



## KOOTENAI TRIBE OF IDAHO

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MAR 24 2000

March 15, 2000

Federal Caucus Comment Record  
c/o BPA-PL  
707 W. Main Street, Suite 500  
Spokane, WA 99205

Re: Comments submitted by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho on the "Conservation of Columbia Basin Fish, Building a Conceptual Recovery Plan," December 1999 Draft

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) thanks the Federal Caucus for providing the opportunity to comment on this important document. The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho submits these comments as part of the public comment period and may provide amendments at a later date as a result of future government-to-government consultations.

The KTOI is committed to participating in initiatives that promote healthy ecosystems and productive government-to-government relationships. The KTOI also strives for consistent and accountable actions that ensure economic sustainability of our resources now and for future generations.

The KTOI commends the Federal Caucus for building a conceptual recovery plan that considers the entire Columbia Basin watershed and its aquatic species. For this reason, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho requests that further consideration be given in the technical documents to the ecosystem impacts to non-anadromous fish that are present in the Columbia River Basin. Specific comments are provided in a separate attachment.

The KTOI also commends the Federal Caucus for providing the management options in a matrix format. This format encourages the use of prudent and careful planning to assure the conservation of fish, wildlife, and historical Tribal values.

The KTOI supports options that ensure opportunities for active Tribal participation in the decision making process. In particular, the KTOI supports increased coordination in the policy and implementation process through collaborative involvement of the affected Tribes, states and federal governmental agencies. This involvement would include the ability of the participants to exercise their respective authorities and responsibilities as leaders and stewards of the Columbia Basin resources.

*for Eileen Wheaton*  
Velma Bahe  
Tribal Chairperson

## ATTACHMENT

### Specific Comments from the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho Relating to "Conservation of Columbia Fish, Building a Conceptual Recovery Plan" December, 1999 Draft

- 1 | The broad policy choices represented by this paper should also include a management review of the existing governmental infrastructure and the institutional barriers that stand in the way of effective species preservation. An efficient and effective decision making process, that involves all stakeholders may be the conservation measure that is the most effective in the recovery of the affected species.
- 2 | When considering hydropower options, it is important to consider the impacts that may occur within the entire ecosystem. In particular, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho requests that the flow strategies outlined in the final "Recovery Plan for the Kootenai River Population of the White Sturgeon," (USFWS, 1999) be considered. These strategies are vital to the Tribal interests in the recovery of the Kootenai River White Sturgeon. Please note also, that the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho also assists in the development of annual flow management plans and should be listed on page 76 of the draft plan.
- 3 | Include in the Hydro Appendix, the native Kokanee, a transboundary fish found in Kootenay Lake, British Columbia. This fish has been adversely affected by dam operations.