

The Apsáalooke Nation Flag



The Apsáalooke Nation flag shows the tribal seal amid a field of light blue. The seal symbols represent various parts of Apsáalooke culture.

Beginning at the bottom of the seal is a **Peace Pipe**. The pipe is offered to placate supernatural powers. The sacred pipe is used in the following ceremonies: The sacred pipe ceremony, sacred tobacco society, sweat lodge, sun dances, daytime hot dances, parade dances through a camp, warrior homecoming dances, leading a caravan relocating to a new site, to discuss matters by chieftains, and by individuals or groups. Each of the three Apsáalooke bands has five warrior societies associated with the pipe as well.

Above the pipe a **Bundle** is depicted. This bundle represents the sacred tobacco society, a group unique to the Apsáalooke.

Above the bundle is a **Sweat Lodge**. There are three main stories told in the sweat lodge--the Seven Buffalos, the Twins, and Big Metal--that teach the moral conduct, ethics and character of the tribe.

In the center of the seal you see a **Tepee**. The tepee represents the Apsáalooke as a four pole people, meaning their tepees are erected with four rather than three base poles. Four is the number of ongoing seasons; there are four directions, and winds. The base poles also represent original boundaries of Apsáalooke Treaty of 1851. This treaty explained the original Apsáalooke country as having one base pole at the Black Hills, one pole at the Wind River, one pole resting at the Bear Tooth Mountains and another pole at the Bear Paw Mountains.

On either side of the tepee are two **War Bonnets**. These represent the Crow clan system, the trailing feathers represent the original ten clans including the Bad War Deeds, Big Lodges, Brings Game without Shooting, Burnt Mouth, Good Prairie Dogs, Greasy Mouth, Newly Made Lodges, Piegan or Treacherous Lodges, Ties the Bundle, and Whistling Water.

Behind the tepee you can see three **Mountain Ranges** of the Crow, the Pryors, Big Horns, and the Wolfs. Most importantly they represent the permanency and strength of the Apsáalooke Nation.

At the top of the seal is the **Sun** with its rays of yellow and orange, signifying the importance of the sun as it represents enlightenment, hope, and peace.

This information was gathered from Mickey Old Coyote's book about the Apsáalooke Nation flag. Mr. Old Coyote was one of the designers of the flag.