

Crow Creek Resumes Stamp Program

by David R. Torre, ARA

Introduction

In 1989, the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe issued the first pictorial Indian Reservation fish and game stamps in the United States. The stamps featured black and white photographs of deer, pheasants, prairie dogs and geese with red serial numbers (see Figure 1). The Tribe issued similar stamps in 1990. Following a three-year hiatus, the Tribe resumed their stamp program. Semi-pictorial stamps were issued for the fall seasons of 1994 and pictorial stamps, similar to those issued in 1989 and 1990, were issued in 1995.



FIGURE 1. THE FIRST PICTORIAL INDIAN RESERVATION FISH AND GAME STAMPS WERE ISSUED BY THE CROW CREEK SIOUX TRIBE IN 1989.

The pictorial stamps that were issued in 1989 and 1990 proved to be popular with a wide spectrum of collectors. For this reason the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe is deserving of much of the credit for the current interest in Indian Reservation stamp collecting. Collectors will no doubt be pleasantly surprised to learn that the 1995 Crow Creek stamps are in full color and include some of the most beautiful fish and game stamps ever issued by any form of government.

The Crow Creek Sioux Tribe did not issue stamps between 1990 and the fall of 1994 for two reasons. First, the size of the stamp boxes necessary to accommodate the 1989 and 1990 issues did not allow room for an important implied consent phrase to be printed on the tribal passbook/licenses. In 1991, Crow Creek Department of Natural Resources officials decided to shorten the phrase and have it printed on the reverse of the stamps themselves. However, they could not agree on the revised wording in time to have stamps printed for either the 1991 spring or fall seasons (Torre, 1992). Second, a change in tribal leadership occurred in 1992 and precipitated a large turnover in Crow Creek DNR personal. At this time Wildlife Director Marsha McGee resigned her position. It was under McGee that the first pictorial stamps had been issued in 1989 and 1990.

By the time the new Crow Creek Wildlife leadership was ready to resume the stamp program, it was well into the summer of 1994. There was not enough time to have pictorial stamps printed for some of the early fall seasons. Therefore, it was decided to issue semi-pictorial stamps for all of the 1994 fall seasons (Willman, 1994). The semi-pictorial stamps were made smaller to allow for the full implied consent phrase to be printed along the left side of the new tribal passbooks (see Figure 2).



FIGURE 2. REVERSE OF PASSBOOK / LICENSES PRINTED IN 1994. A NON RESIDENT WATERFOWL STAMP IS AFFIXED.

Semi-Pictorial Stamps Issued

The 1994 Crow Creek stamps were printed by Register-Lakota Printing in 79 Chamberlain, South Dakota. Different colors of ink were used to print stamps for three classifications of sportsmen. Green ink was used to print the stamps issued to tribal members; blue ink was used for the stamps issued to both affiliate members and reservation residents*; and red ink was used for the stamps issued to both South Dakota residents and non-residents of the state. All of the stamps were printed on white paper and were serial numbered in black (see Figures 3 and 4).



FIGURE 3. SEMI PICTORIAL STAMPS WERE PRINTED FOR THE FALL 1994 SEASONS.

**The current Hunting Guide for the Crow Creek Sioux Reservation defined "Reservation Affiliates" as "Employees of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Indian."*

Unlike the Crow Creek Stamps of 1989 and 1990 (which were numbered continuously by series), all of the different types of 1994 stamps were serial numbered independently, i.e. "1-XXX." The stamps were issued in booklet panes of five (1x5) with a tab at the top. They were rouletted between the stamps and the tab. Five panes were stapled together to form a booklet.

A Total of 24 different stamps were issued in 1994, including separate stamps for fishing and trapping (see Figure 4). In 1989 and 1990, fishing and trapping privileges were conveyed by an all-inclusive sportsman's stamp. Only tribal members are allowed to trap on the Crow Creek Reservation. Sportsman's stamps are no longer issued by the tribe.



FIGURE 4. TRAPPING STAMPS WERE PRINTED AND ISSUED TO TRIBAL MEMBERS ONLY.

There were two printing errors made on the 1994 stamps. The daily small and upland game stamps for South Dakota residents and non-residents were first printed with a face value of \$30.00, when the fee was actually \$40.00 (see Figure 5). At the same time the daily waterfowl stamps for South Dakota residents and non-residents were printed with a face value of \$25.00, when the fee was actually \$30.00 (see Figure 6).

