



# Minnesota Chippewa Tribe: Population Projections

In 2012-2013, Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) contracted with Wilder Research to conduct a study and produce population projections for MCT as a whole as well as for the six member Bands: Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, and White Earth. In 2013-2014, MCT again contracted with Wilder Research to update the existing projections and to add an additional alternative enrollment criteria scenario to the study.

The purpose of this study is to help MCT and its member Bands better understand population trends, and specifically understand the tribe's population trajectory under: the current tribal membership criteria (1/4 blood quantum of MCT blood, scenario 1) and proposed alternative criteria used to determine tribal membership eligibility. The alternative criteria under consideration are: to allow other Chippewa/ Ojibwe blood from non-MCT federally recognized tribes and Canadian First Nations to count toward the requirement of 1/4 MCT blood quantum (scenario 2), to allow blood from any federally recognized American Indian tribes and Canadian First Nation to count toward the requirement of 1/4 MCT blood quantum (scenario 3), to reduce the blood quantum criteria to 1/8 MCT blood (scenario 4), or to use lineal descent from the 1941 MCT base roll (instead of blood quantum) to determine enrollment eligibility. Population projections through the year 2100 were completed for each of these scenarios for MCT and for each Band.

This report summarizes the findings of this study. More detailed information is available in the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Population Projections Methodology Report.

## Key findings

- The overall population of MCT and each of the Bands is declining under the current enrollment criteria (1/4 MCT blood quantum, scenario 1).
- This population decline will also be accompanied by a substantial aging of the population. Nearly half of MCT members will be age 65+ by the later part of this century (under scenario 1), compared with just over 10% in 2013. This significant aging of the population will have an impact on the characteristics and operations (i.e., member programming and service needs) of MCT.
- All of the scenarios using 1/4 MCT blood quantum (scenarios 1, 2, and 3) will result in population declines over the remainder of this century.
- The adjusted fertility rate for the population is low (1.235 children per woman's lifetime) under the current enrollment criteria. A fertility rate of approximately 2.1 or higher (or other changes to the enrollment criteria) is needed to maintain or increase population size.
- The scenario using 1/8 blood quantum (scenario 4) results in a significant initial increase in population size and projections that the population size will remain relatively constant through the end of this century, with some Bands growing considerably and other shrinking considerably (because of the current age and gender differences by Band).
- The scenario using lineal descent (scenario 5) results in a significant initial increase in population size and projections that the population could range anywhere from 120,000 to over 200,000 by the end of the century.

## Study methods

As a part of this study, Wilder Research conducted a MCT member survey that included a random (representative) sample of Band members from each of the six Bands. Over 100 surveys were completed with members of each Band, which were used to understand the extent to which MCT members have non-MCT American Indian and Canadian First Nations blood, in themselves and in their children.

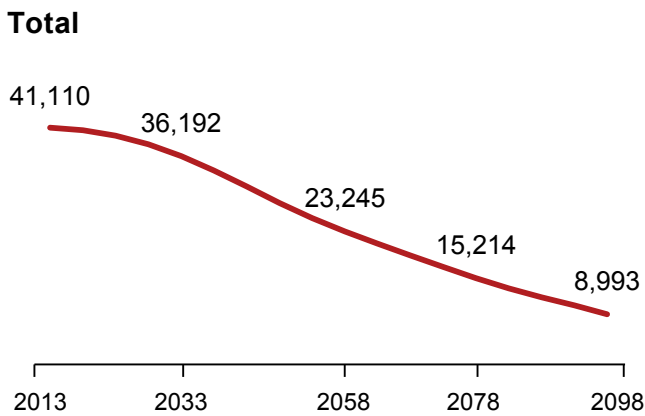
Wilder Research worked with Gillaspay Demographics (Tom Gillaspay, independent consultant and former Minnesota State Demographer) to obtain information from publicly available sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau to establish fertility and mortality rates in this population in order to produce reliable and valid population projections. We also worked with MCT to obtain and update the 1941 Base Roll to be used for the projections based on lineal descent.

Since the population for each of the six Bands was projected using the same survival and fertility rates, differences in projected population depend on the starting (2013) age and gender profile of the enrolled membership.

