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# Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

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Joseph Wildcat, Sr., President  
John "Goober" Johnson, Vice-President  
Jamie-Ann Allen, Secretary  
Melinda Young, Treasurer

Council Members:

Steve Beson  
Betty Jo Graveen  
Frank Mitchell, Sr.  
William "Bill" Stone, Sr.  
Eric Chapman  
George Thompson  
Alice Soulier  
Dee Allen

Location: Vilas County, north central Wisconsin



# Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

## Tribal Statistics

There are currently 3415 Lac du Flambeau tribal members.

- 18 and under = 860
- Ages 18 and older = 2555

The Lac du Flambeau Reservation, located primarily in Vilas County, totals 86,600 acres.

- 39,403 acres are tribally owned
- 18,532 acres are individually allotted
- 28,665 acres are fee land
- 24,000 acres are water/wetlands that include 260 lakes, 65 miles of streams, lakes, and rivers.

The Lac du Flambeau Government, including its enterprises, is the largest employer in Vilas County, employing approximately 800 people (*Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development*).

## Tribal Government

The Lac du Flambeau Tribal Council is composed of 12 members.

- The council meets twice monthly
- Decisions are made by a majority rule
- Elections are held every October for two officer positions and four members of the council. Two-year terms are staggered

## Brief History

The band has inhabited the Lac du Flambeau area since 1745 when Chief Keeshkemun led the band to the area. The band acquired the name Lac du Flambeau from its gathering practice of harvesting fish at night by torchlight. The name Lac du Flambeau or Lake of the Torches refers to this practice and was given to the band by the French traders and trappers who visited the area.

The Lac du Flambeau Reservation was officially established by treaties in 1837 and 1842. The area was continually logged in the following years and became a tourist destination for families from southern Wisconsin and Illinois around the turn of the century.

To increase economic activity and foster self-reliance among the various Native American communities, the tribe began bingo and casino operations. Revenues generated by the casino operations would go to the tribe and directly benefit the economic and social development of the community. The casino has enhanced both the economy of the Lakeland area and to provide public services to residents in Lac du Flambeau.

## **Tribal Services**

### **Aging Program**

The Lac du Flambeau Aging and Disabilities services provides information, referrals, Elder activities, case management, nutrition, transportation, and benefits counseling to elders, veterans, and persons with long-term disabilities.

Services:

- Veteran and Elder benefits
- Veteran and Elder activities
- Elder meals; dining and meals on wheels
- Case management
- Information
- Personal care, chore services, and transportation

### **Judicial Branch** (Not a tribal service)

Includes:

- 1 Trial Judge
  - Associate judges as deemed necessary by Tribal Council and when the need arises three appellate court judges
- Legal counsel must pass bar to practice before the court
- The Lac du Flambeau Court System handles cases such as conservation/natural resources, children & families, health, safety & welfare, civil, divorce, custody, child support, domestic abuse, small claims, replevin, and recognition of foreign orders
- Funded by Bureau of Indian Affairs grants, tribal funds and sub-contract with the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC).

The judicial power of the Lac du Flambeau Band shall be vested in the Judiciary. The Judiciary shall have the powers to interpret and apply the Constitution and laws of the Lac du Flambeau Band. The Tribal Trial Court shall have the original jurisdiction over all cases and controversies, both criminal and civil, in law or in equity, arising under the Constitution, laws, customs and traditions of the Lac du Flambeau Band, including all actions in which the provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, 25 U.S.C., sec. 1901, et.seq., are applicable and cases in which the Tribe, or its officials and employees shall be a party. This grant of jurisdiction shall not be construed as a waiver of the Tribe's sovereign immunity.

### **Education**

Includes:

- Community Education Center
  - Education Department
  - Nicolet Area Technical College classroom
- Zaasijwan Head Start
- Lac du Flambeau Elementary School District
- Lakeland Union High School
  - Extended Resources – West
  - Alternative Site classroom
- Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe Language Program

## **Healthcare: Peter Christensen Health Center**

### Services:

- Quality health care provided by 3 board certified family Practice Physicians, Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber & one Physician Assistant-Certified.
- Acute med conditions assessed through the walk-in dept.
- Staged Diabetic Management
- Obstetric Care
- Womens Wellness
- Chronic Disease Management
- Well Child exams
- Preventative Care
- CLIA certified Laboratory services
- In addition to medical services, PCHC also offers preventative and routine dental care. The dental clinic is under supervision of Dr. Brad Walden, DMD.
- Clinic services include: urgent care, pharmacy, dental, optical, community health, diabetes care, and nutrition
- Funded by Lac du Flambeau Tribe, with some funds coming from the Indian Health Service and the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services
- PCHC also has a new Optical Department, offering the full spectrum of optical services, including frames and contacts. The Optical Department is under the supervision of Dr. Renee Walden, OD.

