



Columbia River Toxics Reduction
Lead Entity

Upper Columbia United Tribes

Presented by Caroline Keever

Lower Estuary Science to Policy Summit 9/2/26



Agenda

- Introduction to UCUT
- Intention of the CRTRLE Project
- Structure of the CRTRLE Project
- Progress and benchmarks
- Q&A



Honoring Ancestral Lands Through Tribal Unity and Stewardship.

The Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) unite five sovereign Tribal nations in Washington and Idaho—the Coeur d'Alene, Colville, Kalispel, Kootenai, and Spokane Tribes—to protect the natural resources and cultural heritage of the Columbia Plateau. From restoring salmon in the Upper Columbia River and safeguarding clean water to conserving wildlife and strengthening Tribal traditions, UCUT leads science-based projects that sustain the environment and communities of the Inland Northwest for future generations.

Our Six Project Paths



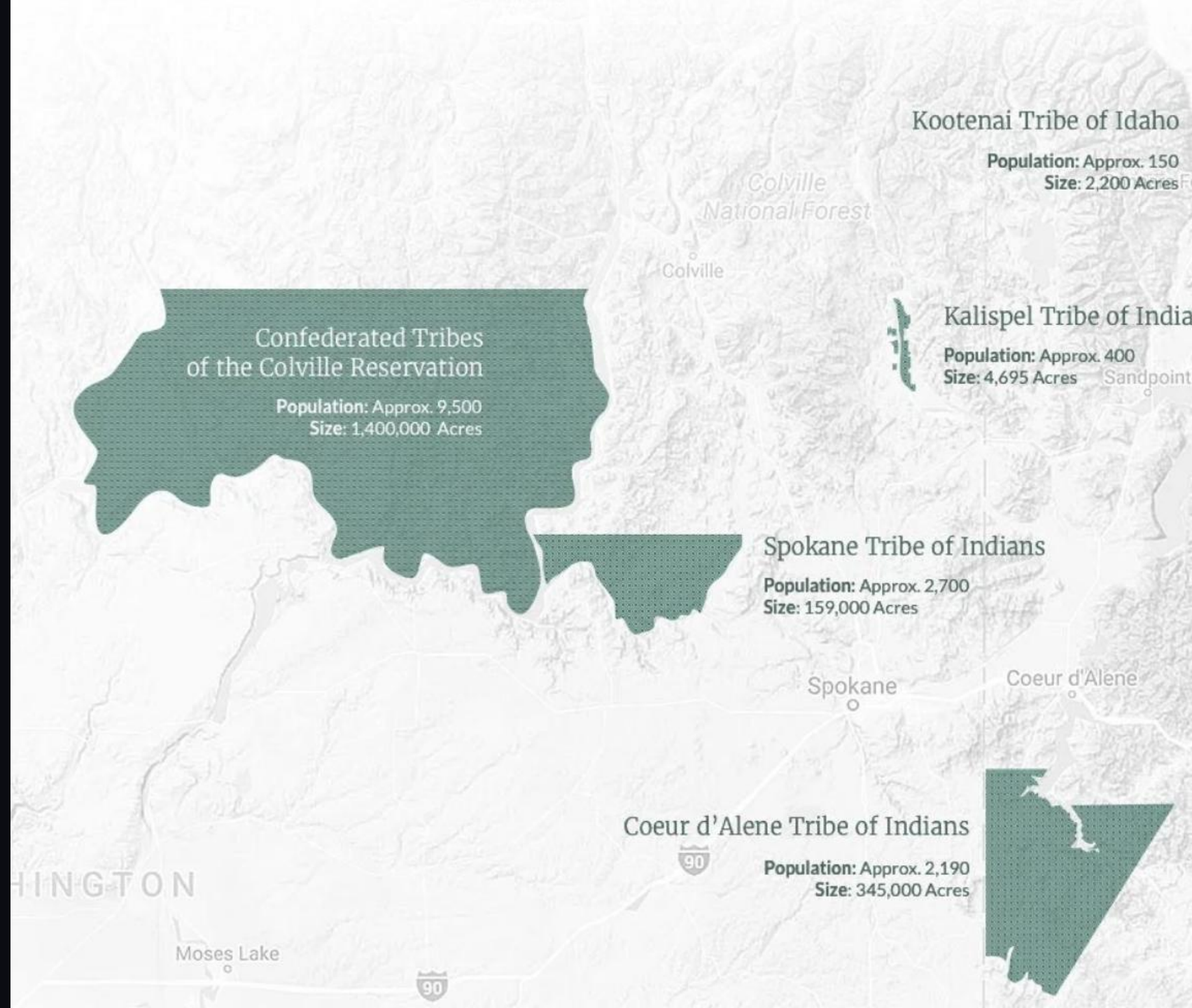
Who are the Upper Columbia United Tribes?

