

The Kalispel Tribe of Indian's Contemporary Usage of Traditional Foodways

By

Alexander Michael Hilborn

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Abstract Body

Native American traditional foodways serve as one of the most important resources for indigenous communities because these resources provide a variety of non-physical cultural assets and health benefits to Native groups through the medium of food. The demolition of North America's foodways through colonization has had adverse effects on indigenous communities ranging from chronic diseases to a breakdown of cultural practices and societal cohesion. This study looks to understand how the people of the Kalispel Tribe interact with their traditional foodways through a series of survey questions and ethnographic interviews to ascertain the importance of traditional food resources to a tribe in a modern context. The Kalispel Tribe has a reservation on the Pend Oreille River and consists of 457 enrolled members and additional unenrolled community members. The survey generated 25 responses and three informants provided ethnographic interviews. Like many tribes, the traditional foods of the Kalispel remain a key part of tribal life and have associated meanings and values that relate to the biological, societal, and cultural health of the community. Insuring the viability of traditional foodways and their beneficial properties represents a way for the Kalispel and other indigenous communities to combat food insecurity and practice self-determination through food sovereignty.

Key Words: Traditional foodways, indigenous food security, Native American food sovereignty.

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presented on November 20, 2014.

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I understand that my project will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University, University Honors College. My signature below authorizes release of my project to any reader upon request.

Alexander Michael Hilborn

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Dedication:

To my late father, Michael Hilborn, for supporting my desire to learn and for always believing in my ability to achieve my dreams.

The Kalispel Tribe of Indian's Contemporary Usage of Traditional Foodways

Introduction:

An evaluation of the current condition and usage of the Kalispel Tribe's Traditional foodways serves an important part in understanding how the historical reduction of an intimately entwined resource has modern impacts on the culture, health and social cohesion of a community and provides a general example of the effects of colonization on Native communities indigenous resources. Since the concept of a foodway incorporates all aspects of a community's relationship with food, ranging from physically acquiring, preparing, and eating food all the way to the folkloric and socio-cultural notions people develop about what they eat, looking at the Kalispel Tribe's foodway usage provides a broad spectrum look into tribal life. The examination of the viability of traditional foodways remains especially vital to Native communities because such foodways represent significant multipurpose resources for tribes to help these communities successfully express their cultural and societal autonomy in a healthy manner. In order to determine how the Kalispel tribe interacts with its foodways and the importance that these resources play in community members lives, I distributed a survey to the community to gather information from the group about their thoughts, feelings, and actions relating to traditional Kalispel foods. Ethnographic interviews with key informants of the community helped to further provide context to the survey results and illustrate aspects of traditional foodway interaction not expressed in the survey responses.

Tribal History:

The Kalispel Tribe of Indians belongs to a group of tribes linguistically and culturally referred to as Interior Salish tribes (Carriker 1973: 3). Other tribes in this group include tribes like the Flathead, the Spokane, the Coeur d' Alene, and the Pend Oreille (Carriker 1973: 3). The Kalispel people's traditional homelands before contact with the white society ranged from the plains east of the Rocky Mountains in present day Montana all the way to the areas surrounding the Pend Oreille River Valley in present day Washington (Carriker 1973: 3-4). The tribe's traditional homeland range covers an estimated four million acres in territory (Carriker 1973: 4). This area of land provided the Kalispel with a variety and abundance of species with which to hunt, fish and gather for food and other resources (Carriker 1973: 6).

Many neighboring tribes referred to the Kalispel as the "Camas People", due to the importance of the root as the primary or first food to the tribe (Carriker 1973: 14). The Kalispel homelands also provided its people with a variety of other roots, berries and plant materials to eat (Carriker 1973: 14). The Kalispels hunted for animals such as deer, elk, moose, cougar, rabbit, bear, goat, beaver, and fowl (Carriker 1973: 14-15). The Kalispel people fished for and eat many fish species, primarily of the trout variety, although they did visit neighboring tribe's lands to fish for salmon (Carriker 1973: 19). These resources formed the basis on which the Kalispel people built a democratic society, with unique social-cultural customs, consisting of sub-bands under a central chief (Carriker 1973: 6). The Kalispel got along historically with their neighbors and seldom engaged in conflict over resources or other matters (Carriker 1973: 19-20). The harsh seasonality of the upper United States and Canada led the Kalispel people to develop a unique knowledge and material culture about how to interact with their indigenous food sources (Carriker 1973: 14).

The Kalispel first made contact with white men who entered the Pend Oreille region around 1809 (Carriker 1973: 1). In the early 1840's Catholic priests began to work amongst the tribe in order to convert its members to their faith (Carriker 1973: 24). Noting winter starvation and malnutrition amongst the Kalispel people during their transition to a more sedentary life style, the Jesuit priests attempted to introduce the tribe to agriculture, but early efforts failed due to a lack of appropriate farming land (Carriker 1973: 29-31). By 1853 the Kalispel did have farmlands functioning that yielded wheat, barley, onions, cabbage, parsnips, peas, beets, carrots, and potatoes (Carriker 1973: 35). Increased sedentary habitation, however, had begun to deplete game resources such as deer (Carriker 1973: 35). When the Jesuit priest finally moved the Kalispel mission to a new location to better serve other tribes, the Upper Kalispel band went and joined the Flatheads on their reservation in Montana, but the Lower Kalispel stayed put at their camp in the Pend Oreille valley (Carriker 1973: 36-38).

Refusal to leave their traditional lands and a lack of desire to go to war left the Kalispel with no treaty rights entering the 1860s (Carriker 1973: 42). Settlers, miners, traders, and loggers increasingly started to encroach upon Kalispel lands, diminishing the tribe's territories, even though little interaction occurred between the groups (Carriker 1973: 44). The Kalispel continued gardening and animal husbandry during this time period, but mostly still subsisted off of fishing and hunting (Carriker 1973: 49).