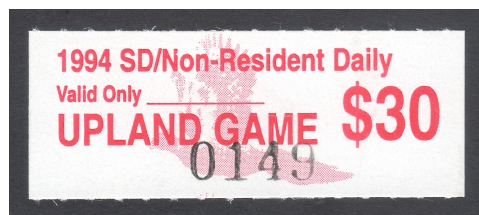


FIGURE 5. 1994 SD/NR DAILY ERROR. THE CORRECT FEE WAS \$40.

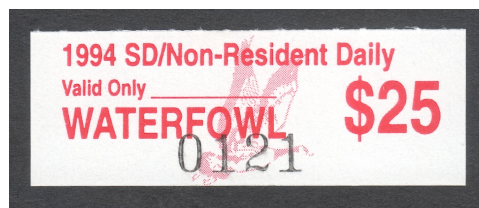


FIGURE 6. 1994 SD/ NR DAILY WATERFOWL ERROR. THE CORRECT FEE WAS \$30.

The stamps were distributed to vendors prior to Crow Creek Wildlife personnel discovering the errors. Once discovered, the error stamps were immediately recalled and replaced with corrected versions—but not before many had already been sold to hunters (Willman, 1994). In addition to the face value changes, the corrected versions of both stamps were printed in a much darker red ink than the error stamps. For a description of all 1994 Crow Creek stamps, see Table 1.

Table 1

Description of 1994 Crow Creek fish and game stamps

| Face Value | Classification | Color | Total ¹ Printed | Remarks |
|------------|--|----------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| \$10 | Tribal member deer | green | 200 | |
| \$25 | Affiliate/resv. deer | blue | 100 | |
| \$75 | SD resident/N-R archery deer | red | 100 | |
| \$250 | SD resident/N-R rifle deer | red | 100 | |
| \$1 | Tribal member fishing | green | 500 | |
| \$5 | Affiliate/resv. fishing | blue | 275 | |
| \$5 | SD resident/N-R daily fishing | red | 100 | |
| \$20 | SD resident/N-R yearly fishing | red | 200 | |
| \$25 | Tribal member pronghorn | green | 100 | |
| \$150 | Affiliate/resv. pronghorn | blue | 100 | |
| \$250 | SD resident/N-R pronghorn | red | 100 | |
| \$5 | Tribal member small/upland game | green | 500 | |
| \$15 | Affiliate/resv. small/upland game | blue | 375 | |
| \$30 | SD resident/N-R daily small/upland game | red | 200 | error; fee was \$40 |
| \$40 | SD resident/N-R daily small/upland game | dark red | NA ² | |
| \$100 | SD resident/N-R season small/upland game | red | 500 | |
| \$1 | Tribal member trapping | green | 100 | |
| \$1 | Tribal member varmint | green | 400 | |
| \$3 | Affiliate/resv. varmint | blue | 275 | |
| \$5 | SD resident/N-R daily varmint | red | 200 | |
| \$20 | SD resident/N-r yearly varmint | red | 200 | |
| \$5 | Tribal member waterfowl | green | 400 | |
| \$15 | Affiliate/resv. waterfowl | blue | 275 | |
| \$25 | SD resident/N-R daily waterfowl | red | 500 | error; fee was \$30 |
| \$30 | SD resident/N-R daily waterfowl | dark red | 200 | |
| \$75 | SD resident/N-R season waterfowl | red | 300 | |

¹According to figures provided by Crow Creek Biologist Tony Willman

²Figure uncertain; believed to be 200 or 500

Multicolor Pictorial Stamps Issued

For 1995, the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe once again had pictorial fish and game stamps printed. The stamps were printed by State Publishing Company in Pierre, South Dakota, and are very similar to those issued in 1989 and 1990 with the exception that they are in full color. According to Crow Creek Biologist Tony Willman, it was always intended to issue high quality stamps once the program was resumed. It is felt that having quality stamps reflects well on both the Tribe and the Wildlife Department and is, therefore, good public relations among sportsmen who frequent Indian Reservations. Remainders of the passbooks printed for 1994 are still being used with the 1995 stamps (Willman, 1995). This may occasionally result in the larger stamps being overlapped.

As were those in 1994, stamps for the three different classifications of sportsmen are color coded. Since the photographs on the 1995 stamps are reproduced in multicolor, it is only the lettering on the stamps which is printed in green, blue and red—for tribal members, affiliates and reservation residents, and South Dakota residents and Nonresidents, respectively. All of the 1995 stamps were printed on white paper with black serial numbers (see Figure 7). They were issued in booklet panes of five (1 x 5) with a tab at the top and were perforated 11 1/2 between the stamps and the tab. Five panes were stapled together to form a booklet.



