



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

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Meeting Date: Dec. 14, 2023

Agenda Item: 2024–2025 Flathead Indian Reservation Non-Member Fishing and Bird Hunting Regulations

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 Minutes

Background: The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and the State of Montana have a cooperative management agreement on the Flathead Indian Reservation (created under MCA 87-1-228 and through a subsequent state-tribal agreement) that provides for presentation and approval of coordinated tribal regulations and season frameworks for fishing and bird hunting regulations to the Fish and Wildlife Commission. Tribal recommendations are presented to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council, which votes on tentative proposals and opens them to general public review and comment. The council then meets for final adoption. The proposals are also presented to the joint Flathead Reservation Fish and Wildlife Board for endorsement. Commission approval is subject to final tribal council approval. The tribe is proposing several regulation changes to the fishing and bird hunting regulations for non-members for the 2024–2025 regulation year, which spans March 1, 2024, through Feb. 28, 2025.

Public Involvement Process and Results: The CSKT Natural Resources Department posted a 30-day public notice through Aug. 28, 2023, and hosted a public hearing on Aug. 28, 2023, to collect public comment. No comment was received. The joint Flathead Reservation Fish and Wildlife Board endorsed the proposed regulations at their July meeting. The tribal council adopted the proposed regulations as final on Sept. 26, 2023. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council and the joint Flathead Reservation Fish and Wildlife Board processes include public comment opportunity as well. For more information, visit <http://www.csktnrd.org>. See the attached document for proposed changes.

Alternatives and Analysis: Approval of the 2024–2025 Flathead Indian Reservation non-member fish and bird hunting regulations allow department wardens to enforce these regulations on tribal lands. Failing to approve the regulations would restrict department enforcement capabilities.

Alternative A: The commission may choose to approve the Flathead Indian Reservation non-member fish and bird hunting regulations as presented.

Alternative B: The commission may choose not to approve the Flathead Indian Reservation non-member fish and bird hunting regulations.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale: The department recommends the commission approves the 2024–2025 Flathead Indian Reservation non-member fishing and bird hunting regulations, which will allow department wardens to enforce the bird hunting and fishing regulations for non-members on the Flathead Indian Reservation.

Proposed Motion: I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission approve the 2024-2025 Flathead Indian Reservation non-member fishing and bird hunting regulations as presented.