In the late 1880s, increased white traffic on Kalispel lands, inspired by the North Pacific Railroad's attempts to settle the area, brought tensions over tribal land holdings to the forefront (Carriker 1973: 53). Following negotiations with the Northwest Indian Commission about one-third of the tribe made a deal to move to the Flathead reservation in Montana in return for compensation, while the majority of the tribe lead by Chief Masselow decided to stay unprotected by the government in their ancestral village (Carriker 1973: 61-63). Pressure from

settlers then forced the smaller group to abandon the western bank of their settlement area and its resources in favor of the eastern side (Carriker 1973: 63-64).

By 1910, Chief Masselow sought aid from Jesuit priests at Gonzaga College to aid his disenfranchised, poverty stricken, and legally homeless people, because the church had not sent someone to see the Kalispels in 25 years (Carriker 1973: 76). The college began to send missionaries to teach the Kalispel how to assimilate into white society (Carriker 1973: 78-79).

President Wilson, by Executive Order, set aside 4,629 acres to serve as the Kalispel reservation on March 24, 1914 (Carriker 1973: 80). This order made the Kalispel an officially recognized tribe by the Executive branch United States government under the directive of the country's President. Figure 1 shows the position of the tribe's reservation in Washington. Figure 2 shows the eight and one-half mile by one-half mile wide reservation that sits on the Pend Oreille River opposite the towns of Usk and Cusick, WA. (Carriker 1973: 80). The tribe had been reduced to one-tenth its pre-contact population number (Carriker 1973: 80). For the next four decades the Kalispel lived in relative isolation, poverty, hunger on their reservation, barred from participating in the white world's economy and without sufficient resources and land to live their pre-reservation lifestyle (Carriker 1973: 81).



Figure 1.

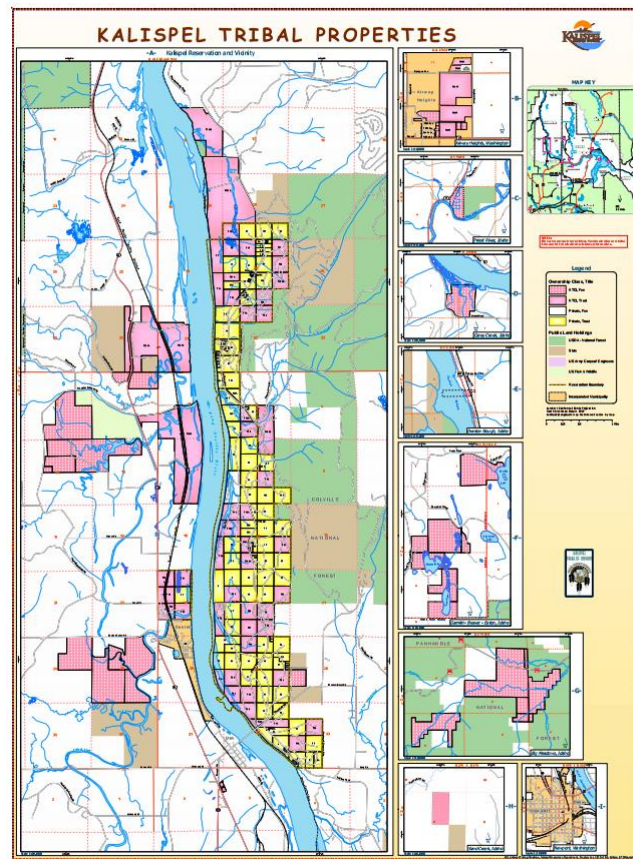


Figure 2.

Starting in 1946 the Kalispel began to seek reparations from the government for wrongs done to the tribe (Carricker 1973: 85). Through the mid to late 1900's, the tribe won a few legal battles and it began to put reparation funds to use building infrastructure and programs to help improve the quality of life for its members (Carricker 1973: 92-101). In 2000, the Kalispel tribe opened up an off reservation casino on 40 acres in Airway Heights, WA so that revenue from gaming could further help to meet the needs of its membership (The Kalispel Tribe of Indians 2014). The Kalispel tribe currently runs language, culture, educational, vocational training, health, and other social programs to enrich the lives of its members (The Kalispel Tribe of Indians 2014). The tribe's natural resource department also works to secure and protect the

landholdings for the tribe so that its membership may continue to make use of their traditional foodway and other material resources (The Kalispel Tribe of Indians 2014).

According to tribe's Finance Enrollment Officer, as of mid-October 2014, the Kalispel tribe has 457 enrolled members (Apyrl Hilborn-Boley, personal communication). The tribe has 159 members under the aged of 17 and 258 members 18 to 54. The tribe also has 40 elder members over the age of 55. Approximately one-third of the membership lives on the reservation and another third live within close proximity (The Kalispel Tribe of Indians 2014).

Literature review:

According to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, indigenous communities develop unique traditional knowledge systems about their local environment and its resources that influence the community's stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, cultural values, beliefs, rituals, community laws (Fitzmaurice 2008). Traditional knowledge closely relates to the ecology of a given community and derives primarily from personal experience and interaction (Fitzmaurice 2008). In this way, the traditional foods eaten by indigenous peoples often develop and contain significant cultural meaning, and these characteristics help to establish the unique sense of community and identity found in many groups that inhabited the American continent (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 421). A deep knowledge of traditional foodways also helps tribal communities to mitigate the sporadic and seasonal nature of wild food resources through social practice that prevent starvation and societal breakdown during leaner harvest times (Johnsen 2009).

Traditional knowledge also serves as a present way of looking at how indigenous peoples can interact with their environment in accordance with ancestors past behaviors in contrast to non-traditional methods introduced through globalization (Fitzmaurice 2008). This knowledge in turn provides indigenous peoples with vital knowledge relating to health, acquiring food, and managing resources (Fitzmaurice 2008). Traditional knowledge functions as a form of community intellectual property and many Natives see the appropriation of such knowledge by outsiders for commercial use as a clear violation of their rights (Fitzmaurice 2008).

Native American communities often engage in reciprocity networks that help to redistribute wealth in a more egalitarian manner (Johnsen 2009). This system of giving and receiving of abundant goods not only helps to insure the food security of neighboring communities, but also insures cooperation and peace amongst these groups (Johnsen 2009).

The social regulations created by this system of mutual obligation lead to a general stabilization in a region that helps to support society and culture building (Johnsen 2009).

