



Tribal Wild Plant Gathering on National Forest Lands During the 2011-2012 Season

by

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INTRODUCTION

Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) member tribes have reserved harvesting rights in territories ceded to the United States through the Treaties of 1836, 1837, 1842 and 1854. In order to provide for the exercise of these treaty rights on lands managed by the USDA Forest Service (USFS) within the 1836, 1837, and 1842 ceded territories, GLIFWC member tribes and the USFS negotiated interim agreements annually beginning in 1995. At the same time the parties continued discussions to develop a more comprehensive and long term agreement.

The discussions resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) entitled *Tribal - USDA Forest Service Relations on National Forest Lands within the Ceded Territory in Treaties of 1836, 1837, and 1842*. The MOU was ratified by nine GLIFWC member tribes (Bay Mills, Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, Lac Vieux Desert, Mille Lacs, Mole Lake, St. Croix and Red Cliff) in 1998 and a tenth GLIFWC member tribe (Keweenaw Bay) in 2000. The MOU was signed by the USFS in 1998. The National Forests addressed in the MOU include the Chequamegon-Nicolet in Wisconsin; and Ottawa, Hiawatha, and Huron-Manistee in Michigan (Figure 1).

Wild plants are harvested by tribal members throughout the year. In previous reports a harvest season began on August 1 and ended the following year on July 31. However, when the new on-line permitting system was implemented in 2011 the permit starting date was changed to April 1 and the ending date was changed to March 31 of the following year. This report summarizes the results of tribal wild plant gathering on the above listed national forests for the 2011-2012 harvest season (April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012) and compares these results with the six previous harvest seasons, 2005-2006 through 2010-2011 (Wrobel 2012).

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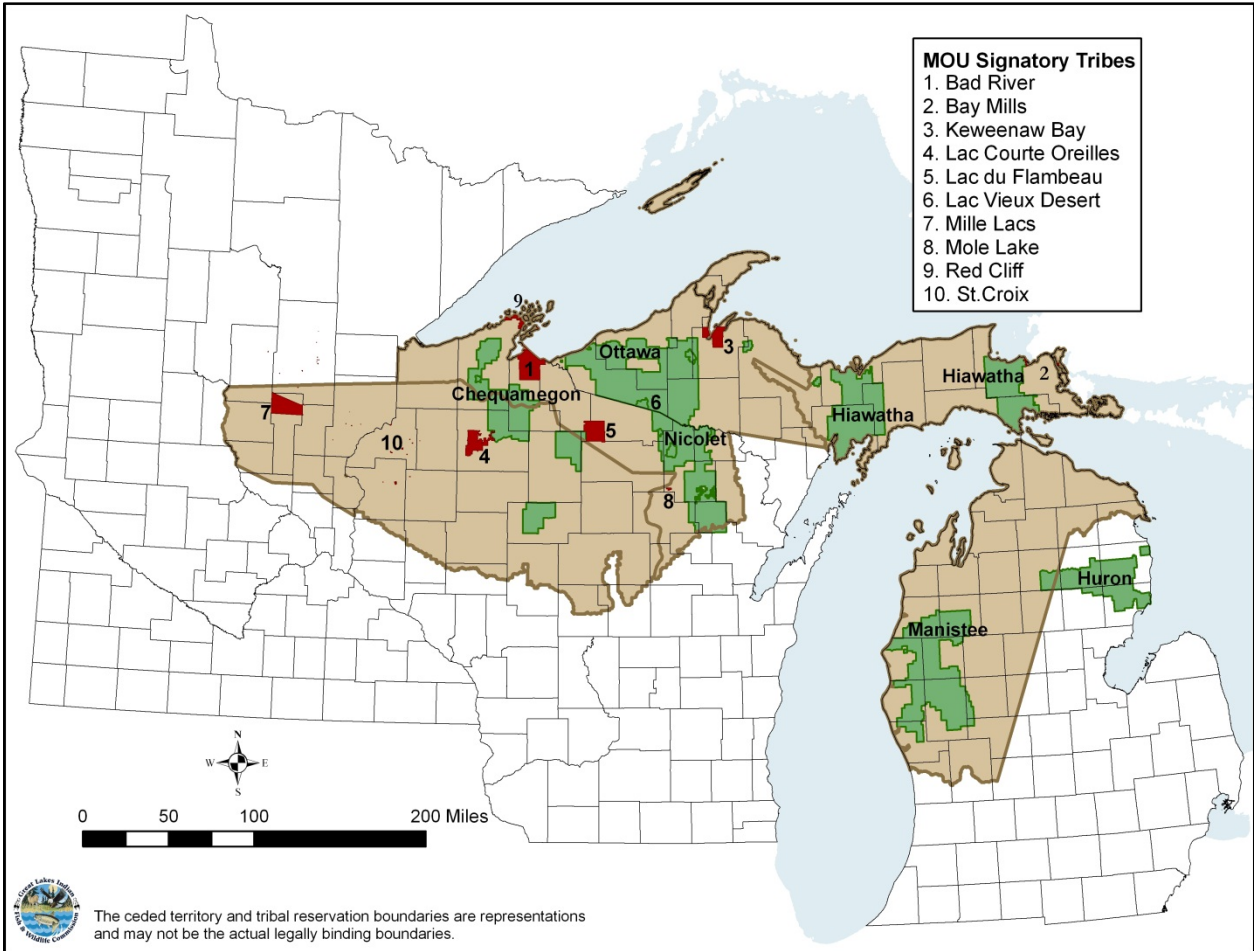


