

SUMMARY OF THE 1985 OFF-RESERVATION
TREATY WATERFOWL SEASON
IN NORTHERN WISCONSIN

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INTRODUCTION

The 1985 tribal hunt was the first off-reservation treaty waterfowl season in northern Wisconsin. The hunting regulations initially proposed by the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) were modified somewhat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) after joint consultation with GLIFWC and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). The proposed regulations were reviewed by the Mississippi Flyway Council and published in the Federal Register for public comment. GLIFWC and WDNR subsequently concurred with the regulations, when finalized by USFWS, and entered into an agreement allowing for joint implementation and enforcement of the hunt.

The dates for the tribal duck and coot seasons were: 20 - 29 September and 5 October - 13 November, with an additional scaup only season 14 - 29 November (Appendix A). A five day closed period between the early and regular seasons (30 September - 4 October) was implemented to allow waterfowl to recongregate in areas that may experience localized "burnout" from tribal hunting pressure. The Canada goose season dates were 28 - 29 September and 5 - 22 October. Bag and possession limits for ducks followed the 1985 federal point values, and for Canada Geese were 3 daily and 6 in possession. All federal and state closed areas, permissible methods, and shooting hour restrictions were the same for the tribes.

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the 1985 off-reservation treaty waterfowl season, including tribal hunter participation, effort, success and harvest. Hunter and harvest statistics were derived by prorating totals reported during mail and telephone surveys by the response rates. Seventy-four percent of individuals issued hunting permits for the September hunt (20 - 29 September) and 68% of individuals hunting during the 2nd hunt (5 October - 13 November) responded to mail and telephone surveys.

A total of 136 tribal members were issued off-reservation waterfowl hunting permits, of which roughly 63 hunted, harvesting approximately 336 ducks, 63 geese, and 124 coots. Tribal hunters averaged 1.4 ducks/trip/hunter and 0.5 geese/trip/hunter. Roughly one-third of the harvest occurred during the 10-day September hunt. Wood ducks were the most common duck harvested, followed by drake mallards and scaup.

Table 1. 1985 off-reservation treaty waterfowl season in the Wisconsin ceded territory.

Season	Total ^a Hunters	Number Hunting	Duck Harvest	Ducks Per Trip	Goose Harvest	Geese Per Trip	Coot Harvest
9/20/85- 9/29/85	66	42	96	1.16	19	0.48	48
10/5/85- 11/13/85	136	41	240	1.55	44	0.50	76
Total	136	63	336	1.41	63	0.50	124

^aTotal Hunters = number of tribal members issued off-reservation waterfowl hunting permits.

Table 2. Percent composition of duck harvest during the 1985 off-reservation treaty waterfowl season.

Season	Drake Mallard	Hen Mallard	Blue- Winged Teal	Green- Winged Teal	Wood Duck	Scaup	Other ^a
9/20/85- 9/29/85	21.1%	12.6%	20.0%		41.1%		5.3%
10/5/85- 11/13/85	21.3%	15.4%	5.4%	9.2%	22.1%	23.3%	3.8%

^aOther = black duck, pintail, redhead, ringneck, common merganser, and goldeneye.

One hundred and thirty-six tribal members were issued off-reservation waterfowl hunting permits, of which roughly 63 actually hunted, harvesting approximately 523 birds (336 ducks, 63 geese, and 124 coots). Roughly one third of the harvest occurred during the 10-day September hunt. Duck hunting success was lower during the September hunt, most likely because of unseasonably cold weather just prior to the hunt and the resulting early departure of major concentrations of blue-winged teal. The overall tribal hunter success of 1.4 ducks/trip is higher than the average Wisconsin state hunter success of 1 or slightly less than 1 duck/trip.

Wood ducks comprised the largest portion of the harvest during the entire season. Wood duck numbers appear to be increasing in northern Wisconsin, probably in part due to the abundant beaver populations. Migrant ducks, especially scaup, became a major component of the bag in the 2nd hunt, and contributed to the greater hunter success.