Columbia River Toxics Reduction
Lead Entity (CRTRLE):

Project Manager, Caroline Keever

Project Coordinator, Jerry White, Jr.





Columbia River Toxics Reduction Lead Entity (CRTRLE)



The Columbia River Toxics reduction Lead Entity is composed of five major project and focus areas or “project bins”.

Subawards available for Member Tribes of UCUT and other NGO entities.

Toxics Reduction Strategic Plan

- Provide a framework for integrating all parties into a cohesive plan
- Creates an overall framework to organize efforts in preventing and removing persistent, bioaccumulative toxics (PBTs) and Chemicals of Concern (CoC) from Columbia Basin waterways.
- Regional inventory of historic mines

Education and Outreach

- Community education that prevents toxics from entering the ecosystems and waterways and informs the public as to managing risk.

Agricultural buffers and Best Management Practices (BMPs)

- Recovery of stream-side, riparian habitats to prevent toxic pollution from running off the surrounding landscape into waterways.

Lead Trade-Out

- Prevent new lead (in the form of fishing gear) from entering and polluting waterways.

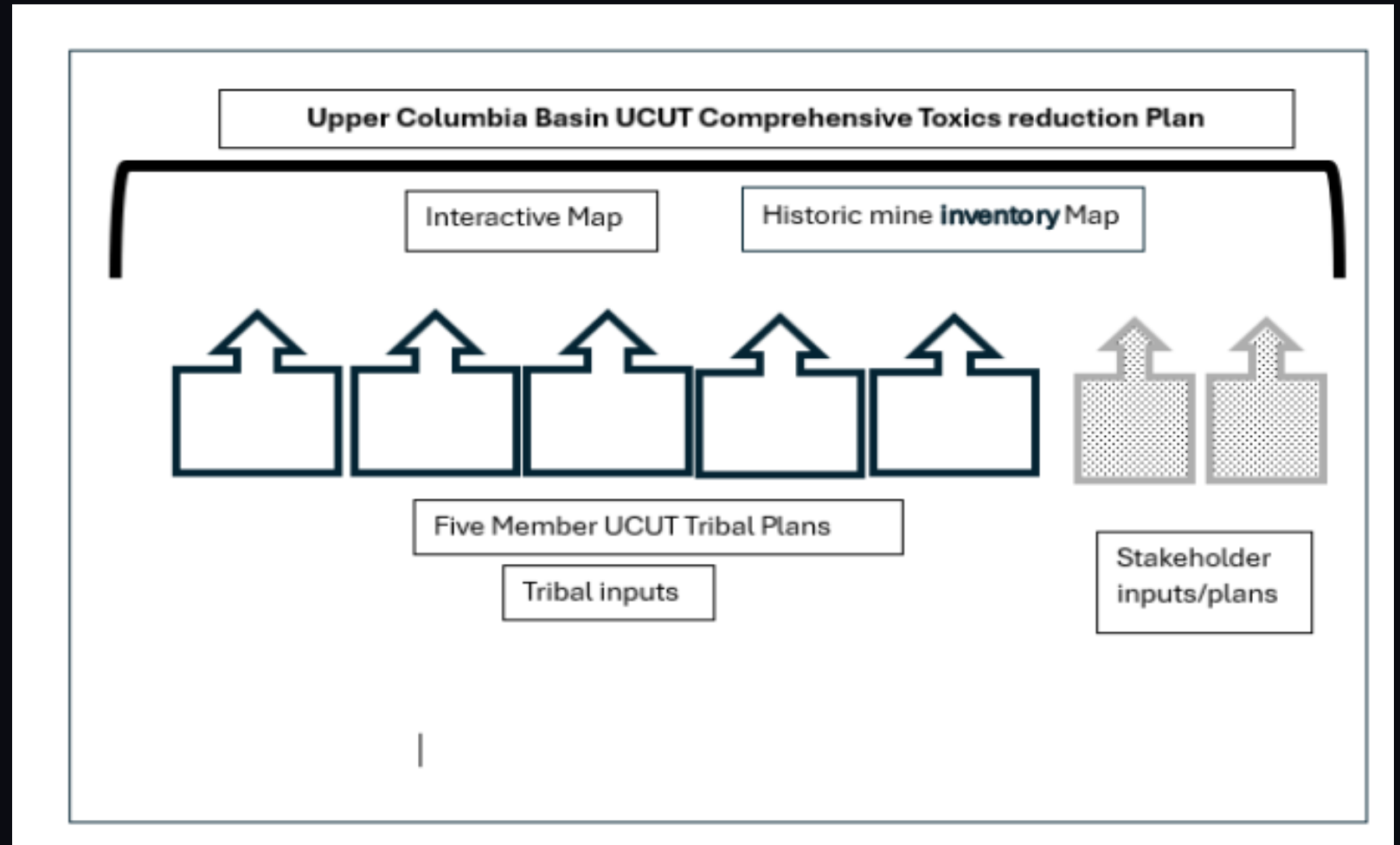
UCUT Central Plan Process: Website, and Interactive Map