Unfortunately, the colonization of North America has led to the disruption of many traditional food systems, along with the food security and sense of community that come with these resources (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996). A change in lifestyle and the destruction of traditional food systems has resulted in historical food insecurity amongst Native American populations (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996.) A history of discrimination has also put many Native Americans at a disadvantage when it comes to properly accessing the modern food system as an alternative to their traditional foodways (Jernigan 2011). Poverty further contributes to food insecurity amongst this demographic (Jernigan 2011). The food provided to indigenous peoples through government programs often lacks sufficient healthy nutrient content and instead contains high amounts of salt, fats and sugars (Jernigan 2011). Many Natives must rely on unhealthy processed foods to make up a large amount of their diet, because the food serves as a cheaper way to eat than healthier options (Jernigan 2011). All of these factors combine to create a situation where resource lacking Native Americans often have very little choice over the kind of food that they can access (Jernigan 2011). For this reason, many indigenous peoples suffer some of the highest rates of food insecurity in American (Jernigan 2011).

Native American food insecurity has had severe health and social repercussions for the wellbeing of this demographic since traditional foods often play a part in social regulation and medical practices (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 421). The current diet that most Americans eat greatly differs from the traditional hunter-gatherer diet that our ancestors evolved to survive on, even though evolutionarily speaking, people have not evolved radically enough to make our new diet healthy for our bodies (Armelagos 2010). The discordance between our society's current food system and the way we evolved to process food helps to explain many of the

chronic degenerative diseases that we find in modern society (Armstrong 2010). Lacking traditional food resources, many native communities have modified their traditional cuisines to incorporate less healthy ingredients and dishes (Kittler et. al. 2011: 117). In the process, these communities have lost the key knowledge needed to make a diet out of traditional foods and have suffered perverse health effects in accordance with the change (Kittler et. al. 2011: 117). Since colonization and a change in diet away from a primarily hunter-gatherer lifestyle, the America's indigenous populations have seen a rise in their rates of diabetes, obesity, cancer, anemia, osteoporosis and dental decay (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 433). Alcoholism and depression have also become major issues amongst this demographic due to changing cultural practices (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 433). Community cohesion and cultural identity have also diminished due to foods losing their traditional cultural meanings (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 434). When Natives do wish to eat a more traditional diet however, they often encounter barriers such as the high cost of returning resources to a viable state for consumption again or social pressures that make it difficult to fully utilize traditional resources (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 422).

In order to improve food security amongst indigenous peoples, groups like the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance have started to view the concept of self-determination under the principles of sovereignty as a means to properly feed people and return communities to a more traditional diet (NAFSA 2013). Food sovereignty goes beyond food security in that it emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to their traditional foods and prioritizes the maintenance and control of foodways in the expression and exercising of rights (NAFSA 2013). The Alliance sees Natives exercising food sovereignty as a means for indigenous peoples to reassert their control over economic, cultural, and environmental assets (NAFSA 2013). NAFSA has adopted the Traditional Plants and Foods Program of Northwest Indian College in order to

define food sovereignty in such a way that it also promotes food sustainability in Native communities (NAFSA 2013).

For food sovereignty to promote food security, the Northwest Indian College says that communities must have access to culturally appropriate and healthy foods that they cultivate in a manner that promotes their longevity and continued use (NIC 2014). All members of a community must also have access to food resources and the growers of food should receive fair compensation for their products and labors according to the guidelines (NIC 2014). Finally, the program sees tribes exercising their treaty rights to secure the above measures as a key part of practicing sustainable food sovereignty (NIC 2014). Natives must periodically practice their treaty rights in order to make sure they stay valid, so the organization says it remains vital for Natives to continue to hunt, fish and gather if they want to maintain unimpeded access to these nutritious and natural resources (NIC 2014). The organization even goes as far as to claim that government assistance programs serve as attempts to undermine Native food sovereignty and hurt food sustainability because they get people to not exercise their treaty rights to healthy and good food so that they relinquish these rights contractually by giving them unhealthy low-quality food (NIC 2014).

Methodology:

Out of respect for the Kalispel Tribe of Indian's sovereign rights as an Executive Order Tribe, I sought permission from the tribe's governing council to conduct anthropological research pertaining to the traditional foodways of the Kalispel people. As a member of the Kalispel tribal community, the council gave me their consent to proceed with research objectives relating to the topic of this thesis.

In order to determine the Kalispel community's contemporary usage levels and current ideologies surrounding their traditional foodways, I distributed a survey geared towards getting tribal and community members to talk about their consumption habits and thoughts relating to traditional foods and sought out key community informants to interviews that would provide context and elaboration of survey results. The distribution of a survey that tribal and community members could confidentially elect to fill out in their personal time provided the best possible means to reach as many members of the group's population in an efficient and non-intrusive manner. The survey consisted of the following eight questions:

- 1) What traditional Kalispel foods do you eat? How often and when do you eat these foods?
How do you go about obtaining and preparing traditional foods? What is your motivation to eat traditional foods?
- 2) What role do you think traditional foods should play in modern tribal life? How should the tribe manage its food resources?
- 3) How do you describe the relationship between food and health? How do you describe the relationship between food and culture?
- 4) Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months:

- Enough of the kinds of food we want to eat
- Enough but not always the kinds of food we want
- Sometimes not enough to eat
- Often not enough to eat
- DK or Refused

5) Age range (indicate one):

18-20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 70+

6) Gender (Indicate one)

Male, Female, Other

7) Residence (indicate one):

On reservation, Off Reservation

8) Employment (indicate one):

Tribal, Casino, Other

Question number one provided a means for respondents to self-identify foods that they considered traditional. The question also attempted to elicit from respondents aspects related to eating traditional foods, such as, the frequency of each foods consumption, issues related to acquiring and processing food items, and the motivation behind their specific dietary choices. Question number two provided a platform for respondents to contextually place their views relating to traditional foods within the larger context of Kalispel culture and tribal life. Along with providing a means to determine respondent's ideologies concerning traditional foods, the question also served as a platform for respondents to offer

their suggestions and opinions on how the tribe should manage its foodway resources for the betterment of the community. Such suggestions, in theory, may in the future help the tribe to implement policies concerning foodway resource management in line with community values and consensus. Question number three looked at how respondents related their traditional foods back to a sense of wellbeing in relation to health and identity. The fourth question of the set is from the USDA's food security survey in an attempt to see if people related food security back to the concept of traditional foodways. Questions five through eight asked respondents to provide basic demographic information to ascertain if any trends related to gender, age, employment, or location of residence occurred and influenced respondent's replies.