FIGURE 7. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TRIBAL MEMBER GUIDE STAMP, ALL OF THE 1995 CROW CREEK STAMPS WERE PRINTED IN FULL COLOR.

A total of 30 different stamps were printed for 1995. New for 1995 were separate archery, mule and whitetail deer stamps for each of the three classifications of sportsmen plus a special tribal member guide stamp. According to Willman, if a tribal member intends to hire himself out as a guide he must first register with the Wildlife Department. At this time the prospective guide is required to purchase a guide stamp for \$25.00 and affix it to his regular hunting license. The stamp is the only 1995 stamp to feature a photograph reproduced in black and white. The photograph is of the famous Sioux Chief Drifting Goose. For a description of the 1995 Crow Creek Stamps, see Table II.

Table II

Description of 1995 Crow Creek fish and game stamps

| Face Value | Classification | Color ¹ | Total Printed ² |
|------------|--|--------------------|----------------------------|
| \$10 | Tribal member archery deer | green | 250 |
| \$25 | Affiliate/resv. archery deer | blue | 250 |
| \$75 | SD resident/N-R Archery deer | red | 250 |
| \$10 | Tribal member mule deer | green | 250 |
| \$25 | Affiliate/resv. mule deer | blue | 250 |
| \$250 | SD resident/N-R mule deer | red | 250 |
| \$10 | Tribal member whitetail deer | green | 250 |
| \$25 | Affiliate/resv. whitetail deer | blue | 250 |
| \$250 | SD resident/N-R whitetail deer | red | 250 |
| \$1 | Tribal member fishing | green | 1,500 |
| \$5 | Affiliate/resv. fishing | blue | 250 |
| \$5 | SD resident/N-R daily fishing | red | 250 |
| \$20 | SD resident/N-R yearly fishing | red | 250 |
| \$25 | Tribal member guide | green | 250 |
| \$25 | Tribal member pronghorn | green | 250 |
| \$150 | Affiliate/resv. pronghorn | blue | 250 |
| \$250 | SD resident/N-R pronghorn | red | 250 |
| \$5 | Tribal member small/upland game | green | 1,000 |
| \$15 | Affiliate/resv. small/upland game | blue | 500 |
| \$40 | SD resident/N-R daily small/upland game | red | 1,000 |
| \$100 | SD resident/N-R season small/upland game | red | 1,000 |
| \$1 | Tribal member trapping | green | 250 |
| \$1 | Tribal member varmint | green | 500 |
| \$3 | Affiliate/resv. varmint | blue | 250 |
| \$5 | SD resident/N-R daily varmint | red | 500 |
| \$20 | SD resident/N-R yearly varmint | red | 500 |
| \$5 | Tribal member waterfowl | green | 1,000 |
| \$15 | Affiliate/resv. waterfowl | blue | 500 |
| \$30 | SD resident/N-R daily waterfowl | red | 1,000 |
| \$75 | SD resident/N-R season waterfowl | red | 1,000 |

¹Color refers to the lettering only; with the exception of the tribal member guide stamp (in black and white) all stamps feature photographs reproduced in multi-color.

²According to figures provided by Crow Creek Biologist Tony Willman.

Stamp Policy Initiated

During the early 1990s, the Creek Sioux Tribe received many inquiries from collectors regarding the availability of their stamps. After their stamp program has resumed, the Tribe established a policy specifically to deal with collectors. The Tribe would not sell stamps to collectors while they were still valid for hunting or fishing. However, expired stamps were made available to collectors for a period of six months following the end of the fall seasons. After that time, all remainders from the previous year were to be destroyed (see Figure 8). According to Crow Creek Wildlife Director Kevin Kirkie, this policy was expected to remain in effect for several years on a trial basis (Kirkie, 1995).

