



Bitter Root RC&D

Salish-Bitterroot Culture Camp

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During the summer of 2011, the Bitter Root Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc. (RC&D) had the opportunity to host a unique summer camp for youth that was located in the beautiful Bitterroot Valley.

Middle school is the time when youth begin to concern themselves with self-definition and connectedness to others. They are looking for ways to build self-esteem while looking for their place in the world. The Bitter Root RC&D seized the opportunity to build on these qualities and provide at-risk youth exposure to the natural resources

that are so much a part of their place in the world. We found a way to bring the two different cultures of youth to an historic meeting site of the Salish and Nez Perce tribes for a four-day, three-night summer camp experience. What better place for them to find connection to themselves and the land and for us to meet our goal!



The goal of the Salish-Bitterroot Cultural Camp was to connect the youth now living in the Bitterroot Valley and the youth who historically lived in the Valley, the Salish, to the common bond that they share on the Bitterroot landscape, expanding their sense of cultural place and context.

Accomplishments

- **FUNDING**
 - USFS More Kids In Woods \$12,000
 - NARC&DC Cultural \$4,300
 - Donations \$2,500
 - TOTAL \$18,800**
- **10+ Partners:** USFS Bitterroot National Forest, National RC&D Association, Merging Waters Educational Center, Bitter Root RC&D Forest Stewardship Fund, Traveler's Rest State Park, Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee and Tribal Elders, Salish Kootenai Tribal Education Department, Salish Kootenai College Field & Home, The People's Center, Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, and Other Volunteers
- **YOUTH**
 - 13 Tribal
 - 8 Bitterroot Valley
- **ACTIVITIES**
 - Drumming
 - Stewardship of the land
 - Cultural education/native skills
 - Healthy foods and hiking
 - Campfire talks and fun
 - Common connections to place

The goal of the Bitter Root RC&D (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization) is to promote conscientious development of the area's natural and human resources, while maintaining or improving the quality of those resources and the quality of life in Mineral, Missoula and Ravalli Counties, Montana.