

CSKT Fish Consumption Advisory Clark Fork - Bitterroot - Blackfoot Rivers



MARY PRICE – CSKT

CHRIS STARK - CSKT

Article III Hellgate
Treaty of July 16,
1855, 12 Stat. 975

“the exclusive right of
taking fish in all the
streams running
through or bordering
said reservation,”...

“also the right of
taking fish at all usual
and accustomed
places, in common
with the citizens of
the Territory” ...



Hellgate Treaty Negotiations, *Cimé* (Council Grove), July 1855.
Gustavus Sobott drawing, courtesy National Anthropological Archives,
Smithsonian Institution.

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Communications Office
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Attention Tribal Fishers
Fish Consumption Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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June 24, 2025

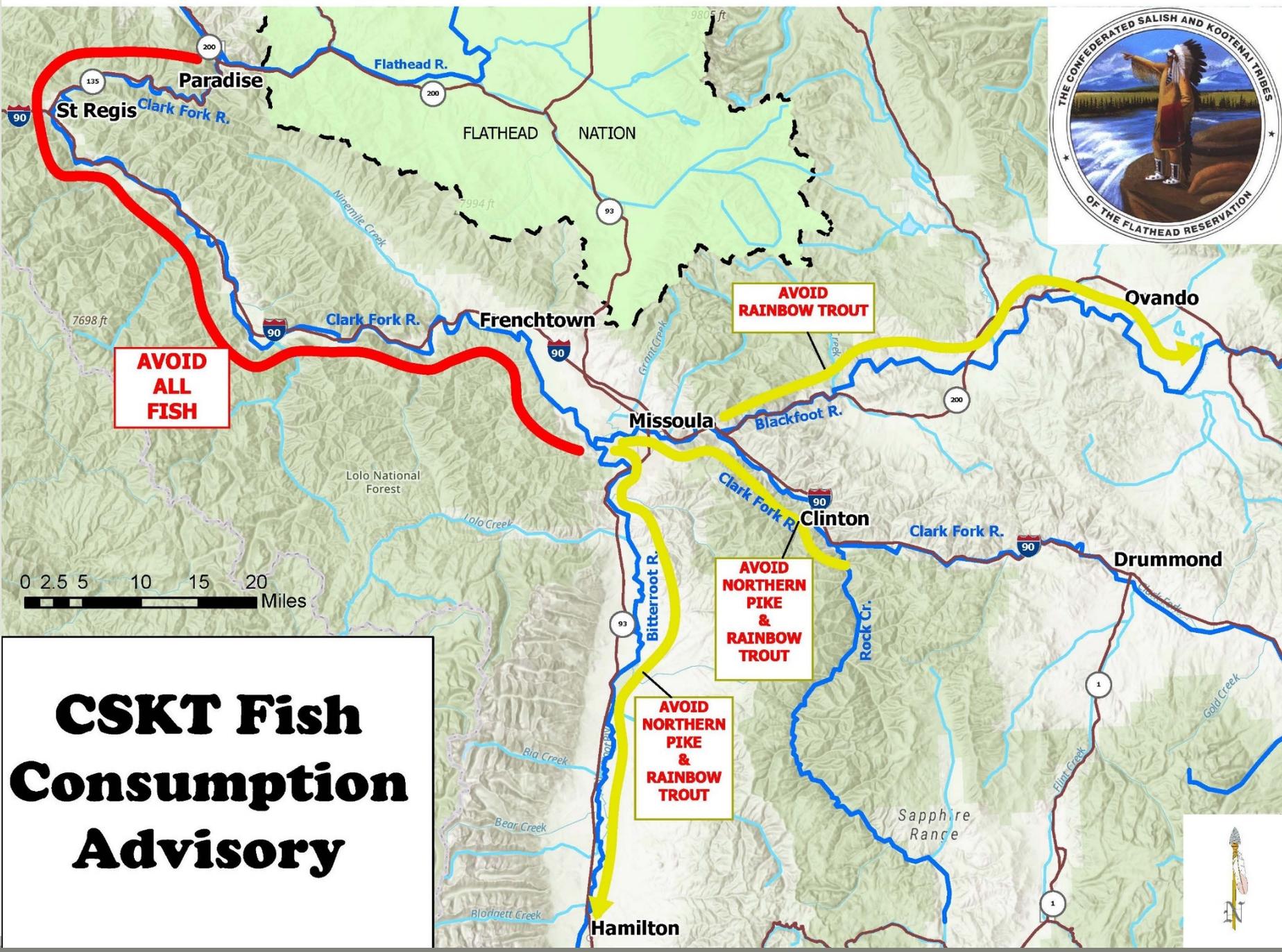
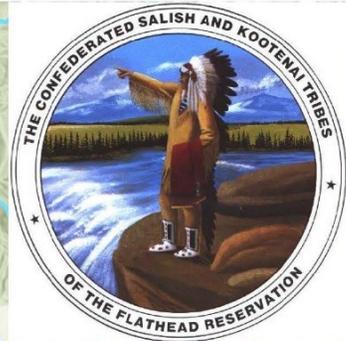
PABLO, MT – The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are advising all Tribal members to avoid consuming all species and sizes of fish harvested from the lower Clark Fork River from the Bitterroot River near Missoula to the Flathead River near Paradise. Recent testing has confirmed the presence of Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), dioxins, and furans in fish at levels that are unsafe for consumption by Tribal peoples.