Respondents received surveys in one of three fashions. The tribe sent out an email containing the survey and instructions to employees and tribal community members via a community mailing list. Physical copies of the survey, along with drop boxes, were placed at the entrance to the tribe's governmental headquarters, wellness center, and language school building in order to reach people unfamiliar with technology. Both of these methods served as a means to reach community members engaged in tribal life and culture not enrolled with the tribe as members. Finally, the tribe mailed out a copy of the survey along with tribal council meeting minutes to every registered tribal member over the age of 18 whom they had an address on file. The combination of these methods ensured the widest level of distribution possible for the population of tribal and community members.

Both enrolled tribal members and community members were asked to participate in the survey to avoid excluding individuals who wanted to contribute to the study regardless of their tribal membership status. Individuals under the age of 18 could not participate in the

study due to parental consent restriction proving an obstacle to keeping the survey process anonymous.

Once individuals had completed the survey process they could elect to waive their anonymity by contacting the researcher to provide an interview that clarified the nature of their survey responses. Individuals could be matched back to their survey by matching the number on the survey to an instruction form that respondents detached at the time of filling out the survey.

Following the analysis of survey results I conducted ethnographic interviews with a handful of individuals with a particular knowledge or familiarity with traditional Kalispel foodways in order to make sense of the qualitative data provided by respondents. These interviews also help to provide a look at the current state of the tribe's traditional foodways in which to provide a contextual background to situate respondent's answers. During the interview process I spoke to the tribe's Cultural Resource Program Manager Kevin Lyons, the tribe's Director of Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources Ray Entz, and tribal member and Salish Language Instructor Jessie Fountain. Each of the recorded interview lasted approximately one hour to one hour and thirty minutes. During the interview process I took field notes by hand to provide clarifying details to interviewee's statements. While visiting the tribe's facilitates for interviews, I had a number of casual conversations with people about food which helped me to gain insights on the way the community views the topic and I even participated in food related events that allowed me to make further observations on the subject. At the end of gathering interviews I transcribed all of the interviews for reference in this thesis.

Upon completion of this study I will give a copy of this thesis to the Kalispel Tribe of Indians for community use. This measure ensures that the population in question in the study foremost has access to the information generated from the research and can use the knowledge for the betterment of the community.

Survey results:

Twenty-five individuals out of the tribes 296 adult members eligible for participation in the study at the time of the survey's distribution elected to respond to the survey. This means that approximately 8% of the adult population of the tribe participated in the study. A total of three respondents returned surveys by email, while 22 respondents returned surveys via the drop boxes places in public locations.

In response to question number one, survey respondents identified over Twenty-five specific varieties of food that they consider traditional Kalispel foods. Respondents also listed numerous generic terms that refer to categories of food that they consume such as fish, game, and berries. The name of identified traditional foods as well as the frequency which people mentioned the items can be found in figure 3.

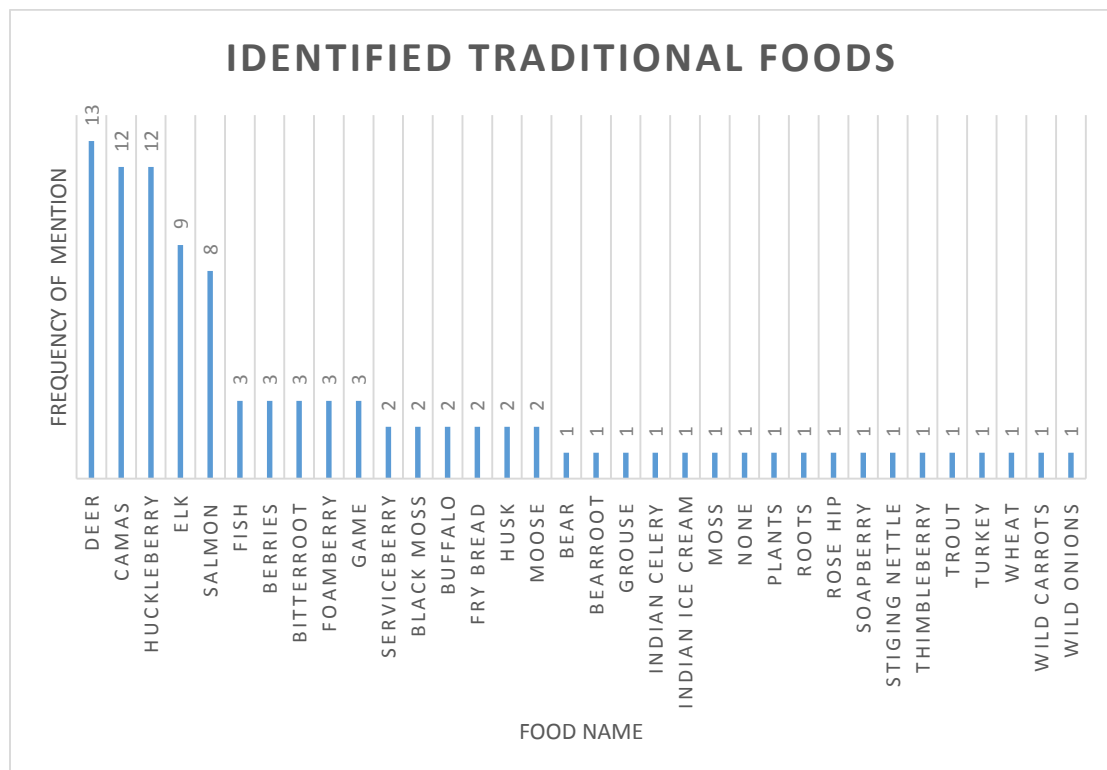


Figure 3.