Figure 1: Ceded territories and national forests covered in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) entitled “Tribal - USDA Forest Service Relations on National Forest Lands within the Ceded Territory in Treaties of 1836, 1837, and 1842.”

Permits, *Stamps*, and Data Collection

Permits for wild plant gathering on National Forest lands were required by nine of the ten GLIFWC member tribes that ratified the MOU. Keweenaw Bay members were not required to obtain permits, but could use their tribal identification card instead. Permits (and *stamps*) were issued by tribal registration station and GLIFWC personnel using the Native American Game and Fish Application (NAGFA™), an on-line permitting system (Integrated Technologies and Consulting, Fargo, ND). Data summaries for the 2011-2012 season were generated based on queries of the NAGFA™ system. Obtaining a permit did not mean a tribal member actually gathered any wild plant resource.

National Forest Gathering Permit

A National Forest Gathering Permit (NFGP) was required for each National Forest (i.e. property) where a member wished to gather one or more of the five forest products that required a permit *stamp*. This permit provided a means to monitor interest in gathering by National Forest.

National Forest Gathering Permit - Permit Stamps

A permit *stamp* was required for each of four non-timber forest products: conifer boughs (primarily zhingob, balsam fir), birch bark (wiigwaas), lodgepoles (abanzh), firewood (misan) as well as ginseng (jisens). If a member chose to gather all five of these non-timber forest products on each of the four National Forests, a total of four permits and 20 *stamps* would be needed. These *stamps* provided a means to monitor tribal interest in gathering these five forest products.

General Gathering Permit

A General Gathering Permit was not property specific and authorized the gathering of all non-timber forest products, such as nuts, berries, wild leeks, not covered by a permit *stamp*. In addition to the four National Forests, this permit also authorized gathering on 10 State properties in Wisconsin. These permits provided a means to monitor tribal interest in gathering forest products not covered by a permit *stamp*. Harvesting sugar maple sap was authorized by a different permit and process, and data for this activity were not included in this report.

Phone Surveys

Starting with the 2001-2002 gathering season and continuing through the 2006-2007 season, GLIFWC conducted and reported results of an annual telephone survey of National Forest Gathering permit holders to estimate the harvest amount of several non-timber forest products (i.e. balsam boughs, birch bark, lodgepoles, firewood and ginseng). However, because of the small amount of change in harvest estimates, the survey schedule was changed to occur every 3 years instead of annually. The survey was not completed for the 2009-2010 season as scheduled due to a personnel change and the development of the new online permitting system. For the 2011-2012 season, a telephone survey was conducted to monitor the harvest of balsam boughs and firewood.

RESULTS

Number of Tribal Members Permitted

In previous reports, the number of permits issued and the number of tribal members permitted were identical because a member only needed one permit for gathering. However, for the 2011-2012 season they are no longer identical because a member could have received as many as 4 National Forest Gathering Permits plus a General Gathering Permit. For this reason, the y-axis in Figure 2 has been changed from “Number of Permits Issued” as in previous reports to “Number of Members Permitted” so that the data for the 2011-2012 season are comparable to previous seasons.

