



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Elk Refuge

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NATIONAL ELK REFUGE RENEWS AGREEMENT WITH SHOSHONE-BANNOCK TRIBES

Refuge Manager Steve Kallin announced that the Shoshone-Bannock tribes have renewed an agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a limited ceremonial bison hunt on the National Elk Refuge this spring. The Shoshone-Bannock tribes, who were historically associated with the Jackson Hole area, will be allowed to harvest up to three bison as part of a traditional ceremonial activity. This activity will be closely coordinated with National Elk Refuge staff and is tentatively scheduled for April 29-30, 2009.

The tribes participated in a ceremonial hunt on the refuge in May 2008, the first since the activity was requested in 2005 during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process of the Bison and Elk Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policy encourages reasonable access to Service-managed lands for Native American ceremonial activities.

The ceremony will be specific to bison and does not extend to other wildlife species. The use of off-road vehicles will be prohibited, a restriction that applies during all other refuge hunting seasons in order to protect habitat.

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