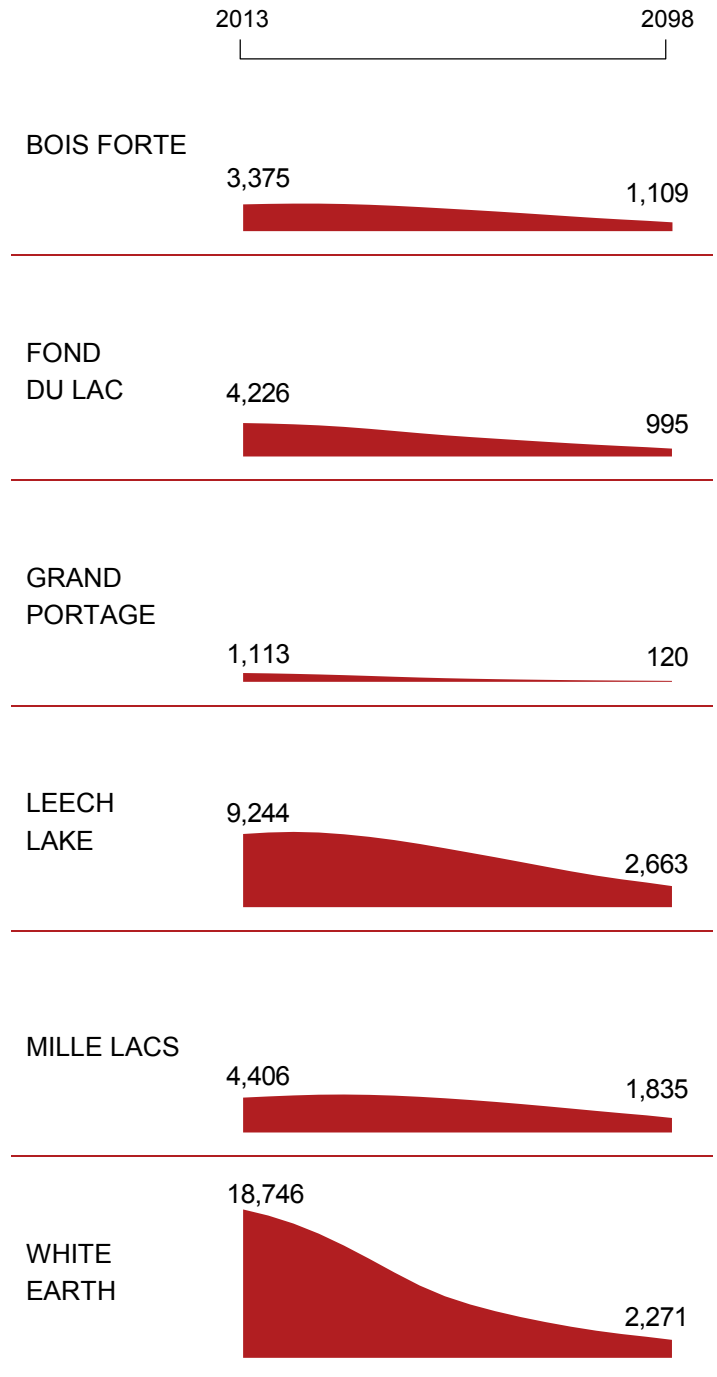
# Scenario 1

Population projections for the Minnesota Chippewa tribe assuming no changes are made to the enrollment criteria, which is currently set at a threshold of 1/4 MCT blood to be eligible for enrollment

This is the most restrictive scenario, since it limits enrollment to the current standard of at least 1/4 MCT blood quantum to be eligible for tribal enrollment. Leaving the tribal enrollment criteria as is, the **projected enrolled population declines from just over 41,000 in 2013 to just under 9,000 in 2098**. This represents a decline of approximately 78 percent or more than 32,000 members.



