



**MIZISE (TURKEY) HARVEST
IN THE WISCONSIN CEDED TERRITORIES,
1994-2007**

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BACKGROUND

The hunting of mizise (turkeys) in the Wisconsin ceded territories has been a small but growing activity since the reaffirmation of off-reservation harvesting under the *Voigt* decision. Once extirpated from the state, turkeys had again become well established in southern Wisconsin as a result of restoration efforts by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). However, the only relatively established population of turkeys in the Wisconsin ceded territories occurred in the northeastern part of the state, a product of separate stocking efforts conducted in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. This small area, designated Turkey Management Zone 32 by the Wisconsin DNR, was bisected by the ceded territory line.

The small population in Zone 32 had shown little ability to expand further, and at the time of *Voigt* case turkey stipulations (1990) many biologists felt that turkeys were approaching the northern limits of their range in the state. However, the large and robust turkey populations established in southern Wisconsin continued to expand steadily northward, both of their own accord and aided by a number of translocation efforts. This expansion appeared to be enhanced in the short term by a time period that included a number of relatively mild winters, and in the long term by human-induced changes to the landscape that had occurred since European settlement. As the birds expanded in numbers and range, additional turkey management zones were established in the state. Between 1993 and 2006, a total of 14 new zones were established in the ceded territory. With the establishment of the last of these (zones 44, 45 and 46 in 2006), the entire ceded territory, and the state of Wisconsin, became included in turkey management zones (Figure 1).

The first known harvest of turkeys under *Voigt* occurred in the spring of 1994, when 3 turkeys were taken from zone 32. Another bird was not registered until the 1997 spring season, when a single bird was harvested from zone 20. Since that time, harvest has varied from year to year, but has been generally increasing. In 2007 harvest reached a record 50 birds (spring and fall seasons combined). This report summarizes turkey harvest through the 2007 fall season. Turkey management zones are being reconfigured for the fall 2008 season; at this time the number of zones in the ceded territory will decline from 15 to 5.

REGULATIONS

Complete turkey harvest regulations are included in the tribe's off-reservation model code. In brief, under stipulations developed for the *Voigt* case, members were required to possess a valid small game hunting permit, and also have a carcass tag if hunting in an established management zone. The spring season began the Wednesday nearest April 13, for 40 consecutive days, concurrent with the state season. The fall season ran from the day after Labor day to December 31. In established zones, the bag limit equaled the number of carcass tags that the hunter had in his or her possession; in non-zoned areas the bag limit was 1 per day. Registration was required for all birds harvested.

HARVEST SUMMARY

Appendix 1 depicts tribal harvest figures by sex, zone and season since 1994. While tribal harvest has been biologically insignificant (with a cumulative harvest of 244 birds), there has been an upward trend in turkey harvest (Figure 2).

Harvest has varied significantly by zone, reflecting mizise abundance (and changes in that abundance over time), tribal population centers, and the number of years the zone has existed, among other factors. Only 3 zones have recorded a harvest of more than 20 birds (spring and fall seasons combined) through the fall 2007 season: 56 from Zone 38 (established in 1995), 42 from Zone 41 (established in 1999), and 24 from Zone 46, established in 2006. No harvest has been reported thus far from zones 21, 22 or 42, which are far from tribal population centers and have relatively little public land. The largest harvest of birds in a single zone and season was 9; the largest harvest of birds from a single zone in a single year was 13.

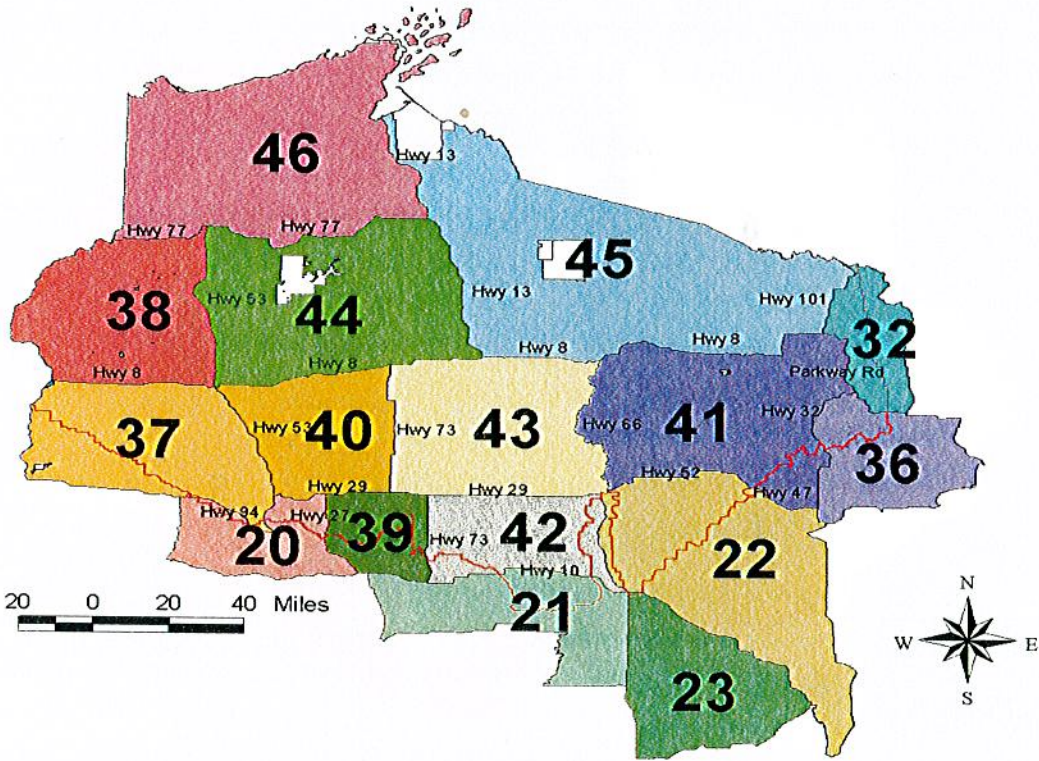
Harvest has increased as turkeys have expanded northward, into areas where many tribal members live and hunt. This point is underscored by noting that only 24 turkeys were harvested from the “non-zoned” portion of the ceded territory (the area that had not yet been placed within management zones) between 1994 and 2005, when the entire state became zoned. In contrast, the newest and northern-most zones (44, 45 and 46) have accounted for a harvest of 54 birds since their inception in 2006.

