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Special points of interest:

- Flathead Outdoors Radio Show is aired every Saturday morning at 8:15 on KERR 750 AM and KQRK FM.
- Salish Point Committee meets the 2nd Friday at 9 am at the Natural Resources Meeting Room
- Shoreline Protection Board will meet Friday, December 9th at 9:30 AM at Pablo-Lefthand Conference Rooms in Pablo.
- Tribal Web Site at www.cskt.org



US Highway 93 Construction

The *US 93 Program* is planned to operate for a five year period. Program funds are derived from the Federal Highway Administration budget, with fund dispersal through the Montana Department of Transportation budget. The Program's planned operational schedule starts 1 October 2004 and ends 30 September 2009.

Planning, design and construction for reconstruction of the 56-mile segment of U. S. Highway 93 on the Flathead Indian Reservation, extending from Evaro to Polson has required Federal, State and Tribal governments to develop new tech-



Highway 93 wildlife crossings at bottom of Polson Hill

niques and inter-agency relationships, to ensure that the concerns of all involved agencies are recognized, and

that the end results are acceptable to all concerned agencies and their constituents. The

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News from the Department Head

Since our last news letter the Natural Resource Department has undergone a few changes. One of the changes is the result of negotiations with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that began a decade ago. These negotiations culminated in an Annual Funding Agreement between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and the USFWS authorizing the Tribes to perform five activities at the National Bison Range Complex, within the exterior boundaries of the Flathead Reservation.

This historic agreement was implemented beginning March 15, 2005. The CSKT fully staffed the AFA by July. The CSKT staff at the Bison Range consists of a Coordinator, Sheila Matt, a Biologist, Shannon Clairmont, a Clerk, Nancy Schall, Park Aids Caryn Bowden and Miranda DePoe, Fire Program activities currently performed by Tribal Division of Fire, Department of Forestry, and Maintenance workers, Tom McClure, Sherry Clairmont and T.J. Haynes, and two Federal Interpersonnel Assignments in Maintenance, Delbert Palmer and Darren Thomas.

The CSKT is proud to be, once again, first in achieving such a monumental agreement with the FWS. Activities since March 15 include a successful roundup. During this years roundup we utilized 59 volunteers and had 3,060 visitors including 1,020 students from 21 schools. We look forward to a long and productive relationship with the Fish and Wildlife service and encourage anyone who wishes to volunteer for any activity to contact Sheila Matt at (406) 644-6446. You may also submit questions about the AFA and the Bison Range to the CSKT, P.O. Box 278, Pablo,

Tracking Loons

Tribal wildlife biologist, Brett Gullett, is tracking the migration pattern of Common Loons that stage on Flathead Lake each fall. Hundreds of Common Loons stop

over on Flathead Lake before they continue their migration south.

In early October ARGOS transmitters were implanted in three adults and one sub-adult. According to Gullett, "These birds will be followed for the next two years to reveal their migration patterns, identify key staging and wintering locations".

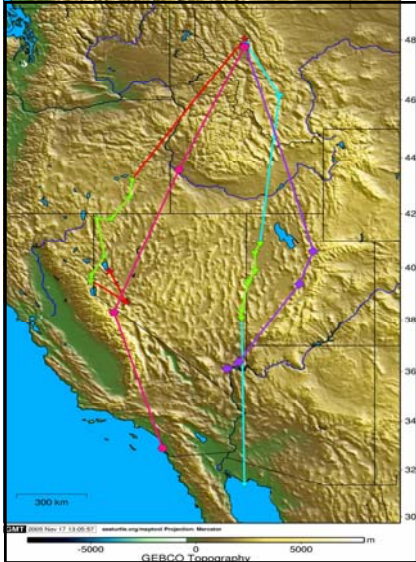
Previous banding data has revealed that many of Montana's breeding Common Loons winter off the coast of central California. One individual Common Loon made the 950-mile spring migration in less than five days. This quick trip emphasizes the importance of identifying each stop or staging areas.

The transmitters will gather data more frequently during the spring and fall migration seasons and provide information for two fall and two spring migrations. During the winter and summer months,

while data collection will be less frequent, individuals can be recognized by colored leg bands. Each bird has been given a unique combination of colors and patterns to allow for sighting and monitoring beyond the life of the transmitters.