Respondents listed deer as the main source of protein consumed. Respondents also frequently mentioned elk and salmon as other sources of protein. Other respondents referred to eating fish in general, with one person specifically listing trout. Some respondents referred to eating game in general as well. A couple of people mentioned eating moose and individuals mentioned eating grouse, turkey and bear at least once. A few respondents also refer to eating buffalo.

Camas bulbs, the first food of the Kalispel people, received mention by respondents as the most frequently eaten variety of vegetation (Jessie Fountain, personal communication). Bitterroot, the first food of other neighboring tribes, comes in second to camas in terms of participant identification. Other roots mentioned include bear root, wild carrots, wild onions and Indian celery. Respondents also mention eating huckleberry almost as often as camas, but several other varieties of berries received a number of mentions such as foam berry, serviceberry, soapberry, and thimble berry. One survey respondent listed Indian ice cream, a dish made from whipped foam berries, as a traditional food as well. Stinging nettle, rose hips, mosses and wheat consist of other plant matter mentioned by respondents as traditional foods. People also mentioned the medicinal plant husk and the seasoning black moss as traditional foods.

In terms of prepared foods, a couple of people mentioned dishes such as fry bread or dumplings as traditional Kalispel foods. One survey respondent said that they do not eat any traditional foods at all.

Tribal members also listed a variety of methods of preserving traditional foods. While many people stated that they smoked or dried their meat to make it last longer, people also

talked about using more modern methods such as freezing and canning to help extend the self-life of goods.

Survey respondents listed a variety of details relating to how and when they access traditional foods. Many people stated that they hunted, fished and gathered many of the traditional foods their families eat personally or received the items from individuals who directly obtained the goods on their behalf. Many people mentioned the importance of elder knowledge and engagement in obtaining traditional foods as a means to safely identify and respectfully obtain the foods. Other people highlighted the importance that cultural revitalization programs, community events, and tribal distribution programs of goods like buffalo and salmon play in helping them to regularly eat traditional foods. Individuals further mentioned that gender roles and seasonality play a part in their experience of obtaining traditional foods. People mentioned the importance of knowing when to gather resources like camas and berries in the proper season so that they could make the most of these resources in the time available or gather enough of these resources to preserve them for leaner months. One respondent listed how the males of their family acquired different resources than the women, but the individual did not go into detail.

In response to the question of why they eat traditional foods people often brought up the health and nutritional benefits of a more traditional diet. Many respondents also listed a preference for the taste of the food, a sense of enjoyment and fulfilment of desire when consuming the foods as reasons they choose to eat traditional foods. People also mentioned that they eat a traditional diet as a way to maintain the knowledge of how to interact with the local foodway and as a means to pass on culture and values within the community, especially to children. An individual also mentioned that eating traditional foods helped them to save money and another person said that they used traditional foods as a form of medicine.

On the topic of health, many people equated food to the cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle and stated the opinion that traditional foods have many benefits over a more modern diet. People listed the nutritional quality and balance of such a diet as one of the reasons why they choose to eat traditional foods. Respondents pointed at the lower fat and sugar content in traditional foods as a way of fighting many diseases common in indigenous peoples, such as diabetes. Respondents also pointed to the lack of chemicals and the immunity boosting properties of the food as reasons why they choose to eat the foods. One respondent said that they ate a more traditional diet because it better suited the metabolism of Kalispel people due to a long history of interaction and influence. One person did, however, point out that not all foods considered traditional may carry health benefits, such as foods cooked in grease like dumplings.

People also listed many cultural reasons for choosing to eat a traditional diet. People said that traditional foods helped with community bonding, and connecting people to their ancestors and land. All of these things in turn gave people a sense of identity in life. People also said that using traditional foodways helps to teach people cultural rules, roles, their indigenous language, about the past, and a respect for resources. Overwhelmingly people emphasized the importance of traditional foods as a building block of Kalispel culture.

When asked about their food security status 12 respondents said they had enough of the kinds of foods that they liked to eat. 12 respondents said they had enough food but not always the kinds of foods they would like to eat. One individual listed that they sometimes do not have enough food.

A mixture of respondents of all ages from 18 to 70+ responded to the survey. The distribution of responses across age ranges can be found in figure 4. Answers across age groups

pertaining to certain topics did not vary widely enough based on the number of surveys collected to draw any major conclusions relating to age and food way interaction.

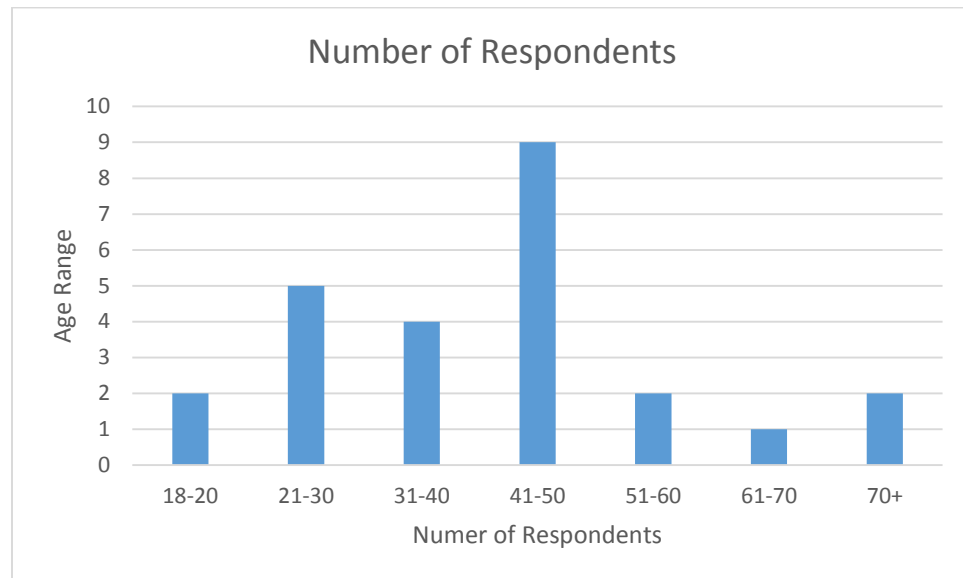


Figure 4.