## By Band



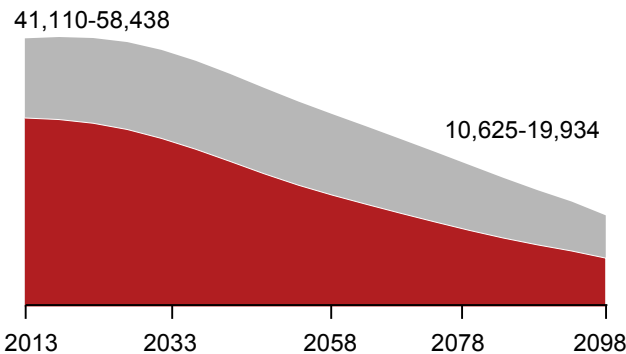
# Scenario 2

Population projections for the Minnesota Chippewa tribe assuming changes are made to the enrollment criteria to allow all Chippewa/Ojibwe blood from a federally recognized American Indian tribe or Canadian First Nation (not just MCT blood) to count toward the 1/4 threshold to be eligible for enrollment

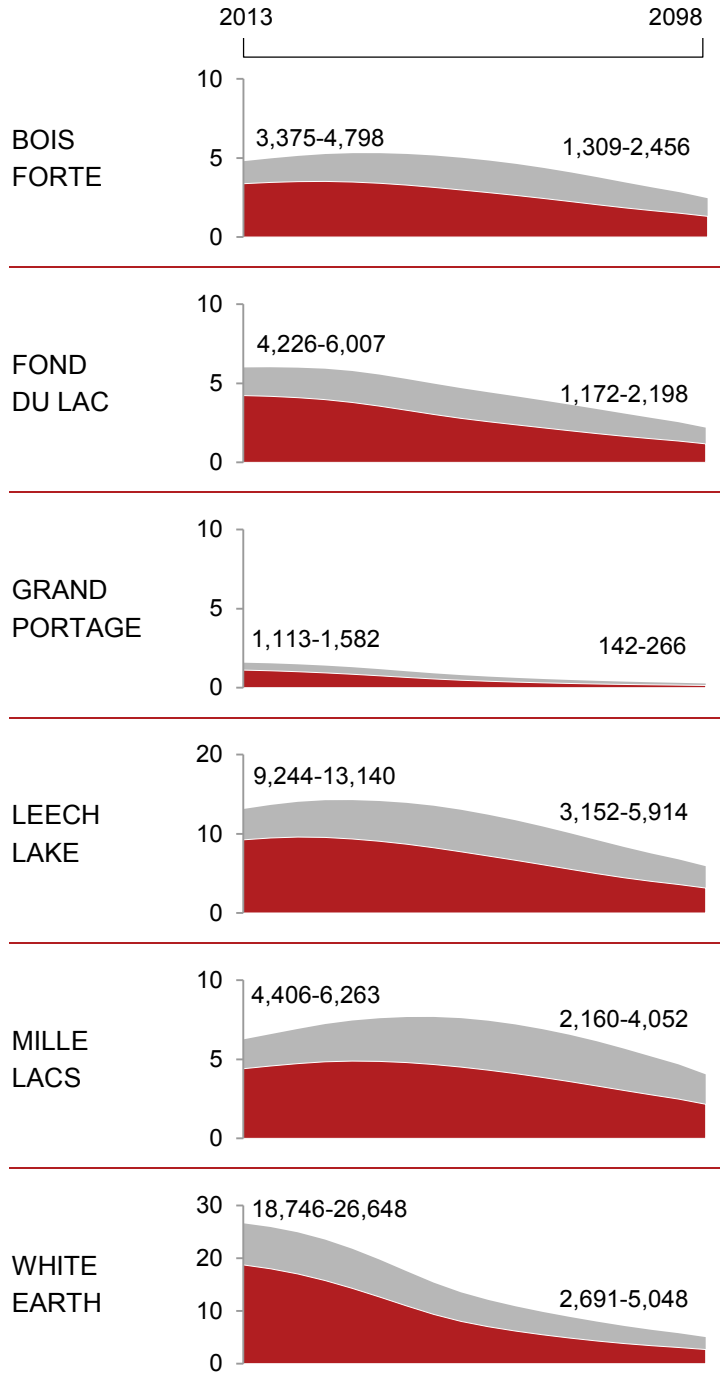
In terms of population size, this scenario is slightly less restrictive than the current tribal enrollment criteria (illustrated in scenario 1), because it allows Ojibwe/Chippewa blood from federally recognized American Indian tribes and Canadian First Nations to be added to MCT blood, resulting in a combined blood quantum of at least 1/4.

