

**State Tribal Relations Committee Meeting (STRC)**  
**Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)**

**April 28, 2014**

Discussion Document

**Challenge:**

The CSKT Tribes are concerned about the lack of distribution of tax funds generated by the Federal Aid in Sport Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson) and the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson, Wallop-Breaux), also referred to as the Federal Aid Program, to Federally recognized Indian Tribes.

As you are well aware, this country's Indian Reservations contain over 56 million acres of land (2% of U.S. land base) with vast array of diverse fish, wildlife and outdoor recreation resources. Although the various Tribes oversee and are responsible for management of these important resources and the funding formula for the Federal Aid Program can count tribal lands, waters, recreationists and populations for returning the federal excise tax dollars to each state, **the tribes are not receiving these very important funds.** Indian people pay the taxes along with non-Indian reservation residents and visitors and tribal resources and management efforts are utilized, but we do not derive the same returns from the Federal Aid Program as the states and even territories do.

As it stands, there are valuable recreational areas on each reservation in Montana. The Tribes find themselves in the position of having resources counted for federal funding and then not being eligible to receive the funding.

Our goal is that future reservation residents and visitors engaged in outdoor recreation and subsistence activities can realize that their federal excise tax dollars are being returned to the tribal fish and wildlife resource management where they hunt, fish and recreate. This is the appropriate time for congress to include Indian Tribes into these federal acts and provide direct federal funding opportunities to our Montana Indian Reservations.

**Proposed Solution:**

1. The CSKT are requesting support for a Governmental Accountability Office (GAO) audit/report of the equitable distribution of the federal excise tax dollars to Federally recognized Indian Tribes for the Federal Aid in Sport Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson) and the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson, Wallop-Breaux).
2. Additional support is requested during the reauthorization or amendment of the Federal Aid Program to include Indian Tribes with the same opportunities and the states and territories.

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**Issue Follow up:**