



Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Natural Resources Department News

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Spring Activities

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Spring is always an active and exciting time.

One of the annual spring activities sponsored by the Tribal Natural Resource Department, Division of Fish, Wildlife, Conservation and Recreation, is the River Honoring. This event is special because it brings together community, Tribal Government, educators and young students from throughout the reservation and the area. *(cont. on pg 2)*

New Permit Year

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation announce the availability of non-tribal member hunting, fishing and recreation regulations for the 2006-2007 permit season. The new permit year begins March 1, 2006. *(cont. on pg 3)*

Wood Ticks

Getting out into the woods to hike in the spring can be great fun. Unfortunately, it only takes one wood tick to give you the heebie geebies and leave you feeling crawley all the rest of the day. Here are some common sense and effective ways to enjoy your time outdoors and remain wood tick-free.
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Spring Bears

Dale Becker, Tribal Wildlife Program Manager, reminds the public that springtime on the Flathead Reservation, with its warmer temperatures and new vegetation is accompanied by an increase in bear activity. Soon after bears emerge from their dens they search for winter killed wildlife and succulent vegetation, the primary sources of much-needed food during spring months for bears.
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Wildlife Babies

Newborn wildlife is irresistible, and many well-meaning people are tempted to "help" when the best thing they can do is leave the young alone. Born in May and June, many young wild animals may appear abandoned and helpless, or seem to be lost.
(cont. on pg 6)

Snow Course Measurements

The Tribal Water Management Program, in the Natural Resources Department has been monitoring snow courses in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through an agreement that between both agencies entered into on October 20, 1988.
(cont. on pg 7)



Spring is always an active and exciting time.

One of the annual spring activities sponsored by the Tribal Natural Resource Department, Division of Fish, Wildlife, Conservation and Recreation, is the River Honoring. This event is special because it brings together community, Tribal Government, educators and young students from throughout the reservation and the area. It begins with a community event on the first evening at which the CSKT present awards to individual honorees who exemplify, through their actions, the spirit of dedication and support for the environment. (Congratulations to this years honorees.) The River Honoring continues for two more days during which teachers take approximately 1000 students through a series of stations aimed at teaching cultural, natural resource, conservation and stewardship ideas. This year is special also because it marks the twentieth year for this event.

I also want to say thank you to all of the staff and community members who make the River Honoring happen each year. It is because of your dedication and support that this event continues to be successful. Also, we want to thank the Tribal Council for their continued support. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes continue to be recognized as a national leader in environmental protection and it is appropriate that this event is part of that effort.

Finally, I want to seek your help in supporting the river environment in the coming year. While unconfirmed, I imagine that one of the reasons for the creation of the River Honoring event was the threat to the Flathead River posed by potential coal mining in the Canadian Flathead, twenty years ago. We are faced with the same threat again today. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are engaged in the British Columbia environmental review process with the State of Montana over the proposed coal mining activities in the upper reaches of the Flathead Basin, located in Canada. During the coming months please find a way to express your support for protection of our precious Flathead River.



NEW PERMIT YEAR

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation announce the availability of non-tribal member hunting, fishing and recreation regulations for the 2006-2007 permit season. The new permit year begins March 1, 2006.

"Few changes have been recommended to the existing regulations, according to Jennifer Friedlander, Tribal Permits Agent. Following public comment the Tribal Council and Montana FW&P reviewed and adopted a final policy that became the March 2006 to Feb 2007 Fishing, Bird Hunting, and Recreation Regulations".

According to Friedlander, the Tribe's continue implementation of the State Automated Licensing System. Again this year, the Tribes will offer the new permit for sale on the internet at <http://dev.discoveringmontana.com/elicenseales>

Jennifer Friedlander, Tribal Permits Agent, said the Natural Resources Department will have 2006 Fishing, Bird Hunting and Recreation licenses available on March 1, 2006. Permits are also available at local vendors.

Reservation permits may be purchased at the Natural Resources Department main office in downtown Polson. Contact Jennifer Friedlander, Tribal Permit Agent, at 883-2888 if you have questions regarding purchasing new permits.

You can view the Regulations at the following link. http://www.cskt.org/tr/nrd_nonmemregs.htm



WOOD TICKS

Getting out into the woods to hike in the spring can be great fun. Unfortunately, it only takes one wood tick to give you the heebie geebies and leave you feeling crawly all the rest of the day. Here are some common sense and effective ways to enjoy your time outdoors and remain wood tick-free.

Wood ticks are dark colored arachnids found in wooded areas, brush, and fields. Ticks feed on the blood of animals and humans. Most ticks are relatively harmless, though several types are carriers of diseases like Lyme Disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. There are many ways to prevent a wood tick bite and limit your exposure to ticks in general. Follow these guidelines for a safe outdoor experience:

- When hiking in heavily wooded areas, stay on paths and walk down the middle of trails to avoid rubbing against bushes and picking up waiting ticks.
- Wear light colored clothing, which will make it easier to spot a tick. Wear shirts and sweatshirts with tight collars and cuffs.
- When spending extended periods outdoors, check yourself often for ticks. Many ticks can be captured before biting. Ticks tend to travel toward areas of warmth, such as the scalp, skin folds and under arm pits.
- Check outdoor dogs and cats for ticks, too. It is not uncommon for a tick to crawl off an animal and on to you. Dogs and cats should wear flea and tick collars during heavy tick seasons.
- Insect repellents, especially those containing 100% DEET, are the most effective means of protecting yourself against tick bites. Apply liberally before dressing and reapply after exposure to water.
- Trim back large bushes near homes, which are popular areas for all types of ticks from Spring-Autumn.