For the 2011-2012 harvest season, the number of tribal members who received at least one National Forest Gathering or General Gathering permit was 1,113 (Figure 2). Compared to the previous harvest season the number of members permitted declined by 579 persons or 34%.

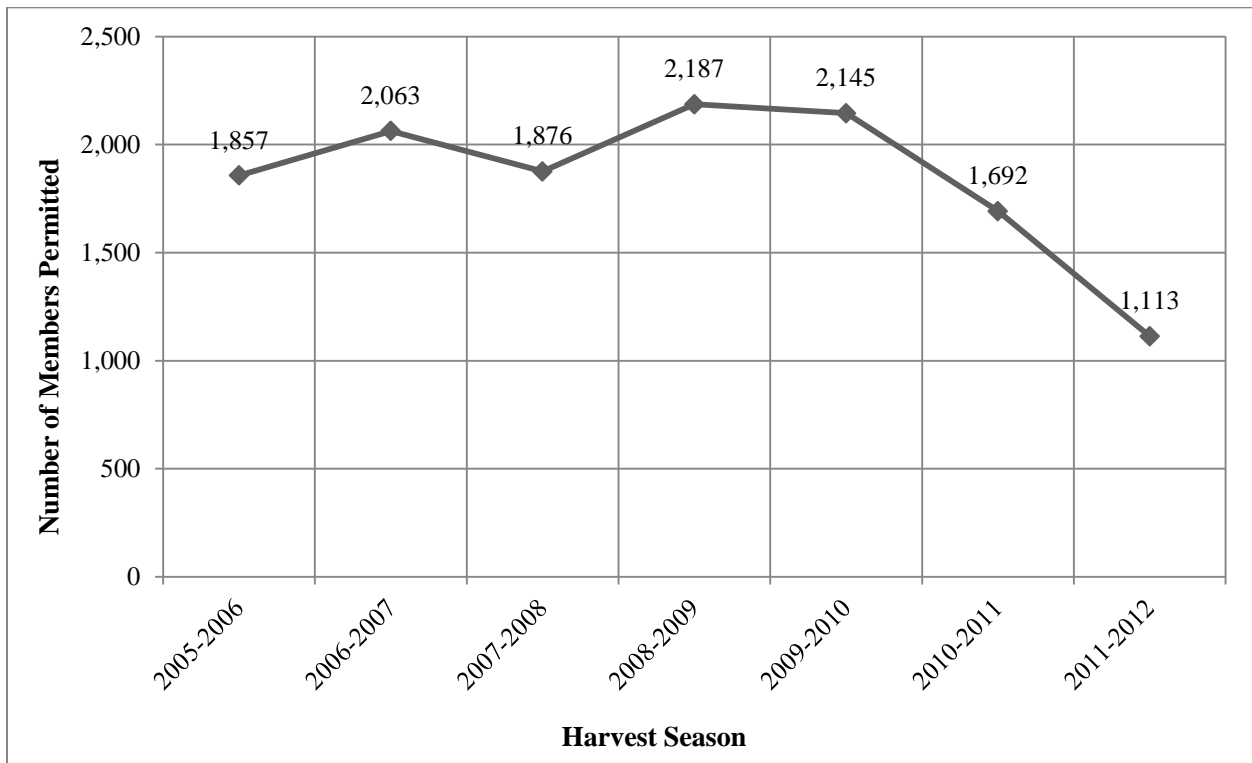


Figure 2: Total number of members who obtained a National Forest Gathering or General Gathering permit or both during the 2005-2006 through 2011-2012 harvest seasons.

Number of Members by Tribe of Enrollment

For the 2011-2012 harvest season, as in previous years, Lac Courte Oreilles members obtained the most National Forest Gathering and General Gathering permits, followed by Lac du Flambeau members (Table 1). Of the 10 tribes signatory to the MOU, seven issued fewer permits during the 2011-2012 season than in any of the five previous years.

Table 1: Number of members who obtained at least one National Forest Gathering or General Gathering permit by harvest season and by tribe of enrollment.