A total of 18 females and 7 males responded to the survey. Survey responses did not vary significantly between genders. 12 respondents listed that they lived on reservation while 13 listed that they lived off reservation. 21 people listed that they work for the tribe, one person listed that they commute between working for the tribe and the off reservation casino, and three people listed that they work jobs unaffiliated with the tribe.

Analysis:

The variety of species identified by the Kalispel as traditional foods, along with their preservation methods, illustrates that the community still retains an intimate understanding of their indigenous environment in line with the concept of traditional knowledge as determined by 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (Fitzmaurice 2008). The variety of species mentioned also shows that traditional foods continue to play a part of the modern Kalispel cultural identity and wellbeing.

The species listed by the Kalispel as consumed at the present moment closely reflect the species listed in historical record with some slight discrepancies (Carriker 1973: 14-15, 18-19). A variety of factors, however, can help to explain the modern dietary choices of the Kalispel in relation to those of their ancestors.

The fact that deer shows up as the primary ungulate source of protein eaten by the Kalispel remains consistent with historical accounts of the importance of this animal to the tribe (Carriker 1973). The frequency of the mention of deer, elk, and moose in the surveys mirrors the relative abundance of each of these species in the area (Entz, personal communication). People may even have mentioned elk and moose as many times as they did in the survey because of currently high numbers of the animals compared to elder accounts of the past (Lyons, personal communication).

Despite the Kalispel having no principal salmon waterways within their Pend Oreille Valley territory, survey respondents listed the fish as consumed more frequently than indigenous species found in the community's waters, such as trout (Lyons, personal communication). A seeming preference for salmon over fish found in more direct waters reflects the ecological situation of the tribe's local waterways and subsequent measures the tribe has

taken to insure that the community continues to have fish. Local habitat for native trout species has declined in the Pend Oreille Valley due to dam projects, water quality issues, and invasive species competition (Lyons, personal communication). Invasive species like pike and walleye, which now flourish in place of the native species, present a health risk to the community if consumed because these fish species bio-accumulate high levels of toxins during their lifetimes as apex predators (Entz, personal communication).

The tribe has issued warnings against eating invasive fish and the tribe's natural resource department works to restore the waterways for native fish, but native fish levels may not currently suit community desires for fish (Entz, personal communication). The exact rates with which Kalispels consume fish in comparison with the Washington State Department of Health's safety advisories is under study at the moment to see if standards need to better reflect the reality of the tribes dietary situation. Until the issue gets addressed further, the safety of one of the community's staple foods remains an ever present problem and concern for the tribe.

To provide supplement fish for the community's consumption, the Kalispel tribe continues the century's old tradition of sending parties to gather salmon from other tribe's fishing waters upon invitation (Carriker 1973: 19). The gift of salmon from other tribes to the Kalispel people continues the Northwest tradition of fostering good will amongst neighboring tribes when it comes to an abundance of the fish (Johnsen 2009). In turn the Kalispel share resources like Camas with neighboring communities (Fountain, personal communication.) This system of reciprocity also continues the redistribution of ecological resources between various groups of the region in a way that increases food access and food security for Native communities (Johnsen 2009).

During my time performing fieldwork with the tribe, I witnessed and participated first hand in the processing and distribution of salmon brought to the community. This food related event created a positive opportunity for community members to connect socially and even provided a chance for adults to educate youth on how to properly and safely make a traditional food safe for consumption. In the process of distributing salmon to the community, the Kalispel physically enacted many of the ideals they expressed about their traditional foods in survey responses. The distribution of fish within the community also represented a smaller version of spreading the fish out between tribes, because it helped to increase the food security of individual families of the Kalispel community with healthy resources. Throughout the process, special thought went into making sure that members not able to acquire the fish directly for themselves or in the most need, such as community elders, received an adequate portion of the resource. These considerations embody the purpose of the region's reciprocity system (Johnsen 2009).

Respondent's identification of historically mentioned species like grouse or bear as current Kalispel foods matches the present ecological situation of the tribe, while the exclusion of some historical species like mountain goat and beaver might reflect the diminished nature of tribal land holdings or a general decrease of these animal's populations (Carriker 1973: 14-15). Respondents also identify animals not listed in historical records, such as turkey, because invasive terrestrial species, including pheasant, now live within the reservation area (Lyons, personal communication). Some animals mentioned in the historical record like cougar, and still found within Kalispel lands, may not have received mention from respondents due to rarity in the diet, family specific food taboos or preferences, or simple oversight (Lyons, personal communication). When people mention buffalo as consumed they may refer to meat that comes from the herd which the tribe currently manages on their reservation property.

The frequency with which people mention camas as a food in the survey reflects the historical abundance and importance of this staple food to the tribe (Carriker 1973 14-15). The survey results also provide a context that explains why the tribe continues to associate its identity heavily with this particular food in a manner typical of NW native communities (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 421). Respondents' mention of bitterroot as a food source, which does not grow on Kalispel reservation lands, provides another example of a Native regional reciprocity system at work (Johnsen 2009). In order to acquire bitterroot, the tribe sends community members to neighboring tribes to participate in their first food ceremonies (Fountain, personal communication). In turn, the tribe invites people from other tribal communities to share in its camas harvest (Fountain, personal communication). The exchange of key traditional food resources as part of first food ceremonies plays a part in keeping tribal traditions and language alive and helps to keep inter-tribal relationships going (Fountain, personal communication). Tribal language instructors often use the gathering first foods as a time for students to practice the language and learn cultural lessons (Fountain, personal communication). Other roots mentioned by respondents remain consistent with historical accounts and the ecology of the reservation (Lyons, personal communication).

The frequent mention of huckleberries in survey responses, compared to other berries, also shows why people commonly associate this food with the Kalispel as one of the tribe's top traditional resources (Fountain, personal communication). Other berries and edible plants mentioned by respondents demonstrate a sampling of the berry types and plant species found in the region (Lyons, personal communication). Possible misidentification of berries due to multiple colloquial names, and a lack of further insight from respondents on their answers, makes it difficult to know with certainty which species of berry people referred to specifically in their answers. The identification of huckleberry by respondents as a food illustrates the close

connection between traditional foods and medicine (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 421). Husk serves as medicinal and spiritual resource for the Kalispel (Lyons, personal communication). Edible plant species omitted from survey respondents answers, like mushrooms or cattails, also might reflect tribal food taboos at play or historical palatability preferences of the group (Lyons, personal communication.)