**The lower end projection under this scenario results in a total MCT population of 10,625 in the year 2098,** which is only slightly higher than the projection of population size if the enrollment criteria is left as is. (The lower end projection assumes that starting in 2013 new births would be eligible for enrollment under the new criteria.) **The higher end projection, which assumes that individuals who are currently alive who meet this criteria would also be eligible to enroll, estimates a total MCT population of 19,934 in the year 2098, with all Bands' populations still declining during this period.** The likely actual MCT population if the enrollment criteria were to be changed to 1/4 MCT plus other Chippewa/Ojibwe blood quantum is likely somewhere in between these two estimates.

## Total



## By Band



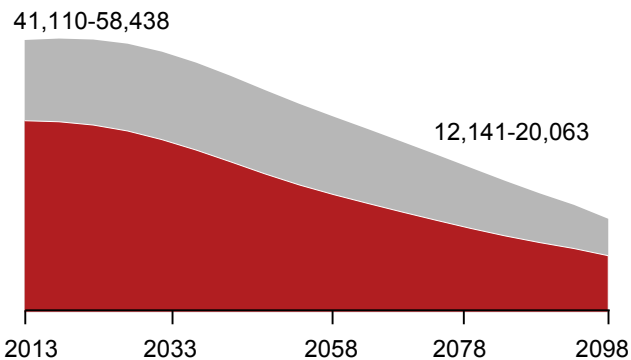
# Scenario 3

Population projections for the Minnesota Chippewa tribe assuming changes are made to the enrollment criteria to allow blood from any federally recognized American Indian tribe or Canadian First Nation (not just MCT blood) to count toward the 1/4 threshold to be eligible for enrollment

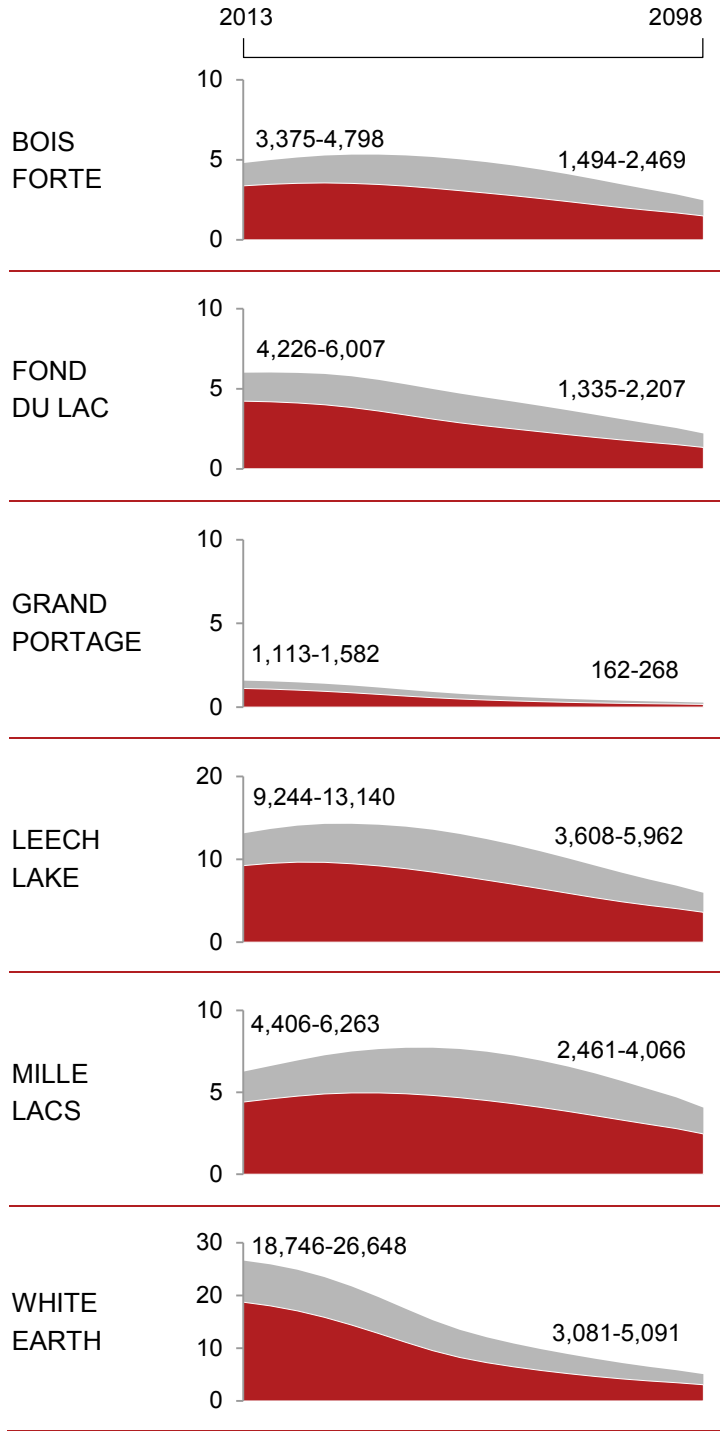
In terms of population size, this scenario is the least restrictive option presented here, because it allows blood from any federally recognized American Indian tribes and Canadian First Nations to be added to MCT blood, resulting in a combined blood quantum of at least 1/4.