While there are thousands of loons in the states, there are less than 100 pairs of nesting loons in Montana and only one nesting pair on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The pair has been unsuccessful in producing offspring over the last three years due to fluctuating water levels on Kicking Horse Reservoir.

Gullett believes the migrating common loon project will assist wildlife biologists in finding answers to important migration routes, stop over lakes and other wintering grounds. This project is a cooperative effort between Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Wildlife Biologists and the Montana Common Loon Working Group.



Seaturtle.org satellite tracking project map of the Common Loons flightpaths

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US 93 Program's priority is to ensure that Tribal Government concerns related to the highway reconstruction are recognized and met.

The US 93 Program staff includes a Program Manager and a Technical Assistant, both of whom are enrolled CS&KT members. The Program Manager is a Professional Engineer and the Technical Assistant is an experienced heavy construction worker. The program staff perform routine monitoring of work in progress, and provide coordination with FHWA, MDOT and contractor managers through regular scheduled meetings, routine communications and special event meetings called to provide needed coordination to resolve critical issues in progress.

U. S. Highway 93 reconstruction on the Flathead Indian Reservation places emphasis on safety, environment and wildlife habitat. Shown (on page 1) is a photograph of one of the wildlife crossings under construction in the Polson Hill area, south of Polson

Tribal Brownfields Response Program

In Fiscal Year 2004, the tribes identified over 120 sites that are considered potential Brownfield sites. This inventory can grow when other sites are identified. The Brownfield committee composed of professionals and community members selected three sites for further consideration. During this past year, the Old Char-Koosta News Building (Pablo, MT), the Elmo Cash Store, and the Old St. Ignatius Dump were selected for a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. The Phase II is processed encompasses and Sampling and Analysis Plan, and Health and Safety Plan. These are essentially guidelines that will be used to determine whether or not further (if any) remediation is necessary. Also completed this past year is a reservation wide Quality Assurance Project Plan for Brownfield site assessments.

For additional information or concerns regarding a potential Brownfield site please contact Marlene McDanal, Solid and Hazardous Waste Specialist at 1-406-

675-2700 extension 7215, by mail: P.O. Box 278 Pablo, MT 59855, by email at mmcdanal@cskt.org, or visit our offices at 301 Main Street, Polson, MT, normal business hours are 8:00a.m. Until 4:30 p.m. You can also visit our website at www.cskt.org.



2005 Flathead Lake Honoring

2005 Flathead Lake Honoring Day, held September 21, was sponsored by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks under the guidance of the Flathead lake and River Fisheries Co-Management Plan which guides Flathead lake and River management from 2001-2010. The event is designed to raise awareness of water quality and fisheries issues for Flathead lake area high school biology students.

The values and goals we celebrated and honored are:

- Conserving native fish, both bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout;
- Maintaining high water quality and limiting nutrient input to the lake;
- Encouraging fisheries harvest of nonnative fish such as lake trout and

lake whitefish.

This year's event hosted more than 100 high school science students from Kalispell, Polson, Ronan and Two Eagle River High Schools.

The 2005 Flathead lake Honoring, at Sacagewa Park, began with an invocation and comments by Stephen Small Salmon a Salish Pend' Oreille Elders Advisory Council member. The opening was followed by welcoming addresses from tribal, state, and local government officials. The final item of the opening was an honor song by the Bigcrane Drum.



Following the opening ceremonies, students attended either four educational stations at Sacagewa Park, or the University of Montana Biological Station at Yellow Bay. Students learned about lake conservation, fisheries biology and management, fish identification, water quality and catching and cleaning fish.

Tribal Fisheries, Game Wardens, and Water Quality staff, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks staff and local conservation groups set up educational stations for the day.

At the Biological Station students learned about the web of life in the lake.

2005 Fall Mack Days

2005 Fall Mack Days sponsored by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes began September 30th and ended October 22nd. It was four exciting weekends of lake trout "mack" fishing for anglers of all ages. Over \$10,000 in cash and prizes was given away in the lottery drawing. The Mack Days Event was held on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays for the first three weekends and ended on Saturday of the fourth weekend at the Blue Bay Campground with a free fish fry for anglers and families.

The 2005 Fall Mack Event will also be the beginning of the "Over 100 Club" where names of anglers who caught and entered 100 or more lake trout were placed in a special \$500 drawing.