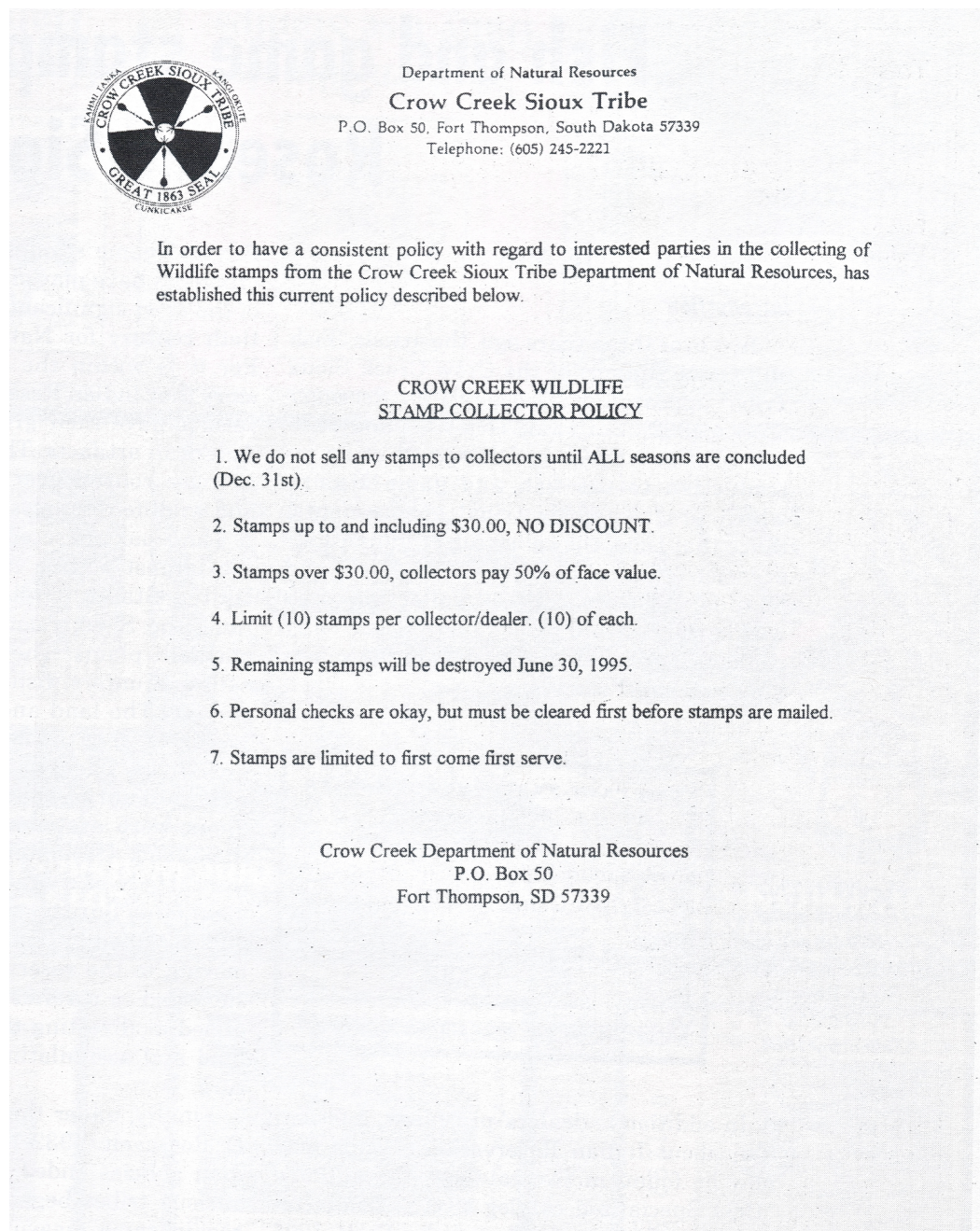


FIGURE 8. THE CROW CREEK SIOUX TRIBE'S STAMP COLLECTOR POLICY.

When ordering stamps from any tribe, two things be kept in mind. First, selling fish and game stamps to collectors is of fairly low priority to tribal conservation officials. Tribal licensing personnel frequently share in other duties and responsibilities that keep them very busy. Therefore, collectors should not be alarmed or surprised if it takes up to two months for their orders to be filled. Second, although tribal licensing personnel are slowly becoming more sensitive to the needs of collectors with regard to the needs of collectors with regard to condition, occasional faults (especially creases) are to be expected. (By the same token, collectors should be aware that small faults do not effect an Indian Reservation stamp's value as they do say pictorial state or federal waterfowl stamps.) Requests for exchanges will be handled on a case by case basis, depending on the supply of stamps and the human resources available at the time the request is made.

Update: The Crow Creek Stamp Collector Policy remained in effect through 1999. Starting in 2000, it was repealed and collectors were no longer able to purchase stamps directly from the tribe.

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