**The lower end projection under this scenario results in a total MCT population of 12,141 by the year 2098,** which is slightly higher than either scenario 1 or scenario 2. (The lower end projection assumes that starting in 2013 new births would be eligible for enrollment under the new criteria.) **The higher end projection, which assumes that individuals who are currently alive who meet this criteria would also be eligible to enroll, estimates a total MCT population of 20,063 in the year 2098, with all Bands' populations still declining during this period.** The likely actual MCT population if the enrollment criteria were to be changed to 1/4 MCT plus other American Indian or Canadian First Nations blood quantum is likely somewhere in between these two estimates.

## Total



## By Band

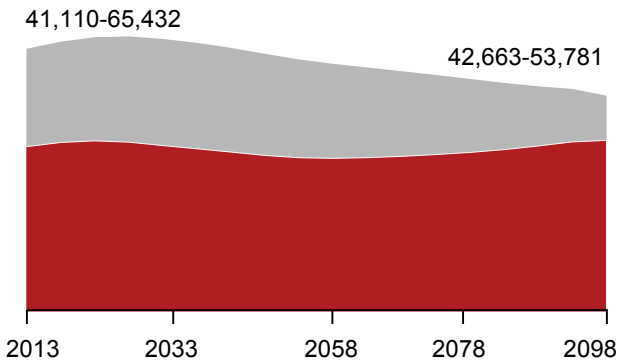


# Scenario 4

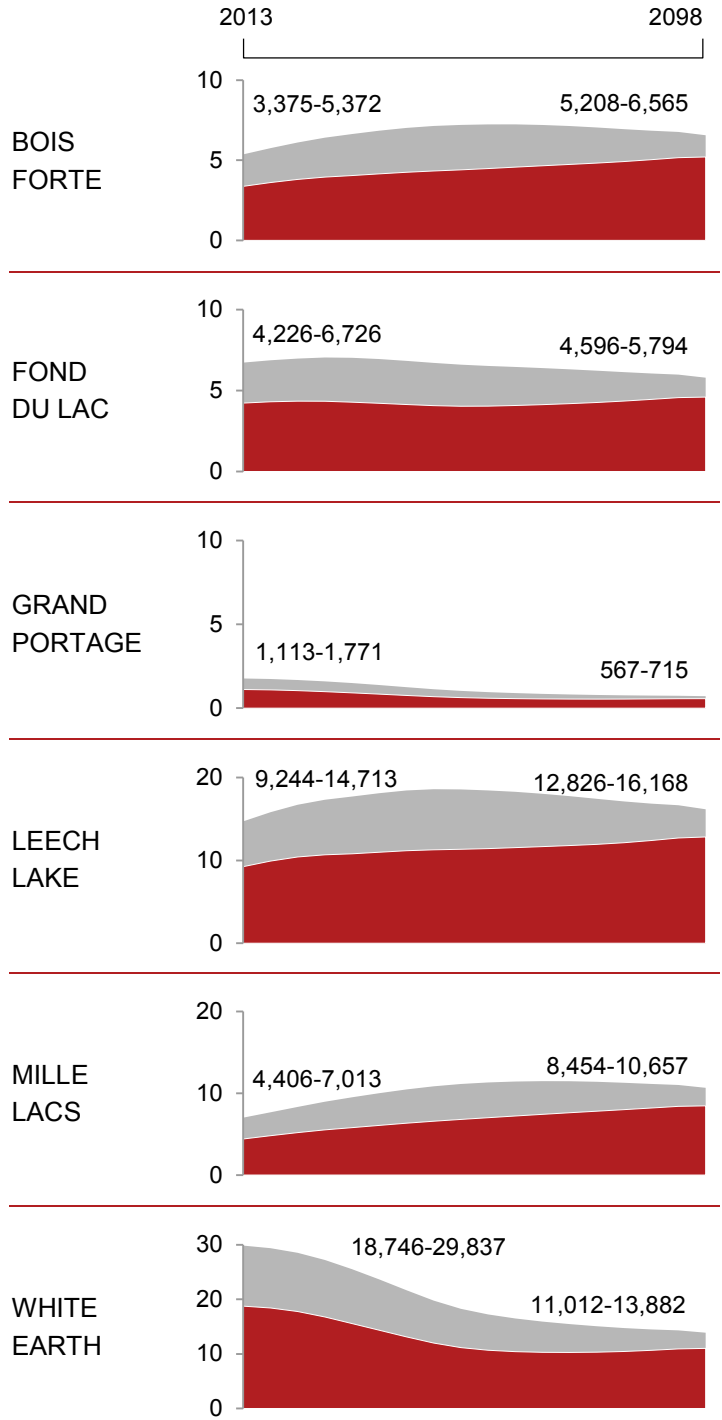
## Population projections for the Minnesota Chippewa tribe assuming the enrollment criteria is changed to 1/8 MCT blood to be eligible for enrollment

This is a much more liberal scenario than the others under consideration, because it lowers the overall blood quantum requirement to 1/8 MCT blood. This change effectively increases the “adjusted fertility rate” of