Tribe of Enrollment	Harvest Year						
	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012
Bad River (BRV)	113	233	145	289	240	226	141
Bay Mills (BM)	135	168	157	78	1	1	2
Fond du Lac (FDL)	-	-	-	-	-	1	0
Keweenaw Bay (KB)	4	7	2	1	5	1	2
Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO)	449	547	675	648	729	624	492
Lac du Flambeau (LDF)	407	403	328	417	380	347	191
Lac Vieux Desert (LVD)	84	145	71	104	71	8	66
Mille Lacs (MIL)	103	39	129	66	114	50	4
Mole Lake (MLK)	138	97	96	109	145	172	50
Red Cliff (RC)	271	301	193	304	358	169	154
St. Croix (STC)	153	123	80	171	102	93	11
TOTAL	1,857	2,063	1,876	2,187	2,145	1,692	1,113

Number of Members by Registration Office and Tribe of Enrollment

Of the 1,113 members issued one or more permits, the majority (945 members or 85%) received permit(s) from their tribe's registration office (Table 2). Permits were issued at 9 of 11 tribal registration offices plus by GLIFWC. Eight tribal registration offices, including the one at Fond du Lac, issued permits to members from 2-5 other tribes. GLIFWC issued permits to members from 6 tribes.

Table 2: Number of members who obtained at least one National Forest Gathering or General Gathering permit by registration office and tribe of enrollment.

Registration Office	Tribe of Enrollment *											
	BRV	BM	FDL	KB	LCO	LDF	LVD	MIL	MLK	RC	STC	TOTAL
BRV	91	-	-	-	6	3	1	-	-	16	-	117
BM	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
FDL	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	6	-	10
GLIFWC	12	-	-	1	7	1	1	-	-	5	-	27
KB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LCO	3	-	-	-	452	7	-	4	-	11	6	483
LDF	12	-	-	-	8	173	-	-	2	3	-	198
LVD	1	-	-	1	8	-	64	-	-	-	1	75
MIL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MLK	2	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	48	1	-	56
RC	12	1	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	112	-	132
STC	6	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	4	14
TOTAL	141	2	0	2	492	191	66	4	50	154	11	1,113

*Numbers in boldface and larger font are for the number of members that received their permit from their tribe's registration office (N=945).

Number of Members by Permit Type

Of the 1,113 members who obtained at least one permit, 547 selected only National Forest Gathering Permit(s), 87 selected only a General Gathering Permit, and 479 selected both types of permit (Figure 3). The majority of tribal members (1,026 of 1,113 or 92%) obtained a National Forest Gathering Permit indicating an interest by most members in gathering one or more of the five forest products that required a *stamp*.

A total of 547 members received only National Forest Gathering Permit(s). Since a NFGP was required to gather one or more of five specific forest products, nearly half of the members (49% or 547 of 1,113) indicated an interest in gathering only these five forest products. In addition, since the other members received a General Gathering Permit, about half of the permittees (51% or 566 of 1,113) indicated an interest in gathering other forest products.

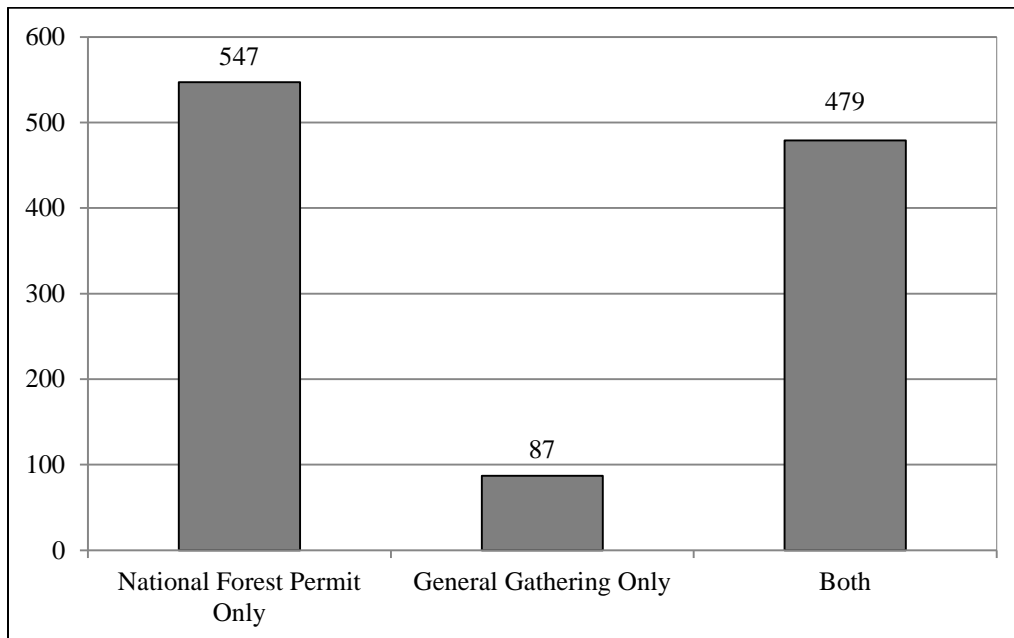


Figure 3: Number of tribal members who obtained only National Forest Gathering Permit(s), only a General Gathering Permit or both types of permit.