Mentions of making indian ice cream out of *Shepherdia* berries or of eating black moss hint at the communities traditional cooking techniques (Entz, personal communication). Black moss does not provide many calories to food, but does lend items like camas flavor, making the plant more of a spice than the center of a meal (Entz, personal communication). Respondents' inclusion of prepared non-indigenous foods like fry bread and dumplings as part of the tribes traditional diet illustrates the adoption of less healthy alternative foods into traditional Native American cuisines out of historical necessity (Kittler et. al. 2011: 117). The ingredients need to make these dishes also represent some of the cheap and unhealthy food options provided to natives through government commodity food programs (Jernigan 2011).

Although knowledge of the seasonality of foods plays a large part in acquiring traditional foods, respondents mentioned modern methods of preservation such as canning and freezing as complements to traditional methods of drying or smoking foods when it comes to increasing the shelf-life of foods into the off season (Fitzmaurice 2008). The use of modern technology to make traditional foods more available year round to Kalispels serves as an example of traditional foodways actually benefiting from outside influence. An increase in preservation methods even helps modern Kalispels rely more on a traditional diet to not suffer the cyclical chronic malnutrition studies have found occurred in their ancestor populations due to the seasonality of their diet (Lyons, personal communication).

Respondent's statements that they often acquire traditional foods directly or have an immediate proxy do so for them serves as an example of the familiarity and experience aspect of using a traditional resource at play (Fitzmaurice 2008). On the particular topic of food resources by proxy, interviews also highlighted how these measures help to ensure that non-able bodied members still get the traditional foods and medicine they need from able bodied members of the community (Lyons, personal communication). The mention of tribal programs that distribute food to the community also shows how official programs play a part in supplementing people's traditional diets to offset modern obstacles. All of these measures represent a community mentality to equitably share resources. This also reflects the community value that resources given as a gift instead of traded or sold retain more of their potency and beneficial aspects (Lyons, personal communication).

Knowledge about how and when to safely access traditional foods still plays a large part in the Kalispels interaction with traditional resources, particularly when it comes to elders' participation. Oral knowledge passed down from elders about the uses of traditional plants has helped younger Kalispels learn how to use these resources in a beneficial manner (Fountain, personal communication). The experience elders have when it comes to resources remains especially important when dealing with identifying and using plant species because almost all of the plant species eaten have a poisonous counterpart that could easily make a novice sick if mistakenly ingested (Fountain, personal communication). For this reason, the Kalispel rely on traditions like having an elder open up the gathering of a resource with a blessing, because this measure helps guarantee the safety of gathering spots and acts as a source of cultural resource management to prevent over harvesting (Fountain, personal communication).

The oral tradition of keeping knowledge about food resources serves a few roles within Kalispel culture. Kalispel cultural leaders seem to express the idea that knowledge should be

shared verbally between people because that keeps the knowledge serving an immediate practical function and also provides elders with a sense of purpose. The practice also serves as socio-regulatory method to keep knowledge out of the hands of people who would misuse or abuse the knowledge (Fitzmaurice 2008). In this way, the Kalispel can maintain control over their foodways to ensure people do not appropriate the knowledge in a way that harms the community or puts other people at risk.

One of my informants expressed the view that the community needed to continue to access their traditional resources or risk losing the ability. This source gave a religious-cultural explanation that traditional resources represent a gift from the creator that if not properly appreciated could disappear (Fountain, personal communication). This concept also matches the idea of losing access to a resource along with the loss of traditional knowledge (Fitzmaurice 2008). This scenario happened in the case of glacier lily because the individuals with knowledge of the resource passed away without sharing the right information and the resource has since fallen out of the traditional diet of the Kalispel (Lyons, personal communication). This example shows one of the key vulnerabilities of relying solely on oral tradition to keep knowledge alive. Thankfully, the practice of passing on oral knowledge can also help to revive traditions, however, because the knowledge only comes up when an interest really exists amongst people. When the Kalispel needed help learning how to create and reintroduce earth ovens for the cooking of ungulate meats and roots for cultural events on their reservation, they sought out knowledge of the practice from a cousin tribe, and now the use of these ovens has taken off again on the reservation (Fountain, personal communication).

When talking about the health aspects of food, respondents often directly related the two topics as parts of the same concept by saying “food equals health or food is health”. The relation of food to health might relate to the fact that a distinction between many traditional

foods and medicine does not exist culturally (Lyons, personal communication). The relationship of concepts might also speak to general observations and understandings of the group's wellbeing in relation to the tribe's level of food security and diet changes over time since many members have lived through vastly different periods of food availability. The respondent who mentioned the relationship between most Americans' modern diet and its chronic negative health effects even echoed the discordance theory of medical anthropology that states our modern society's diet has evolved too rapidly to make the consumption of processed foods healthy for our much slower evolving bodies (Armelagos 2010). This type of logic and the fact that respondents often expressed views that traditional foods had superior health qualities to modern foods shows an awareness and concern on the part of the community about how modern foods may not suit the community's dietary needs as well as traditional foods.

According to a Salish language instructor the group does not often speak about the healthy dietary aspects of food when discussing what Kalispel foods to eat and how to acquire them, since the words for many chronic health issues like diabetes, do not exist in the language (Fountain, personal communication). Prior to an introduction of modern foods and a change of diet, to eat simply signified health (Lyons, personal communication). The fact that ancestors once considered the foods ok to eat implies their healthy attributes in the Salish language (Fountain, personal communication). Now, however, the addition of alternate food systems means having an abundance of food can also mean health issues. In order to talk about the health aspects of traditional foods compared to modern foods, like less sugar and fat, students often code switch to English after a lesson to communicate these concepts (Fountain, personal communication). The necessity for students to talk about the healthy aspects of traditional foods in comparison to the unhealthy aspects of modern foods serves as an example of traditional knowledge being contextualized in modern terms (Fitzmaurice 2008). In order to

truly express their understanding of the health qualities of foods, students choose English because the language better conceptualizes the modern nuances of the situation. In this way, traditional Kalispel foods acquire the modern value of health only in juxtaposition to non-traditional foods. While speaking in Salish students can connect to how their ancestors viewed foods, but by speaking English students can make the healthy qualities of traditional foods relevant to their lives.