Table 3. Summary of off-reservation treaty waterfowl season, 9/20/85-9/29/85 and 10/5/85-11/13/85.

	Permits issued	Number hunting	Hunters successful	Duck harvest	Ducks ^d per season	Goose harvest	Geese ^d per season	Coot harvest
LDP ^a	49	13	8	50	3.85	19	1.46	
St. Croix	27	14	11	90	6.43	5	0.36	59
Red Cliff	26	7	6	7	1.00	12	1.71	
LCO ^b	20	5	5	50	10.00	4	0.80	
Mille Lacs	9	4	4	35	8.8	2	0.50	29
Bad River	3							
Mole Lake	1							
KB ^c	1	1	1	3	3.0	2	0.50	
Total (rep) ^e	136	44	35 ^h	235 ⁱ	5.34	44	0.95	88
Total (est)	136	63 ^g	50 ^h	336 ^f	5.34	63 ^f	0.95	124

^aLDP = Lac du Flambeau.

^bLCO = Lac Courte Oreilles.

^cKB = Keweenaw Bay.

^dper season per hunter = reported harvest/reported number hunting.

^etotals reported by hunters surveyed.

^fTotal Harvest = estimated early season harvest plus estimated regular season harvest.

^gEstimated total number hunting = total estimated harvest/reported ducks or geese per season per hunter.

^hEstimated number of successful hunters = reported successful hunters x estimated number hunting / reported number hunting (63/44).

St. Croix members harvested the largest number of ducks taking approximately 38% of the estimated 336 ducks taken by treaty hunters. Lac du Flambeau members harvested the largest number of geese, taking approximately 43% of the estimated 63 harvested during the treaty hunt. Tribal hunters averaged 5.3 ducks/season, which is roughly the same that Wisconsin state hunters averaged.

Table 4. Off-reservation treaty waterfowl hunters, 9/20/85-9/29/85.

Tribe	Permits issued	Number hunting	Duck Hunting trips	Ducks per trip	Goose Hunting trips	Geese per trip
LDP ^a	28	12	20	0.30	21	0.33
St. Croix	17	9	15	1.60		0.00
Red Cliff	7	2	3	0.00	3	1.00
LCO ^b	6	3	10	2.20	3	0.67
Mille Lacs	5	4	11	1.45	1	0.00
Bad River	1					
Mole Lk.	1					
KB ^c	1	1	2	1.50	1	2.00
Total (rep) ^d	66	31	61	1.16	29	0.48
Total (est)	66	42 ^e	82 ^e	1.16	39 ^e	0.48

^aLDP = Lac du Flambeau.

^bLCO = Lac Courte Oreilles.

^cKB = Keweenaw Bay.

^dTotal reported = sums of effort reported by hunters surveyed.

^eTotal estimated = total reported x response rate (66/49).

Sixty-six tribal members were issued off-reservation waterfowl hunting permits for the September hunt, of which roughly 42 hunted, averaging 2 duck hunting trips/hunter, 1/goose hunting trip/hunter, 1.2 ducks/trip and 0.5 geese/trip. Sixty-eight percent of the individuals hunting were St. Croix or Lac du Flambeau members accounting for 62% of the duck and goose hunting trips.

Table 5. Off-reservation treaty waterfowl hunters, 10/5/85-11/13/85.

Tribe	Permits issued	Number hunting	Duck Hunting trips	Ducks per trip	Goose hunting trips	Geese per trip
Lac du Flambeau	49	5	28	1.57	24	0.50
St. Croix	27	11	30	2.20	24	0.21
Red Cliff	26	6	7	1.00	7	1.29
Lac Courte Oreilles	20	4	24	1.16	2	1.00
Mille Lacs	9	2	17	1.12	3	0.34
Bad River	3					
Mole Lake	1					
Keweenaw Bay	1					
Total (rep) ^a	136	28	106	1.55	60	0.50
Total (est)	136	41 ^b	155 ^b	1.55	88 ^b	0.50

^aTotal reported = sums of effort reported by individuals hunting.