## **Housing Authority**

The mission of the CHA is to develop, operate and maintain affordable housing programs and activities on the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation. The purpose of these activities is to provide Tribal membership with a decent, safe, sanitary housing and supportive services that promote self-sufficiency, economic and community development on the Reservation. The Chippewa Housing Authority's first 20 low rent properties were available to the community in 1966. Today, CHA housing stock includes 196 low rent units, 50 Mutual Help homes, 72 Tax Credit units and 64 USDA-RDS 515 units.

## **Law Enforcement**

### Includes:

- Twelve officers and one Chief of Police
- Agreement with Vilas County Sheriff's Department (transportation, jail housing)
- Funded primarily with tribal funds, some discretionary federal grants, and Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance funds

## **Lac du Flambeau Public Library**

The mission of the Lac du Flambeau Public Library is to provide informational, cultural, educational, recreational resource and services to all residents of the Lac du Flambeau area, and encompassing the communities in Vilas County. The library is committed to freedom of information to all.

## **Social Services**

The Tribe's Family Resource Center provides a wide range of services and programs to the Lac du Flambeau Community to ensure the support and preservation of family life and well being on the reservation.

Services/Departments:

- Lac du Flambeau Child Welfare Office
- Mental Health Outreach Program
- Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program
- Tribal Family Services Program
- Domestic Abuse Program
- Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) Program
- Economic Assistance/Support
- Food Distribution Program
- Youth Services
- Problem Gambling Counseling

## **Tribal Natural Resource Department**

This Department was designed to provide the personnel, materials, supplies, equipment, facilities, and management of the natural resources on the Lac du Flambeau Reservation.

The reservation is 86,630 acres (or 144 square miles). It is a checkerboard reservation with land status consisting of Tribal (45.4%), Tribal Allotted (21.4%), and Alienated (33.1%) land.

The reservation consists of 260 lakes, 17,897 surface acres of water, 64 miles of creeks, rivers, and streams, 2,400 acres of wetlands, and 41,733 acres of forested upland.

The Department consists of ten programs:

- Fish Culture
- Fisheries Management
- Wildlife Management
- Circle of Flight
- Conservation Law
- Forestry
- Water Resources
- Parks and Recreation
- Environmental Protection
- Historic Preservation
- Land Management

## **Tribal Roads Department**

The Tribal Roads Department is committed to maintaining all tribal roads and ensuring traffic runs as smooth as possible in Lac du Flambeau. The department is focused on keeping tribal roads accessible at all times.

Services:

- Snow plowing for elders, tribal roads, and some bus routes
- Maintenance of tribal roads; gravelling, signage, disposing of fallen trees, etc.
- Cleaning of lots for new home/subdivision construction

- Stumpage, brushing of tribal lots as requested
- Upkeep of Tribal Garage and all machinery and equipment therein to maintain safety

## **Water and Sewer Department**

The Department strives to provide quality, uninterrupted service that meets or exceeds all Federal safe drinking water standards. Also collects and treats all wastewater generated by the community.

## **Youth Center - Abinoojiiyag Center**

The Abinoojiiyag Center is available for Lac du Flambeau community youth and their families.

The Abinoojiiyag Center provides alternative, positive activities for youth to reduce and stop alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, and criminal behavior among youth on the Lac du Flambeau reservation.

The Center operates under the Family Resource Center, and collaborates with the Lac du Flambeau Public School, Lakeland Union High School, Tribal programs, Great Lakes Inter Tribal Council, and other tribes throughout Wisconsin to provide these services.

Services the Abinoojiiyag Center building is available for include, family activities such as naming ceremonies, family reunions, birthday parties, when no other center-sponsored activity is taking place, which promote family togetherness, community wellness, healthy alternatives to alcohol, tobacco and other drug use

## **Economic Enterprises**

Lac du Flambeau employs approximately 800 people.

<u>Business</u>	<u>Type of Business</u>
Lake of the Torches Lac du Flambeau, WI	Casino, hotel/lodge, convention center
Lac du Flambeau Tribe and Tribal Enterprises Lac du Flambeau, WI	Campground/marina Store/Gas Station Smoke Shop Museum Simpson Electric