It is also advisable to avoid consuming rainbow trout and northern pike harvested from the Bitterroot River and the upper Clark Fork River above the Bitterroot River to Rock Creek, and, to avoid consuming rainbow trout from the Blackfoot River.

PCBs, dioxins, and furans build up in fish tissue over time through water, sediment and the aquatic food web. These contaminants pose a health risk to all fish consumers, and an even greater health risk to the most sensitive members of the Tribal population including women of child bearing age, pregnant nursing women, and young children.

These contaminants have been linked to negative health effects in the immune, and nervous systems and may be associated with birth defects. Dietary exposure to PCBs is linked to development problems in children whose mothers were exposed to PCBs before becoming pregnant. PCBs and dioxins are classified as probable and definite human carcinogens, respectively. Dietary practices are the most important source of exposure to PCBs, dioxins and furans.

- PCBs, dioxins, furans
- Clark Fork River
- Bitterroot River
- Blackfoot River



CSKT Fish Consumption Advisory

AVOID ALL FISH

AVOID RAINBOW TROUT

AVOID NORTHERN PIKE & RAINBOW TROUT

AVOID NORTHERN PIKE & RAINBOW TROUT

0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles



CSKT Tribal Fisher Exposure Model

Receptor Population	Age Group	Exposure Pathways
CSKT Subsistence Fisher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young Child (0-6 years)• Older Child (6-16 years)• Adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ingestion of resident trout and other freshwater finfish and shellfish.• Ingestion of wildlife and plants.• Non-consumptive uses of fish, wildlife or plants.• Incidental Ingestion of surface soil, sediment & surface water• Dermal contact to surface soil, sediment & surface water

Fish Consumption Rates

EPA Human Health Risk Assessment for Smurfit Site OU3

Recreational Fisher

North Dakota (USEPA 2011) 12 g/day (6 g/day child)

Tribal Fisher

Mean g/day

Percentiles g/day

50%	90%	95%
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Nez Perce Tribe (EPA 2016)

National Cancer Institute

98.4

55.2

239

345

Shoshone-Bannock Tribe (EPA 2016)

National Cancer Institute

23.3 (11.5 child)

10.2

61.5

92.6

EPA Guidance for Assessing Chemical Contaminant Data for Use in Fish Consumption Advisories

Recreational Fisher

17.5 g/day

Tribal Fisher

142.4 g/day

EPA Final HHRA Smurfit OU3 Tribal Fisher Risk

Fish Sampling

- 2019 Fish Samples (MFWP & EPA)
- Rainbow Trout & Northern Pike
- Fillets (w/skin, belly flap)
& Carcass
- CFR Missoula to Saint Regis & Bitterroot River
- Dioxins, Furans, PCBs



Risk Estimate

- Unacceptable risk from consuming fillets or whole-body fish - northern pike or rainbow trout
- TEQ risks primarily driven by coplanar PCBs
- Unacceptable cumulative risks driven by fish consumption

EPA **Guidance for Assessing
Chemical Contaminant Data
for Use in Fish Advisories**

**Volume 2
Risk Assessment and Fish
Consumption Limits
Third Edition**



Montana Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines



Photo: Steve Fisher

What you need to know about Mercury, PCBs, and other contaminants when fishing in Montana.

This guide provides information about how to enjoy healthy meals from wild fish caught in Montana. It provides specific scientific data about the water bodies which have been tested, plus more general information for areas that have not yet been tested.



- For information on collection and laboratory testing of fish from Montana waters, call MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks at 406-444-2449.
- For information on the health risks of eating fish, call MT Health & Human Services 406-444-2837 or email: HHSFCS@mt.gov.
- This on-line version of the brochure will be updated as new data is gathered: fwp.mt.gov/fishing

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Quantifying Toxins to Inform Fish Consumption and Identify Sources of Pollutants



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Columbia River

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Columbia River Basin Restoration Funding Assistance Program

The Columbia River Basin Restoration Funding Assistance Program is a competitive grant program for environmental protection and restoration programs throughout the Columbia River Basin. The grant program offers funding assistance to eligible entities on a competitive basis. See below to learn more [about the program](#) and how it was established.

New Funding Opportunities

- [Tribal Government Request for Applications](#) due January 31, 2023.
- [Toxic Reduction Lead Request for Applications](#) due March 13, 2023.

- Columbia River Basin Restoration Funding Assistance Program (EPA)
- Project Partners: Montana Trout Unlimited, Trustees, Clark Fork Coalition, FWP, DEQ, NRDP, CAG, Missoula County Water Quality and the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
- Approximate amount \$300,000 (\$220,000 grant, \$80,000 cost share)