

Spring has arrived and we're all anxious to get outdoors and take advantage of nature's bounty and enjoy some fresh air. In these uncertain times of social distancing and concern over food scarcity, the NRD would like to highlight some of the trapping and hunting opportunities available to Tribal members that encourage a subsistence lifestyle and support natural resource stewardship. This is also a good time for us to remember that for many species, spring is the beginning of courtship, breeding, and nurturing/rearing of young. KBIC rules and regulations take these times into consideration, providing protections for these animal nations, so future generations may enjoy the same relationships and opportunities we have.



The muskrat and beaver trapping seasons run through May 15<sup>th</sup>. Harvest of these species not only puts food on the table, but provides a source of income through the sale of their fur. The meat of beaver and muskrat is a good source of protein and can be cooked similar to a pork or beef roast (and tastes very similar). The water-rich environment of the Reservation supports robust populations of both muskrat and beaver.

Spring turkey season opens on April 1<sup>st</sup> and continues through May 31<sup>st</sup>. The NRD would encourage hunters to limit their Spring take of turkey to males only (jakes and toms) to protect the females (hens) during the breeding season. Small game and upland game bird seasons run from September 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> providing ample time to harvest species such as squirrel, rabbit, snowshoe hare, and ruffed grouse. Porcupine can also provide a year-round source of meat similar to pork or chicken.



While you may be seeing white-tailed deer in every field you pass, early Spring is a very difficult time for deer. Winter is a season of food scarcity, which puts a great deal of stress on their bodies. Unpredictable Spring weather can prolong access to higher quality resources, which can lead to additional stress and mortality. Many females are pregnant and need all the nutritious food they can get to birth a healthy fawn. While antlers are starting re-grow, it is still very difficult to tell a doe from a buck. Hunting deer at this time could be detrimental to the long-term health and sustainability of our deer herd. We would not encourage deer hunting for any reason at this time, but encourage everyone to enjoy their sightings, while spending time outdoors.

NRD staff are currently working with Tribal leadership, the legal department, and law enforcement to update the KBIC Tribal Code Title 10 Hunting, Fishing, Trapping, and Gathering (2003). Proposed changes include providing more opportunities for youth, clarity on rules and regulations, and when possible expanding harvest opportunities.

For additional questions regarding season regulations, please see KBIC Tribal Code Title 10 Hunting, Fishing, Trapping, and Gathering or contact Erin Johnston, Wildlife Biologist, at [ejohnston@kbic-nsn.gov](mailto:ejohnston@kbic-nsn.gov).