Number of Members per Permit Type and National Forest by Tribe of Enrollment

For the 2011-2012 harvest season, a total of 1,026 tribal members received a National Forest Gathering Permit(s) (Tables 3 and 4). Of these, 61 members received a NFGP for more than one National resulting in a total of 1,148 permits issued for the four National Forests combined. The majority of National Forest permits were issued for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (983), followed by the Ottawa (98), Hiawatha (42), and Huron-Manistee (31) National Forests.

The number of both National Forest permits and members receiving a General Gathering permit was greatest for Lac Courte Oreilles (552 and 172, respectively), followed by Lac du Flambeau (194 and 169), Red Cliff (155 and 101), and Bad River (145 and 65, respectively) (Table 4).

Table 3. Number of members by tribe of enrollment that obtained a National Forest Gathering Permit (NFGP) for from 1-4 National Forest.

Tribe of Enrollment	Number of Members Obtaining a NFGP permit for:				
	1 National Forest	2 National Forests	3 National Forests	4 National Forests	Total
BRV	121	12	-	-	133
BM	2	-	-	-	2
FDL	-	-	-	-	0
KB	1	-	-	-	1
LCO	431	11	1	24	467
LDF	164	4	2	4	174
LVD	36	-	-	-	36
MIL	4	-	-	-	4
MLK	50	-	-	-	50
RC	147	2	-	1	150
STC	9	-	-	-	9
TOTAL	965	29	3	29	1,026

Table 4. Number of members by tribe of enrollment who obtained at least one National Forest Gathering Permit by National Forest and Total, or a General Gathering Permit.

Tribe of Enrollment	Total Members Permitted	Number of Members	National Forest Gathering Permit					General Gathering Permit
			National Forest					Number of Members
			CNNF	Ottawa	Hiawatha	Huron-Manistee	Total Permits	
BRV	141	133	132	11	1	1	145	65
BM	2	2	1	-	1	-	2	1
FDL	0	0	-	-	-	-	0	-
KB	2	1	1	-	-	-	1	1
LCO	492	467	464	32	31	25	552	172
LDF	191	174	174	10	6	4	194	169
LVD	66	36	1	35	-	-	36	49
MIL	4	4	4	-	-	-	4	-
MLK	50	50	48	2	-	-	50	2
RC	154	150	150	1	3	1	155	101
STC	11	9	8	1	-	-	9	6
TOTAL	1,113	1,026	983	92	42	31	1,148	566

Number of Forest Product *Stamps* Issued

Of the 1,113 members who obtained gathering permits (Table 1), 1,026 members obtained at least one National Forest Gathering permit (Tables 3 and 4). These 1,026 members selected 3,113 *stamps* for the five forest products or 3.0 *stamps* per gatherer (Table 5).

By forest product, the greatest number of *stamps* were for balsam boughs (999) followed by firewood (767), birch bark (491), lodgepoles (424), and ginseng (432) (Table 5). By National Forest, the greatest number of *stamps* was issued for the CNNF (2,861), followed by the Ottawa (145), Hiawatha (59), and Huron-Manistee (48).

Table 5: Number of forest product stamps issued by Forest Product and National Forest.