MCT members (adjusted to reflect the proportion of children born to member mothers who are themselves eligible for enrollment), the **projected enrolled population will have fluctuations and slight overall growth between 2013 and 2098, although some Bands would increase substantially whereas others would decrease substantially.** The lower end projection assumes that starting in 2013 new births would be eligible for enrollment under a 1/8 MCT blood quantum criteria. The higher end projection assumes that individuals who are currently alive who meet this criteria would also be eligible to enroll. The likely actual MCT population if the enrollment criteria were to be changed to 1/8 MCT blood quantum is likely somewhere in between these two estimates.

### Total



### By Band



# Scenario 5

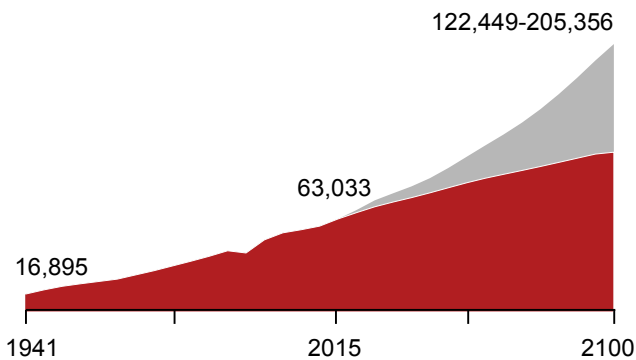
Population projections for the Minnesota Chippewa tribe assuming the enrollment criteria is changed to lineal descent from the 1941 MCT base rolls to be eligible for enrollment

This is the most liberal scenario than the others under consideration, because it does not use blood quantum, but instead would make anyone who is a lineal descendant from someone on the 1941 MCT Base Roll to be eligible for enrollment.

