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Major expansion underway at Kootenai River Inn and Casino

Project includes all new rooms, casino showroom, restaurant and new spa

(Bonners Ferry, ID) – The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho has announced major expansion and renovation plans for the Kootenai River Inn and Casino.

The project, which begins this summer, will feature a new showcase casino room with a masterpiece “river” running overhead. The Tribe also plans a new spa and expanded meeting and dining areas.

All of the hotel rooms, each with a private balcony and view of the beautiful Kootenai River and the ancestral home of the Tribe, are being completely renovated.

“Our guestrooms will all be new from top to bottom and this phase of our master plan will be completed this summer,” said Gary Aitken Sr., chairman of the Kootenai Tribal Council.

Shortly after Labor Day, a major expansion and improvement of the casino facilities will commence, along with a complete new kitchen and dining room expansion along the river. The banquet and meeting facilities will more than double.

“Our Inn hosts a number of meetings and groups now and our ability to serve larger groups will play a major role in positioning the Inn for the future along with our management group of Hagadone Hospitality Company,” said Kym Cooper, Vice-Chairperson of the Tribal Council.

Part of the Kootenai River Inn and Casino operation is a ‘temporary’ casino building that will become all new and permanent. The Tribe will not be adding any Indian Gaming Devices to what they now operate but older models will be replaced with an exciting new generation of IGD’s. The new machines utilize updated technology complying with Proposition One guidelines overwhelmingly passed last year by Idaho voters.

The new casino room designed by architects Rann Haight and Roy Marshall, along with interior designer Pam Burke, will feature a unique river flowing through the casino and suspended from a vaulted ceiling. The ‘river,’ which is a sculpture composed of wood, glass, metal and natural objects, will flow over a dramatic real-life waterfall at the end of the casino. Casino guest will have a unique perspective of being below the river and behind the flowing waterfall.

“It is a concept that has never before been created and we think it will put the Kootenai River Inn on a list of must-see places in the region,” said Haight.

The Tribe will also be adding a new full-service spa that will further enhance the services provided by the Inn. The spa will feature a salon for hair care, manicures, pedicures, facials and a variety of massage treatments. A soothing meditation room will allow spa goers maximum relaxation before and after treatments.

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho opened the Kootenai River Inn in 1986 and since that time has continued to expand and improve the property. Management services are provided by Hagadone Hospitality of Coeur d'Alene.

The upgrade coincides with two other future-thinking projects for the city of Bonners Ferry. A major highway improvement project is underway which will link the Kootenai River Inn and Casino directly with downtown Bonners Ferry for the first time. This summer the community will build a 325-foot-long underpass connecting downtown Bonners Ferry with the Kootenai River Inn and Casino, as well as launch a major downtown beautification project. In 2006 the town plans to build an International Gateway Visitor's Center.

"The members of our Tribe are very proud of the Kootenai River Inn and Casino," said Aitken. "Our current master plan will be completed when this portion of our development is completed in late spring of 2005. While we are not the biggest operation in the region, we certainly have the goal to be the best and give our customers the finest odds to win at our Inn."

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