The Mack Days events are held to help restore balance to the fisheries of Flathead Lake caused by the increasing population of lake trout. Native trout species (bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout) are currently over powered by the large population of lake trout in Flathead Lake.

Barry Hansen-fisheries biologist for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes states, "These events represent a new approach to fisheries management that strives to directly involve the angling public in shaping the fish community. Even though these events continue to grow, the lake trout population remains strong and we need to continue to build the events and maintain them in the future."

Hunters Tips

Know Before you go: Plan
Be sure that you have the most up to date map. Throw away your old maps.

Prepare:
Carefully study the appropriate hunting regulations of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes or the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks before you leave home.

Respect Road Closures:
Gates and road closures are in place to protect wildlife and habitat and improve hunting opportunities. Check with Natural Resources Department or Tribal Forestry Department to learn which roads are open.

Respect Wildlife:
Use stealth to close the distance between you and legal game. Never chase wildlife in a motor vehicle. Never take a shot you're not sure is within your capabilities.

Practice with your firearm before you go to the field. Follow up on every shot. EVERY time you shoot at game, follow up. Walk up to where the game was and carefully and thoroughly verify whether or not you hit the animal. Remember that even a perfectly shot animal may run 100 yards before expiring.

Respect other people and their safety:

Avoid hunting in areas with concentrated public recreation. Shooting from or across public roads is unlawful. Wear orange even if you think no one else is around. Be courteous to other hunters and non-hunters alike. Many people will judge **all** hunters by the practices you display in the field. Help protect the image and future of hunting.



A People of Vision

Natural Resources Department
Clayton Matt,
Department Head

NRD Divisions:
Fish, Wildlife, Recreation
and Conservation
Manager: Tom McDonald
Environmental Protection
Manager: Rich Janssen
Water Administration
Manager: Bill Foust

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Information & Education
Specialist
Germaine White



Big Horn Sheep

The Bighorn sheep has a compact muscular body covered with a brown coat. The sheep's belly, rump, back of legs, muzzle and eye patch are white. The sheep's muzzle is narrow and pointed.

Bighorn sheep tend to be a grazing animal and feeds on grasses. They can weigh 115 to 280 lbs. The maximum life span is 16 - 18 years but bighorn sheep average about 7-8 years. Most die during the winter from cold, predation or disease.

The male sheep is called a ram and has massive brown curled horns that can weigh as much as 30 lbs. The horns curl back over the

ears, down and up past the cheeks. By the time a ram reaches 7 to 8 years of age, he can have a set of horns with a full curl and a spread of up to 33 inches. Ewes, the females, are smaller than the rams and have shorter horns that never exceed half a curl.

In the late fall, during the rutting season, the rams engage in a head butting battle to establish dominance over other rams. Rams may reach one another at speeds of 50-70 miles per hour and an estimated force of 2400 pounds. The echoing crash can often be heard more than a half mile away.

Bighorn sheep are very ag-

ile, being second only to mountain goats in their ability to climb steep terrain. However, the goat is more of a climber or "walker", whereas the sheep, which bounds like a mule deer, can move much faster.

Mountain sheep rely on extremely acute eyesight and can detect slight movements and small objects nearly a mile away. Bighorn sheep are thought to have 8 power vision, eyesight 8 times more powerful than humans. Because an enemy cannot easily approach them unseen on the open mountain expanses, they have little use for highly developed senses of hearing or smell.

NRD Employee Focus

Maggie Winter-Sydnor

Maggie Winter-Sydnor was recently hired as a Wildlife Habitat Restoration Specialist with the Tribal Wildlife Management Program.

Maggie earned her graduate degree at Colorado State University in Restoration Ecology in the Rangeland Ecosystem Science Department. After her graduate degree she participated in an internship program at a Department of Energy site near Idaho Falls. Following her internship she worked for private industry on restora-

tion projects in the Tahoe Basin in Northern California.

"Maggie brings outstanding qualifications and work experience to this position. She will make valuable contributions to the wildlife habitat mitigation and restoration projects under the Kerr Dam wildlife habitat restoration program", said Dale Becker, Tribes' Wildlife Program Manager.

Maggie and her husband Rusty moved to Ronan in

a position with the Tribes Fisheries Program. Maggie has enjoyed gardening and teaching soils science classes at Salish Kootenai College.