Kalispel foods sit at the heart of Kalispel culture to the point that people must serve and eat traditional foods at certain ceremonies (Lyons, personal communication). When teaching Salish, instructors often focus lessons on traditional foods and traditional foods play a large part in the tribe's cultural and social programming for community members (Fountain, personal communication). These facts help to show why around a half-dozen survey respondents wrote phrases similar to, "Food equals culture or food is culture," when asked traditional foods role in tribal culture. Taking survey respondents' answers that food equals health into account, one could logically conclude that traditional foods not only play a role in keeping the tribe physically well but also culturally healthy. In turn, a strong cultural foundation provides the tribe with a social environment that puts the physical, mental and spiritual health of its members at the forefront of life. In this way, food serves as a cornerstone for the framework of Kalispel culture.

Respondents' answers on the food security question ranged towards the top of the spectrum compared to national findings about Native American's levels of food security (Jernigan 2011). It remains important to note that impoverished members of the community may have elected not to participate in the survey out of a lack of life constraints or enthusiasm. As of right now, the community members who participated in the survey largely represent a specific sub-set of the Kalispel population that more actively engages in the community through work and events but largely neglects the fringe members of the community. A fuller inclusion of

community's membership in response to the food security question may better represent the community as a whole than the sample presented in this study.

Since the sample size of the study did not offer any significant insights into how gender and age play a role in the Kalispel's interaction with their traditional floodways, all conclusions on this topic come from interviews with informants. Clear gender roles when it comes to acquiring and preparing food seem to have taken a backseat in favor of modern views and group efforts to keep traditional practices alive within the community (Lyons and Fountain, personal communication). People of all age groups appear to engage traditional resources but age differences do influence mentor-student and people's ability to directly acquire resources. For example, community elders help the pregnant members of the tribe know which herbs they can safely use to cure their maladies and in return younger members of the tribe do the physical gathering of traditional pain relieving plants for the elders so they do not have to perform the labor personally.

In most cases, people did not list place of residence as a concern when they discussed access to traditional foods and many people who listed that they live off reservation visit the reservation frequently for work. This means that most respondents have the opportunity to frequently access foodway resources despite place of residence. For this reason, a future question asking access frequency of foodway resources might better cover availability of traditional foods to tribal and community members than questions of residence and place of work.

Conclusion:

The Kalispels' continued utilization of their traditional foodways in line with historical and modern obstacles provides an example of a community using its indigenous traditional knowledge to make the most of resources due to their social, cultural, and health related importance to the community (Fitzmaurice 2008). The conservation and ecological management of traditional food resources remains a primary concern for the community as they interact with their environment to insure the safety and abundance of traditional resources.

Traditional foods play a variety of cultural roles within the community which provide for the physical and social wellbeing of the group to offset some of the negative results of colonization. The swapping of traditional foods in a regional Native American reciprocity system helps the Kalispel and neighboring tribes to maintain close socio-cultural connections and increases the overall food security of these communities with healthier indigenous food options through an egalitarian model of distribution (Johnsen 2009). Traditional foods also serve medicinal roles within the community and serve as a way for the Kalispel to provide food to their more vulnerable members (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996). As a way to keep Kalispel cultural knowledge and language alive, the transmission of these topics often centers on food related activities and food plays a large and significant role in the community's cultural programming (Fitzmaurice 2008). A continued connection to traditional food resources helps the Kalispel to form a sense of identity as a people to connect as a group and to their ancestors and lands (Kuhnlein and Receveur 1996: 421). Simultaneously, traditional foods also provide a way for the Kalispel to think and talk about having a healthier community in the future

(Fitzmaurice 2008). For the above reasons the Kalispel consider traditional foods a cornerstone of their culture and key to maintaining a healthy community spiritually, mentally and physically.

Food from non-indigenous sources have proven inconsistent historically and contemporarily for Native communities, and thus reliance on such foodways will always provide a slight risk to these community's food security (Jernigan 2011). The modern food system also does not suit the biological needs of people as well as traditional foodways (Armelagos 2010). The Kalispel and other indigenous populations can help mitigate the negative effects of food insecurity and the modern diet by maintaining a connection to their traditional foodways. The use of food sovereignty theory and practices could serve as one way for the Kalispel to continue to insure the integrity of their traditional food resources for the continued benefit of the community (NAFSA 2013). The focus of food sovereignty on food related issues provides the Kalispel with tangible issues to fix as a community that may in turn lead to improvements in related areas of life by extension. In order to best determine how food sovereignty could play a part in helping the Kalispel tribe to achieve its foodway restoration and protection goals, the community would have to host a grassroots meeting to discuss the appropriate role of food sovereignty in tribal life.

The restoration of the Kalispel's traditional foodways to levels that could fully service the sustenance needs of the community would give the Kalispel the means to truly express their autonomy and unique cultural identity free of reliance and dependence on modern foodways that do not have the same health benefits or social significance to tribe (NIC 2014). Native communities can maintain the viability of their traditional foodways by actively exercising their rights as a culturally determined people and by advocating for the continued maintenance and restoration of these food sources (NIC 2014). This will help ensure these communities will have

access to food resources that both fulfill their physical and metaphysical needs in a healthy manner as unique societal entities (NIC 2014). Exercising food sovereignty through treaty rights will also help the Kalispel and other tribes to ensure the integrity of their membership's health, the continuation of their cultural practices, and societal cohesion amongst Native communities through food as medium. Ultimately, food sovereignty and the suitable restoration of their traditional foodways would allow the Kalispel and other Natives greater options when it comes to choosing their diet, and the physical and non-physical elements that accompany those choices, so that these groups can practice a more comprehensive version of self-determination.

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