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Thu Feb 09 2012 14:02:13 GMT-0500 (Eastern Standard Time)

## **CBP Designates Kootenai Tribe's Enhanced Tribal Card as Acceptable Travel Document**

01/31/2012

**Washington** – U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho announced today the publication of a notice in the Federal Register designating the Kootenai Enhanced Tribal Card (ETC) as a travel document acceptable for entering into the United States through a land or sea port of entry.

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho was the first tribe to sign a memorandum of agreement with CBP in March 2009 to begin the process of creating a secure travel document denoting identity, tribal membership and citizenship. Production of the cards began in May 2011.

The Kootenai ETC incorporates secure issuance processes, document security features and radio frequency identification technology that meet the requirements of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative. The ETCs will be available to qualifying Kootenai Tribe members on a voluntary basis.

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho is a cross-border tribe whose members live in the United States or Canada. The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho is also one of seven bands of the Kootenai Nation, with two in the United States and five in Canada. Under the current agreement, only members of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho can be issued an ETC.

"We are proud of our partnership with CBP that has led to the issuance of the Kootenai ETC," said Kootenai Tribal Chairperson Jennifer Porter. "The Kootenai ETC allows our tribal citizens to continue to travel within Kootenai Territory on both sides of the United States-Canada boundary to visit family and practice our culture while helping to secure the border for the greater good of all citizens."

Since 2008, several U.S. tribes have engaged CBP on the ETC initiative and are currently working with CBP to enhance their tribal identification document. To date, 12 U.S. tribes have officially submitted an ETC memorandum of agreement to CBP. Out of these 12, CBP has signed a memorandum of agreement with six tribes: the Kootenai of Idaho, the Pascua Yaqui of Arizona, the Seneca of New York, the Tohono O'odham of Arizona, the Coquille of Oregon, and the Hydaburg of Alaska.

In the WHTI Land/Sea Final Rule, published April 3, 2008, DHS allowed all U.S. federally recognized tribes to work with CBP to produce an ETC denoting citizenship and identity that could be accepted for entry into the United States through a port of entry. Under a memorandum of agreement, each interested U.S. tribe will develop a secure photo identification document to be issued only to the tribe's legitimate members who could be either U.S. or Canadian citizens. These documents can be electronically verified by CBP at ports of entry.

*U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.*

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