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## **CONSTRUCTION WORK STARTS ON FIRST PHASE OF THE KOOTENAI TRIBE OF IDAHO'S KOOTENAI RIVER HABITAT RESTORATION PROGRAM**

September 1, 2011  
Bonners Ferry, Idaho

Implementation of a habitat restoration program to help restore Kootenai River white sturgeon and other native fish populations began August 31. The project site is located in the Braided Reach of the Kootenai River upstream from Bonners Ferry.

Susan Ireland, Director of the Kootenai Tribe's Fish and Wildlife Department says, "The project will include treatment of 5,230 feet of stream bank that is currently eroding and in some cases calving off into the river, placement of large wood in the river to improve instream habitat, instream work to create more complex fish habitat, riparian planting, and livestock fencing."

For the past few months a local contractor working for the Kootenai Tribe has been stockpiling hundreds of trees and root wads. They have also been locating nearby sources of gravel and plant materials. Ms Ireland said, "The project general contractor, Goodfellow Brothers Inc., started mobilizing equipment to the site and setting up materials staging areas in late August. They will be delivering materials to the project sites through September and the in-water and bank restoration construction work will take place from the end of September to the end of November."

A number of landowners are allowing program activities to occur on their lands. Patty Perry, the Tribal Administrator with the Kootenai Tribe said, "Some of the project actions will take place on private lands and access will occur through private lands. We couldn't implement this program without the support and cooperation of those landowners."

Jennifer Porter, the Kootenai Tribal Chair explained, "This program is very important to the Tribe, it will help to restore the Kootenai people's resources and culture. The program will also provide benefits to the local community."

Bonneville Power Administration has provided funding for the planning and design of the program and is funding most of the purchase of project materials and construction. The Kootenai Tribe also received a grant from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality to help purchase construction materials.