^bTotal estimated = total reported prorated by the % of the estimated number of individuals hunting (determined by telephone survey), who responded to the mail survey (68%).

One hundred thirty six tribal members were issued permits valid for off-reservation waterfowl hunting during the 2nd hunt. Approximately 41 hunted, averaging roughly 4 duck hunting trips/hunter, 2 goose hunting trips/hunter, 1.6 ducks/trip and 0.5 geese/trip. Fifty seven percent of the individuals hunting were St. Croix or Lac du Flambeau members, accounting for 63% of the duck and goose hunting trips.

Table 6. Off-reservation treaty waterfowl harvest, 9/20/85-9/29/85.

Tribe	Drake mallard	Hen mallard	Blue-winged teal	Wood duck	Pintail	Unident. duck	Total ducks	Coot	Canada geese
LDPa	2		4			6			7
St. Croix	5	6	11	2		24	22		
Red Cliff									3
LCOb	5	3		11		3	22		2
Mille Lacs	3		3	9	1		16	14	
Bad River									
Mole Lk.									
KB ^c				3		3			2
Total (rep) ^d	15	9	14	29	1	3	71	36	14
Total (est) ^e	20	12	19	39	1	4	96	48	19

aLDF = Lac du Flambeau.

bLCO = Lac Courte Oreilles.

cKB = Keweenaw Bay.

dTotal reported = sums of harvest reported by hunters surveyed.

eTotal estimated = total reported x response rate (66/49).

Tribal hunters harvested approximately 96 ducks, 19 geese, and 48 coots during the September hunt. Sixty-five percent of the ducks harvested were reported to be taken by St. Croix and (Lac Courte Oreilles members and 50% of the geese by Lac du Flambeau members. Wood ducks made up the largest portion of the bag. A cold front on 19 September resulted in the early departure, before the hunt began, of major concentrations of blue-winged teal from northern Wisconsin, resulting in a lower than expected percentage of blue-winged teal in the bag. Tribal hunters were limited to hunting geese for 2 days during the early hunt, 28 - 29 September, consequently the goose harvest was low.

Table 7. Off-reservation treaty waterfowl harvest, 10/5/85-11/13/85.

Tribe	Drake mallard	Hen mallard teal	Blue-winged teal	Green-winged teal	Wood duck	Scaup	Other ducks ^c	Total ducks	Canada Geese
Lac du Flambeau	2	1	2	2	7	26	4	44	12
St. Croix	26	13	7	12	8			66	37
Red Cliff	1				5		1	7	9
Lac Courte Oreilles	5	8			9	6		28	2
Mille Lacs	1	3		1	7	6	1	19	15
Bad River									2
Mole Lake									
Keweenaw Bay									
Total (rep) ^a	35	25	9	15	36	38	6	164	52
Total (est) ^b	51	37	13	22	53	56	9	240	76

^aTotal reported = sums of harvest reported by individuals hunting.

^bTotal estimated = total reported prorated by % of the estimated number of individuals hunting (determined by telephone survey), who responded to the mail survey (68%).

^cIncludes 1 of each of the following - black duck, pintail, redhead, ringneck, common merganser, and goldeneye.

Tribal hunters harvested approximately 240 ducks, 44 geese and 76 coots during the 2nd hunt (10/5/85 - 11/13/85). Sixty-seven percent of the ducks were reported to be harvested by St. Croix and Lac du Flambeau members, and 70% of the geese by Lac du Flambeau and Red Cliff members. Mallards made up the largest percentage of the hunters bag followed closely by scaup and wood ducks.

Table 8. Off-reservation treaty waterfowl hunting areas, 9/20/85 - 9/29/85.