Process:

Each Tribe will build a specific plan – relevant to tribal geography (same deliverables)

Each member Tribe will contribute/coordinate components of their strategic plans to the central UCUT plan :

- 1) Toxics inventory (monitoring results, permitted sources, etc.)
- 2) Focus List
- 3) Priority list
- 4) Gap Analysis
- 5) Inventory of sources and pathways
- 6) Identify Strategic Initiatives – Implementation Actions
- 7) Incorporate Historic Mining inventory into plan
- 8) Each member tribe contributes information to the UCUT (housed) Interactive Map



CRTLRLE Subawards

Toxics Reduction projects:

For Non-Governmental Organizations

- Riparian Buffers
- Outreach and Education
- Lead (Pb) Fishing Tackle



Outreach & Education Subaward:

Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF)

Outreach on issues that revolve around
the Upper Columbia River

2026 LRF Bus Tour of the Watershed.

67 participants - members of the public
and 22 agency representatives

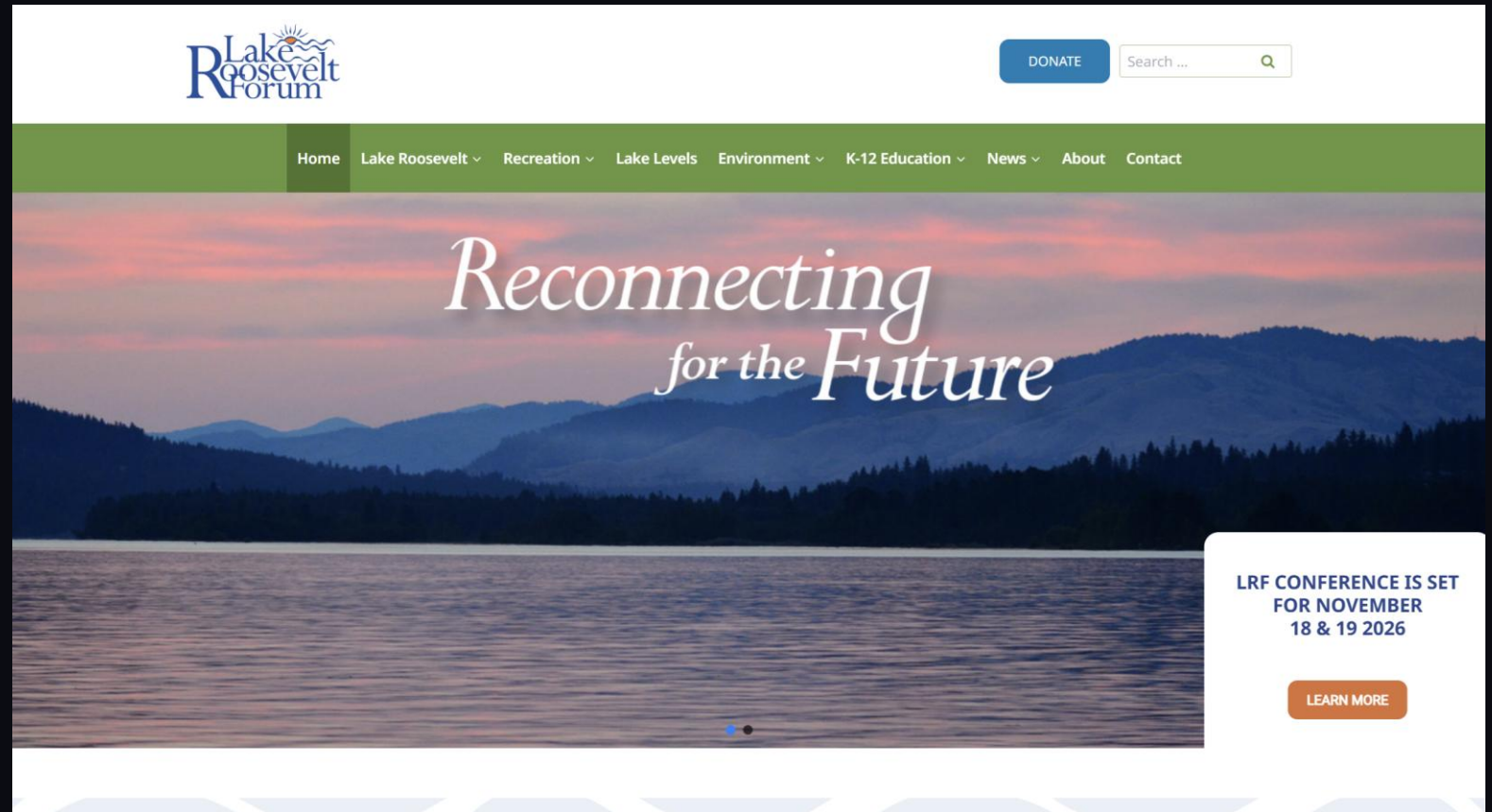


Outreach & Education Subaward:

Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF)

Conference hosting Tribes and Managers in Toxic Reduction efforts

Resident and anadromous fish recovery



Outreach & Education:

Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF)

Newsletters keeping the public apprised of events and efforts in the upper Columbia River Basin



The screenshot shows the Lake Roosevelt Forum website. The header includes the logo, a 'DONATE' button, and a search bar. The navigation menu lists: Home, Lake Roosevelt, Recreation, Lake Levels, Environment, K-12 Education, News, About, and Contact. The main content area features a 'News' section with a breadcrumb trail: 'All News / Education / Northport Community Gathers to hear Residential Soil Sampling Results and More'. The article title is 'Northport Community Gathers to hear Residential Soil Sampling Results