

## Fireworks Policies Among Washington Tribes — Context for Whatcom County Fireworks Policy Discussions

This summarizes fireworks policies among Washington tribes to provide context for how tribal governments across the state are approaching wildfire risk, cultural protection, and community safety.

**Key Finding:** Across Washington State, most tribes are voluntarily tightening fireworks regulations, including full bans, burn-ban triggers, and restrictions on hazardous types. The Nooksack Tribe is an outlier, maintaining one of the least restrictive fireworks environments among the tribes reviewed.

| Tribe                                           | Fireworks Policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Notes / Rationale                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lummi Nation                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No fireworks allowed during any burn ban on tribal land.</li><li>• Fireworks universally prohibited on all Lummi Nation Housing Authority properties and the Stommish Grounds.</li></ul> | Cited reasons include wildfire risk and protection of cultural integrity. |
| Spokane Tribe                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total ban on fireworks on all Spokane Tribal lands (2026).</li></ul>                                                                                                                     | Implemented due to fire danger and community safety concerns.             |
| Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total ban on fireworks across 1.4 million acres (2026).</li></ul>                                                                                                                        | Adopted in response to high wildfire risk across a large land base.       |
| Tulalip Tribes                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific bans on certain types of fireworks under Tulalip Ordinance 52.</li></ul>                                                                                                        | Focused on regulating hazardous types.                                    |
| Puyallup Tribe                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fireworks allowed only if not banned by federal law (16 CFR 1500.17).</li></ul>                                                                                                          | Aligns tribal rules with federal safety standards.                        |
| Nez Perce tribe (Idaho)                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Just initiated a total ban on the discharge of fireworks reservation-wide.</li></ul>                                                                                                     | Citing dry and hazardous conditions.                                      |

| Tribe                                          | Fireworks Policy                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Notes / Rationale                                |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Squaxin Island Tribe, South Puget Sound</b> | Fireworks only authorized in the ball field — no exception. If temperatures are over 99, fireworks will be banned on that day. Residents asked to mow lawns down to one inch since long, dry grass is a fire hazard. | Due to fire hazard posed by fireworks.           |
| <b>Nooksack Tribe</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No restrictions found on types of fireworks sold.</li> <li>• Regulations primarily address permitting and age limits (no sales to minors under 16).</li> </ul>              | Among the least restrictive policies identified. |

**Note: Colville Reservation – 9,300 members; Lummi: 5,700; Nooksack 2,000**

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*“Our Tribal elected officials, our Tribal council really considers the potential impacts, the risks associated with fireworks use. If it looks like it’s a bad idea, we’ll make the decision proactively early in the year to ban those so that people know ahead of time, don’t go buy fireworks from outside vendors or Tribal vendors buying them to sell at a later date. Again, just trying to be proactive so that the folks in the community are aware and can make other plans accordingly - so that don’t run into those few individuals sometimes that make bad choices because they already had them and they want to use them and they think it’s probably going to be okay. That’s not always the case.*

*Largely what we’ve heard from our membership is support for it. I think they recognize a potentially bad season on the horizon and so what we’ve heard so far is, ‘good decision. We’re glad you did it now.’”*

*— Cody Desautel, Exec Director of the Colville Confederated Tribes*

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## Implications for Whatcom County

### 1. Regional alignment:

A county policy reducing discharge days or prohibiting fireworks during burn bans would be **consistent with the direction many tribes are already moving.**

### 2. Local relevance:

The Lummi Nation—Whatcom County’s closest tribal neighbor—already prohibits fireworks during burn bans and restricts them in culturally significant and residential areas.

3. **Economic impact considerations:**

While the Nooksack Tribe may experience some impact from county-level restrictions, **other tribes have already self-imposed far stricter limits**, including full bans, without external mandates.

4. **Wildfire and public safety:**

Tribal governments across the state are increasingly prioritizing wildfire prevention and community safety over revenue from fireworks sales.

**Conclusion**

The evidence shows a clear statewide trend: tribal governments are tightening fireworks regulations to protect people, property, and cultural resources. In this context, Whatcom County's consideration of a one-day discharge window and a burn-ban trigger is not only reasonable but aligned with the evolving practices of many Washington tribes.