Area	Hunters	Duck hunting trips	Ducks harvested	Ducks per trip	Coots harvested	Geese hunting trips	Geese harvested	Geese per trip
W. Rice-A Pothole Lks	13	28	41	1.46	36	5	1	0.20
Goslyn Lk	4	11	5				1	
Clam Lk	2	3	14		36	2		
Briggs Lk	1	3	1			1		
Yellow R.	2	3						
Other	4	10	21			2		
Amsterdam Sloughs ^b	2	2	0	0.00				
Powell Marsh	10	17	2	0.12		14	6	0.43
Chequamegon NF	4	7	12	1.71		6	4	0.67
Chequamegon Bay	1	1	2	2.00		4	3	0.75
Other	1	6	14	2.33				
Sawyer Co.	1	6						
Total (rep) ^c	31	61	71	1.16	36	29	14	0.48
Total (est) ^d	42	82	96	1.16	48	39	19	0.48

^a W. Rice - Pothole Lks - wild rice lake - pothole region of Burnett and Polk Counties.

^b Amsterdam Sloughs is a state wildlife area that is a part of the Crex Meadows-Glacial Lake Grantsburg complex in western Burnett County.

^c Total reported = sums of data reported by hunters surveyed.

^d Total estimated = total reported x surveying rate factor (66/49).

The wild rice lake - pothole region of Burnett and Polk counties received the heaviest tribal duck and coot hunting pressure and harvest during the September hunt. This region accounted for approximately 46% of the tribal duck and coot hunting trips, 58% of the duck harvest and all of the reported coot harvest. Hunter success in the rice pothole region, reported at 1.5 ducks/day, was higher than the tribal average for the September hunt. Powell Marsh in Vilas County received the heaviest goose hunting pressure and harvest with roughly 48% of the goose hunting trips and 43% of the goose harvest.

Table 9. Off-reservation treaty waterfowl hunting areas, 10/5/85-11/13/85.

Area	Hunters	Duck		Ducks harvested	Ducks per trip	Coots harvested	Geese hunting trips	Geese harvested	Geese per trip
		hunting trips	trips						
W. Rice-a Pothole Lks	10	46	82	1.78	42	23	3	0.13	
Gaslyn Lk	3	11	8						
Clam Lk	1	4	14		42				
Briggs Lk	2	15	30			15	2		
Yellow R.	4	16	30			8	1		
Powell Marsh	5	18	28	1.56		19	10	0.53	
Chequamegon NP	3	5	15	3.00		2	3	1.50	
Chequamegon Bay	3	4	5	1.25		6	8	1.33	
Other	7	33	34	1.03		10	6	0.60	
Douglas Co.	1	4	2			4	3		
Oneida Co.	1	2	3			2			
Rusk Co.	1	1				1	2		
Sawyer Co.	3	22	26			1			
Vilas Co.	1	4	3			2	1		
Total (rep) ^b	28	106	164	1.55	42	60	30	0.50	
Total (est) ^c	41	155	240	1.55	62	88	44	0.50	

^aW. Rice - Pothole Lks = wild rice lake - pothole region of Burnett and Polk Counties.

^bTotal reported = sums of data reported by individuals hunting.

^cTotal estimated = total reported prorated by the % of the estimated number of individuals hunting (determined by telephone survey), who responded to the mail survey (68%).

The wild rice lake - pothole region of Burnett and Polk counties received the heaviest tribal hunting pressure and harvest during the 2nd hunt. This region accounted for approximately 43% of the duck and coot hunting trips, 38% of the goose hunting trips, 50% of the duck harvest, and all of the reported coot harvest. The region also had a high duck hunter success reported at 1.8 ducks/trip. Powell Marsh and Chequamegon Bay (in Ashland and Bayfield Counties) accounted for a reported 42% of the tribal goose hunting pressure and 60% of the goose harvest. Chequamegon Bay and the Chequamegon National Forest had the highest goose hunter success, reported at 1.3 and 1.5 geese/trip respectively.