Forest Product	National Forest				TOTAL
	CNNF	Ottawa	Hiawatha	Huron-Manistee	
Balsam Boughs	850	83	38	28	999
Birch Bark	466	13	7	5	491
Firewood	723	28	9	7	767
Lodgepoles	407	11	2	4	424
Ginseng	415	10	3	4	432
TOTAL	2,861	145	59	48	3,113

Phone Survey

A phone survey was conducted to monitor harvest of balsam boughs and firewood gathered by tribal members during the 2011-2012 season (Appendix A). Categories for harvest of these two forest products were as follows:

Balsam Boughs (Tons)	Firewood (Cords)
0-1	0-3
2-3	4-6
4-5	7-10
>5	>10

Of the 1,016 members who obtained a gathering permit for balsam boughs or firewood or both, 313 members (31%) were called (Appendix B). A total of 52 members responded to the survey (17% of those called). Of these, 5 members reported gathering 0-1 tons of balsam boughs each while 2 members reported gathering firewood (1 member at 0-3 cords and 1 member at 4-6 cords). All reported harvest was for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Due to small sample size, harvest estimates were not calculated.

SUMMARY

For the 2011-2012 harvest season, the number of tribal members who received at least one National Forest Gathering or General Gathering permit was 1,113, a decline of 579 persons or 34% compared to the 2010-2011 season. Lac Courte Oreilles members obtained the most National Forest Gathering and General Gathering permits, followed by Lac du Flambeau members. Of the 10 tribes signatory to the MOU, seven issued fewer permits during the 2011-2012 season than in any of the five previous years.

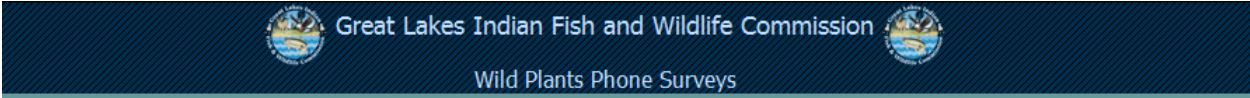
Of the 1,113 members who obtained at least one permit, 547 selected only National Forest Gathering Permit(s), 87 selected only a General Gathering Permit, and 479 selected both types of permit. The 1,026 members who obtained at least one National Forest Gathering permit selected a total of 3,113 *stamps* for the five forest products that required a *stamp* or 3.0 *stamps* per gatherer.

A phone survey was conducted to monitor harvest of two forest products, balsam boughs and firewood. A total of 52 members responded to the survey. Of these, 5 members reported gathering 0-1 tons of balsam boughs each while 2 members reported gathering firewood (1 member at 0-3 cords and 1 member at 4-6 cords). All reported harvest was for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Due to small sample size, harvest estimates were not calculated.

LITERATURE CITED

Wrobel, J. 2012. Tribal Wild Plant Gathering on National Forest Lands; Harvest Season 2010-2011. Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. Odanah, WI. Administrative Report 12-09, September 2012.

APPENDIX A. Online data entry form used for phone survey data collection.



Wild Plants Harvest: Insert record	
Season*	2012-2013
Species*	Balsam Boughs
Did You Gather?*	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Forest	Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest
Amount	Species: Balsam Boughs
	Amount: 0-1 Tons
* - Required field	
<input type="button" value="Save"/> <input type="button" value="Cancel"/>	



Wild Plants Harvest [Advanced search](#)

Master record ([return to list](#))

Permittee	NAGFA ID (License Holder ID)	Tribe
Jon Doe	1234	Bad River

Actions	Season	Species	Did You Gather?	Forest	Amount
Add new Refresh 	2012-2013	Balsam Boughs	Yes	Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest	0-1 Tons
Add new Refresh					

APPENDIX B. Phone survey results by tribe of enrollment.

Tribe	#All Permittees	Balsam Permit Only	Firewood Permit Only	Both Balsam and Firewood Permits	# of Permittees with Balsam and Firewood	# of Permittees Called	% of Permittees Called	# of Respondents	# Active: Balsam Boughs	# Active: Firewood
Bay Mills	2	1	1	0	2	2	100%	2	0	0
Bad River	141	34	29	68	131	37	28%	12	0	1
Lac Courte Oreilles	492	175	25	263	463	148	32%	21	4	0
Keweenaw Bay	2	0	1	0	1	1	100%	1	0	0
Lac du Flambeau	191	15	4	152	171	49	29%	4	0	0
Lac Vieux Desert	66	22	1	13	36	12	33%	0	0	0
Mille Lacs	4	1	1	2	4	4	100%	1	0	0
Mole Lake	50	4	15	31	50	13	26%	4	0	0
Red Cliff	154	19	49	81	149	38	26%	6	0	1
St. Croix	11	4	0	5	9	9	100%	1	1	0
Total	1,113	275	126	615	1,016	313	31%	52	5	2