How to remove a tick

The goal of tick removal is to get rid of the live insect in one piece. While the squeamish at heart may be tempted to give the little bugger a quick yank and be done with it, leaving parts of the tick embedded in your flesh will most likely cause an infection. With patience in mind, follow these simple steps:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Sterilize a pair of tweezers. This can be done with rubbing alcohol and a cotton swab or by running a lit match beneath them.
3. Grab the tick as close to your skin's surface as possible and pull slowly. Do not jerk! You want the tick to help you, by backing out as you're pulling. If the tick does not back out on its own, stop pulling, and add a few drops of rubbing alcohol, cooking oil, or petroleum jelly to the surface of the skin. The added moisture will begin to drown the tick, causing him to back out.
4. Wait. Within five to ten minutes, the tick should begin to loosen its hold.
5. Pull again. Using the tweezers again, gently pull the tick from your skin.
6. Examine the tick. Make sure you both remove the head and body of the tick. If you suspect the tick is a disease carrier, preserve the tick in a ziplock bag for examination by your physician.
7. Cleansing. Once the tick is out, wash the skin area with antibacterial soap or swab affected area with an antiseptic. Any itching, rash or irritation can be treated with hydrocortisone or antiseptic creams.

For more information about wood ticks on the Reservation contact Germaine White, Information and Education Specialist at 675-2700 ext 7299



SPRING BEARS

Dale Becker, Tribal Wildlife Program Manager, reminds the public that springtime on the Flathead Reservation, with its warmer temperatures and new vegetation is accompanied by an increase in bear activity. Soon after bears emerge from their dens they search for winter killed wildlife and succulent vegetation, the primary sources of much-needed food during spring months for bears.

Both black and grizzly bears emerge from their den sites after spending four to six months hibernating. Females with cubs are particularly dangerous when they venture from their dens with newborns. Once bears become active in the spring, they will begin their search for food and bears aggressively protect food sources. Keep alert for any signs of bears, make your presence known, and keep a safe distance from all bears that are observed while recreating outdoors. Be alert for signs of bear activity such as evidence of feeding on a carcass, tracks, trampled vegetation, or scat. Do not approach bears under any circumstances.

Becker reminds recreationists that bears generally travel through heavy tree and brush cover along stream and wetland habitats, but may also be found in open fields and shrub thickets. The public should be cautious when entering dense cover that limits visibility to avoid surprising a bear.

Bears are readily drawn by scent of food items, garbage, pet foods, gardens, fruit trees, birdseed, hummingbird feeders and other attractants, often resulting in bear and human conflicts. Whenever someone leaves food or attractants available for bears, they create situations that invite bears to become problem bears, which could ultimately endanger someone or cause the bear's demise.

Tribal wildlife managers work to protect bear populations through public information, education and management of human bear conflicts -- such as enforcement of regulations and/or relocation of problem bears.

According to Becker, "one key aspect of the public education program is providing the public with information on ways to eliminate bear attractants". To receive information on eliminating bear attractants and confrontations, please call the Tribal Wildlife Management Program at (406) 883-2888.

If a grizzly bear is observed, please report any grizzly bear observations to the Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office at (406) 883-2888, or to Tribal Law & Order Dispatch at (406) 675-4700. Report black bear conflicts or problems to a Conservation Officer or Tribal Dispatch. When calling regarding a bear, always tell Tribal Dispatch you are calling about a bear problem or conflict.



WILDLIFE BABIES

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SNOW COURSE MEASUREMENTS

The Tribal Water Management Program, in the Natural Resources Department has been monitoring snow courses in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through an agreement that between both agencies entered into on October 20, 1988.

The initial agreement provided for the management of seven snow measurement sites on the Flathead Indian Reservation with the general focus to upgrade the manual sites to SNOTEL telemetry. SNOTEL telemetry provides real time data to all managers that depend on the information. Tribal staff also assist the NRCS with measuring ten sites adjacent to the Reservation. Since the initiation of the agreement all but two sites on the Reservation have been upgraded to SNOTEL.

The Water Management staff consists of a Hydrologist, Chief of Field Operations, and three Hydrologic Technicians, provide staff for the field measurements. NRCS and Flathead Agency Irrigation Division staff provide assistance as required. Two Reservation sites and one located north of the Reservation are reached by snowmobile. The remainder of the sites are reached by helicopter.

Annual maintenance is done during the summer months by NRCS staff. These visits to the sites are coordinated with the Tribes through the Wildlife Management Program, Wildland Recreation Program and the Conservation (Game Wardens) Program.

The collected information is used for stream flow forecasting for irrigation and fisheries management, forecasting for reservoir and lake management, determining and predicting flood flows and timing, fire planning and wildlife management.