

THE ITKN CONNECTION

Leadership in Action

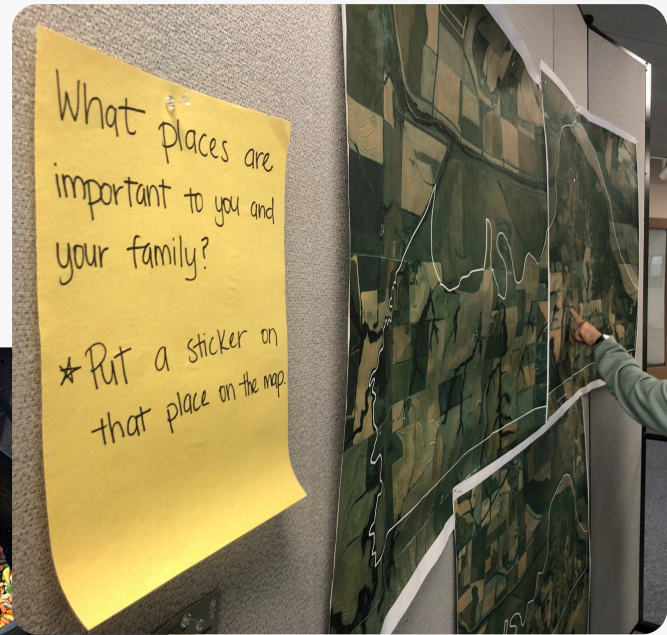
The Climate Resilience Program and Powwow Committee Host Spring Feast

As the first spring thunders rolled in and the season begins to shift, the Climate Resilience Team and Powwow Committee hosted a gathering centered on plants that hold meaning for us as loway people. loway community members shared stories about these plants and their connections to place, culture, and memory.

Attendees made marks on a map of the reservation to identify where these plants currently grow or once did, while sharing the stories tied to those locations. This activity helped capture both ecological knowledge and cultural history.

A meal was shared of traditional foods that included corn, beans, squash, wild rice, elk, and buffalo and was enjoyed alongside members of the Powwow Committee and the broader loway community. Elder, Reuben Kent, opened and blessed the space making a nod to the transition of leadership shift from Bear Clan to the Buffalo Clan.

For the Climate Resilience team, collecting and sharing these plant stories continues to inform how they do things; grounding their efforts in cultural knowledge, guiding their purpose, and shaping how they approach and carry out their work.



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A Clearer Path for Our People

Our heritage teaches us that our daily actions must support a stable future. With this in mind, ITKN has refreshed our Administration careers page to display only timely, open positions. This isn't just a website update; it's a commitment to a more encouraging employment culture. Under the guidance of our new HR Director, we are aligning our hiring visuals with our 7-generation vision—ensuring that every interaction with our tribal government is accurate, respectful, and focused on the growth of the Báxoje community. - Donell Zerkel

Missouri River Fish Study: What the Data Shows

Biopsy samples were collected from fish in the Missouri River near White Cloud during the most recent field sampling event on October 8, 2025. These data report mercury concentrations for each sample in several formats. Of the 10 biopsy samples analyzed for mercury, 2 had mercury concentrations above the EPA's recommended criterion of 0.3 mg/kg for human consumption. These two samples were from freshwater drum measuring 24.1 inches (612 mm) in length and weighing 6.2 pounds (2,730 g), and a flathead catfish measuring 24 inches/610mm in length and weighing 6.2lbs, with mercury concentrations of 0.613 mg/kg and 0.428 mg/kg, respectively.

The other 8 fish sampled all had mercury

concentrations below the EPA's recommended criterion. Although these results do not mean the water-body should not be fished, they do suggest caution regarding the amount and frequency of fish consumption from this site, particularly if larger predatory fish, such as flathead catfish and freshwater drum, are being eaten.

Because mercury occurs in at least trace amounts in most game fish from natural surface waters, the EPA recommends using discretion regarding how often fish are consumed from any source, whether marine or freshwater, including store-bought fish.

Pregnant women or women expecting pregnancy should not be eating extensive amounts of fish from our waters for their safety.

EPA guidance:
<https://www.epa.gov/mercury/guidelines-eating-fish-contain-mercury>



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Foraging Regulations

The Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska continues to support the responsible use and protection of natural resources through its Fish and Wildlife Codes, including regulations related to foraging.

These codes are developed by the Fish and Wildlife Department and reviewed by the Fish and Wildlife Board, which includes Tribal citizens. This ensures decisions are made alongside the community and reflect Tribal knowledge and values.

Recent questions have highlighted the need for clarity around foraging. With more people heading outdoors, it is important to understand who is permitted to forage on Tribal lands.

Under current Tribal Fish and Wildlife Codes, non-Native individuals who do not reside on the Reservation are not permitted to forage on Tribal-owned lands. Native community members, including Tribal citizens who live outside of Reservation boundaries, are allowed to

forage on Tribal lands. Non-Native individuals who reside on the Reservation and are married to a Tribal citizen will need to go to the Fish and Wildlife Department to receive a permit to forage.

These regulations do not apply to privately owned land. Foraging on private property is determined by the landowner and should only take place with permission.

By following these guidelines, we help protect and preserve natural resources for future generations. Full Fish and Wildlife Codes are available on the Tribal website under Government > Fish and Wildlife > Fish and Wildlife Codes.

Groundbreaking Ceremony for Campbell Housing Complex

Wednesday, April 15, 2026

1:30 p.m. Groundbreaking (Building Site - Senor homes on Thrasher Rd.)



Campbell Housing Complex



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CERNA EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS

Cerna, the Center of Excellence for Regenerative Native Agriculture, is actively seeking livestock and row crop producers who are working to advance market partnerships within their operations. Grant funding is available to support producers in building and scaling these opportunities.

Producers interested in expanding market access and leveraging available funding are encouraged to connect with Cerna to learn more.

ITKN RECEIVES \$1 MILLION GRANT FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

ITKN continues to prioritize infrastructure enhancements aimed at improving water quality, system reliability, and long-term sustainability for the community.

ITKN extends its sincere gratitude to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) for their generous \$1,000,000 infrastructure grant. This funding will support critical water system improvements on the reservation, creating a lasting impact for generations to come.



**We honor our past while
building a healthy
future - thank you for
staying connected.**

General Council Dates:

**May 30, 2026
August 1, 2026
October 17, 2026**

Upcoming Event Dates:

**April 11, 2026 - Demo Derby
April 18, 2026 - Car Show
April 30 - May 3, 2026 City of
White Cloud Flea Market
June 27, 2026 - Rodeo**