Fall seasons have accounted for 60% (138/229) of the total harvest. This may suggest that most tribal turkey hunting occurs coincidental to other fall hunting activities. During the spring season - the turkey hunting season most important for most sport hunters - many tribal subsistence gatherers are occupied with spring fishing activities.

The sex ratio of the harvest (M:F) has been 88:12 in the spring seasons, 36:64 in the fall seasons, and 57:43 over all.

MANAGEMENT CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED FOR THE FALL 2008 SEASON

In the fall of 2008 several changes will be made to the tribe’s off-reservation turkey regulations. The number of the zones in the ceded territory will drop to five, coincidental with the ceded territory portions of state zones 3-8 (Figure 3). The daily bag limit will go to 3, and carcass tags will not longer be required. Registration of all turkeys harvested will still be required to allow harvest monitoring to continue. New “threshold” levels of harvest will be established for each zone in each season, and harvest declarations to the state for subsequent years will only be required if these threshold levels are exceeded.



The boundaries depicted on this map are representations and not intended to be legally binding.

Figure 1. Wisconsin ceded territory mizise management zones, as of the spring 2006 season. (See Table 1 to determine the year each zone was established.)

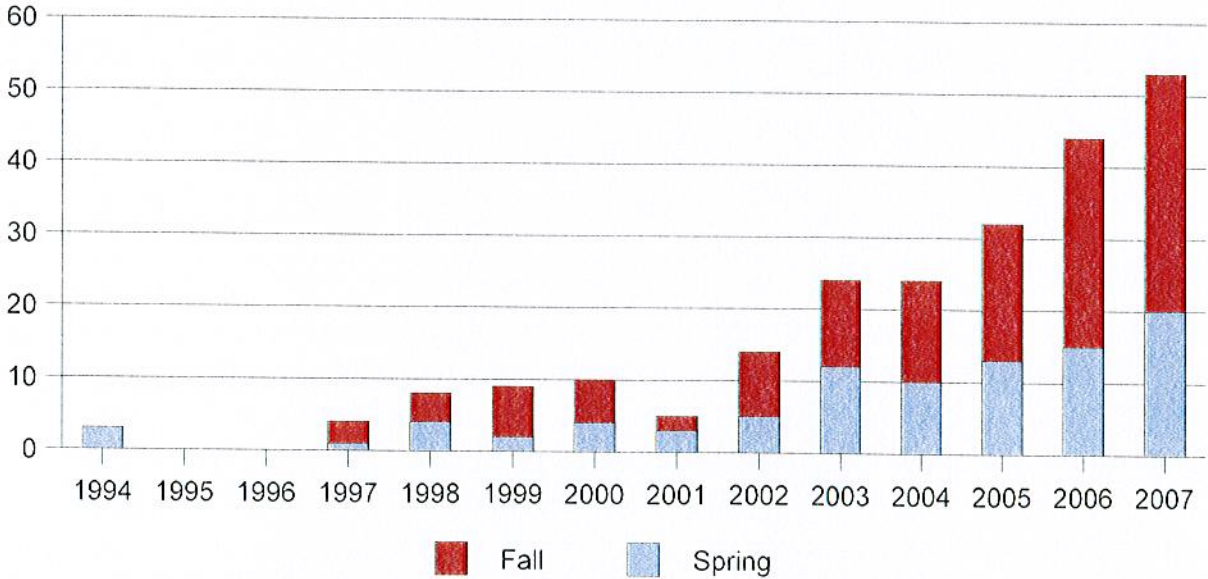
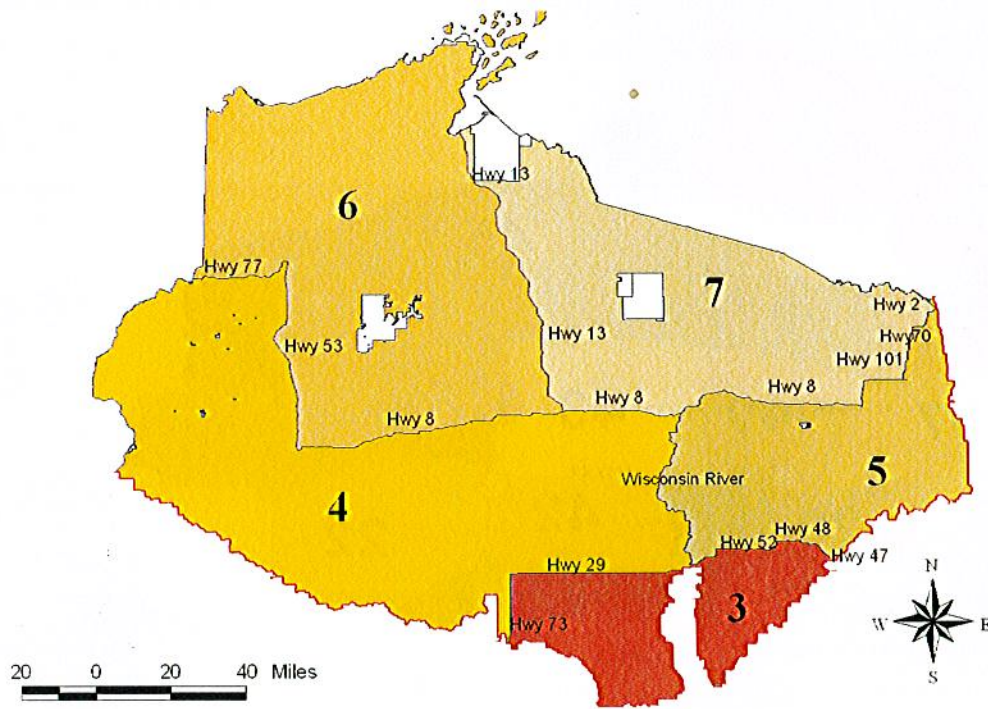


Figure 2. Wisconsin off-reservation mizise harvest, 1994 - 2007, by season.



The boundaries depicted on this map are representations and not intended to be legally binding.

Figure 3. Wisconsin mizise management zones for the fall 2008 season.

Appendix 1. Mizise (turkey) harvest by year, sex and zone.

MIZISE MANAGEMENT ZONE

			NON- ZONE	20	21	22	32	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	UNK	Total	Season Total	Year Total	
2007	Spring	Male							2	2		1	4		2	3	2	2		18	20	53	
