 62	Zone 64	Zone 72	Zone 77	Zone 80	Total Harvest
Bull Moose	8	6	1	1	2	1	1	1	4	5	1	31

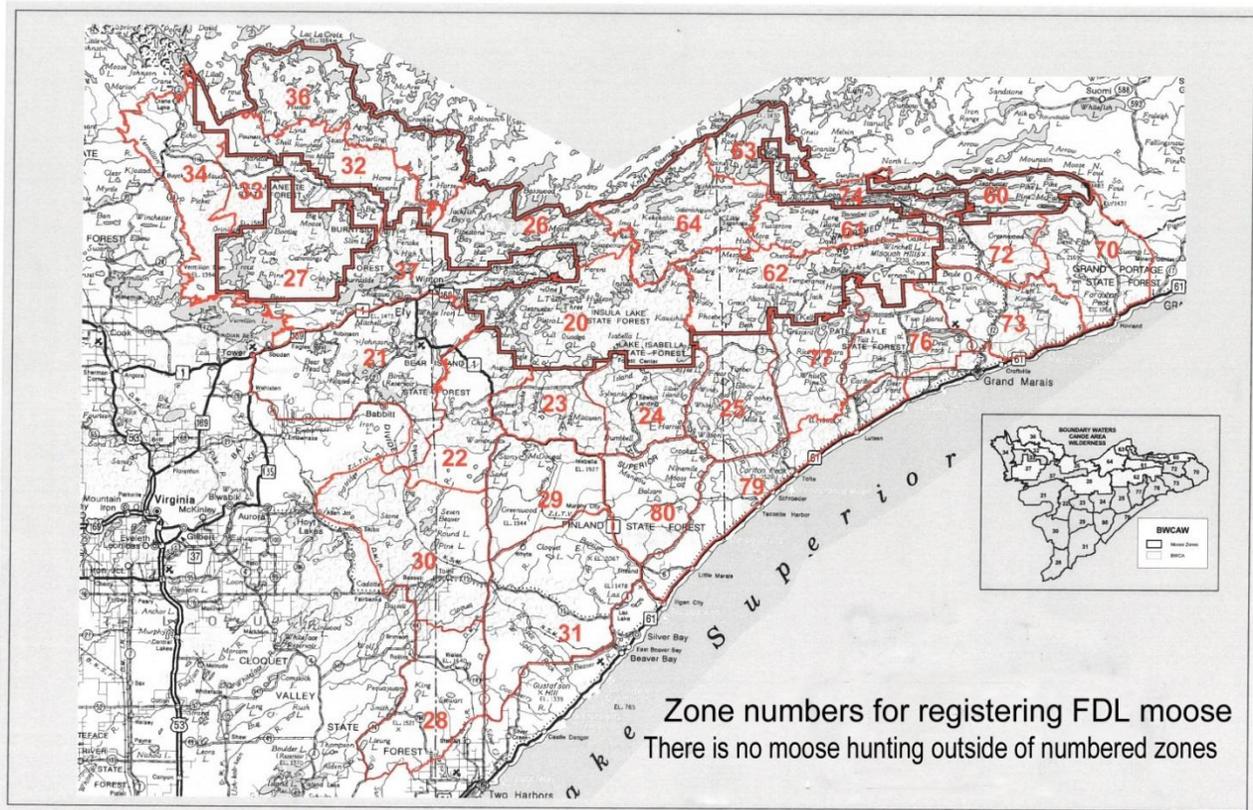


Figure 5. Area opened for 2020 FDL moose hunting in the 1854 Ceded Territory.

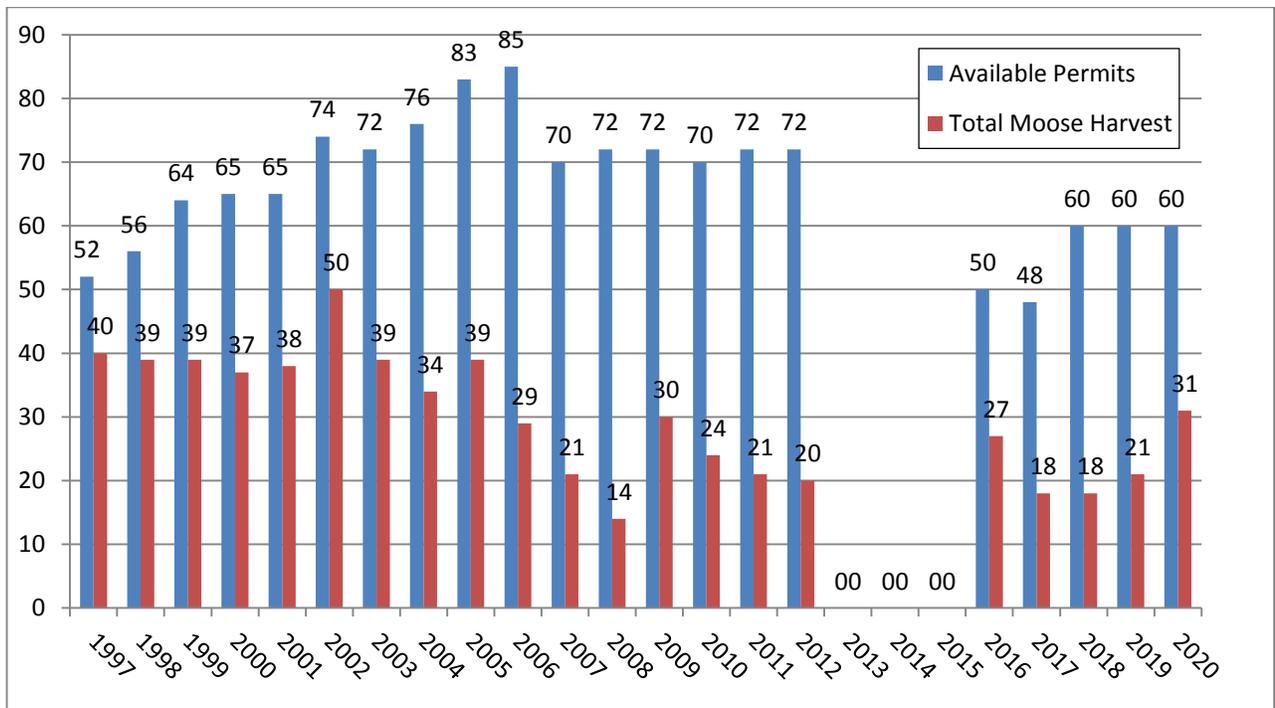


Figure 6. Fond du Lac total moose harvest and number of permits available 1997-2020.

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