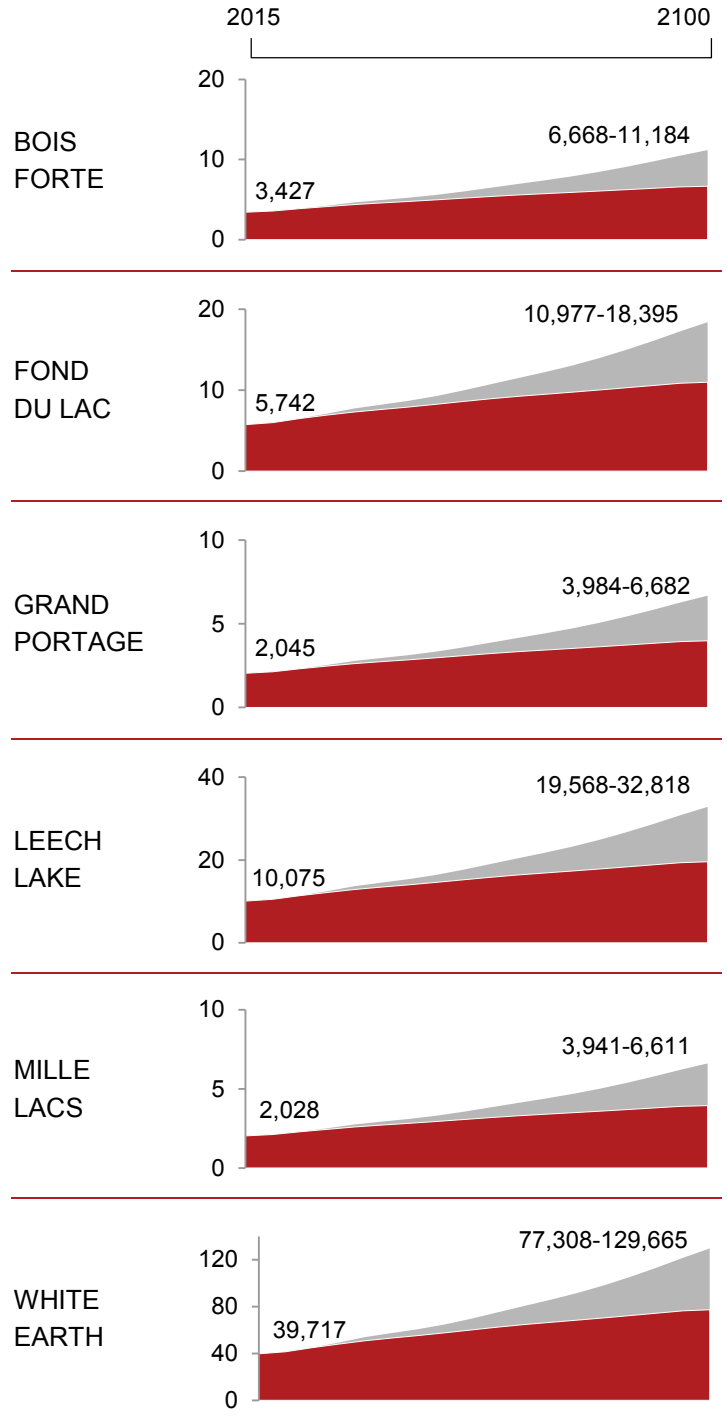
Under this scenario, the highest possible base population of MCT as of 2015 would be 63,033. However, as with the other scenarios, not everyone who would become eligible to enroll if the enrollment criteria were changed would actually enroll, so the 2015 base population would likely be somewhere between the current MCT population and this number.

**By the end of this century, the MCT population under this scenario could range from a lower end estimate of just over 120,000 to a higher end estimate of just over 200,000.** This huge range is based on varying projections of fertility rates for this population over the next century.

## Total



## By Band



# Wilder Research

Information. Insight. Impact.

451 Lexington Parkway North  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104  
651-280-2700  
[www.wilderresearch.org](http://www.wilderresearch.org)



AMHERST H.  
WILDER  
FOUNDATION  
ESTABLISHED 1906

**Here for good.**

#### **For more information**

For more information about this report, contact Nicole  
MartinRogers at Wilder Research, 651-280-2682.  
Author: Nicole MartinRogers  
MAY 2014