		Female											1	1		1				2			
		Unknown																		0			
2006	Spring	Male							1	3		1	4		1	1		3		14	15	44	
		Female																	1	1			
		Unknown																		0			
2005	Spring	Male					1			4	1		3		2					11	13	32	
		Female					1									1				2			
		Unknown																		0			
2004	Spring	Male								4	3									10	10	24	
		Female																		0			
		Unknown																		0			
2003	Spring	Male							1	4										8	12	24	
		Female									2									4			
		Unknown																		0			
2002	Spring	Male								2										4	4	13	
		Female																		0			
		Unknown																		0			
2001	Spring	Male								2										4	3	5	
		Female																		0			
		Unknown																		0			
2000	Spring	Male					1			1										4	4	10	
		Female																		0			
		Unknown																		0			
1999	Spring	Male																		2	2	9	
		Female																		0			
		Unknown																		0			
1998	Spring	Male					3													3	4	8	
		Female					1													1			
		Unknown																		0			
1997	Spring	Male								2										2	2	7	
		Female																		0			
		Unknown																		0			
1996	Spring	Male																		3	1	4	
		Female																		1			
		Unknown																		0			
1995	Spring	Male																		2	3	3	
		Female																		1			
		Unknown																		0			
1994	Spring	Male					2													2	0	0	
		Female					1													1			
		Unknown																		0			
1993	Spring	Male																		2	0	0	
		Female																		1			
		Unknown																		0			
1992	Spring	Male																		2	0	0	
		Female																		1			
		Unknown																		0			
1991	Spring	Male																		2	0	0	
		Female																		1			
		Unknown																		0			
1990	Spring	Male																		2	0	0	
		Female																		1			
		Unknown																		0			
Total By Zone			24	5	0	0	16	1	6	56	6	5	42	0	12	12	18	24	2	229	229	229	
Year Zone Enacted			1990	1994	1994	1993	1990	1994	1995	1995	1996	1999	1999	2002	2002	2006	2006	2006					