and More', dated January 29, 2026. The text describes a community meeting hosted by the EPA, Washington State Department of Ecology, and Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) in Northport. It mentions that approximately 20-30 individuals attended, and Ecology provided an update on the cleanup and reopening of the Northport Waterfront. The article also notes a memorial and dedication to John Roland, a Washington Department of Ecology employee. A sidebar on the right lists 'News Categories' including Agency Updates, All News, Aquatic Invasive Species, Cleanup - Soil & Waterfront, Columbia River Systems Operation Review, and Columbia River Treaty.

Lake Roosevelt Forum

[DONATE](#)

[Home](#) [Lake Roosevelt](#) [Recreation](#) [Lake Levels](#) [Environment](#) [K-12 Education](#) [News](#) [About](#) [Contact](#)

News

[All News](#) / [Education](#) / [Northport Community Gathers to hear Residential Soil Sampling Results and More](#)

Northport Community Gathers to hear Residential Soil Sampling Results and More

January 29, 2026

Last September, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Washington State Department of Ecology, and Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) hosted a community meeting in Northport. Approximately 20-30 individuals attended the meeting. Ecology provided an update on the cleanup and reopening of the Northport Waterfront next to the town park during the first portion of the meeting. This meeting followed a memorial and dedication to John Roland, a Washington Department of Ecology employee whose collaborative efforts spearheaded the actions that led to the cleanup of the riverfront and park area completed this summer (to read more, see page 6: "Northport Remembers").

Following the memorial dedication, EPA provided an update on results of the 2025 soil sampling at 87 residential properties, including the concentrations of lead and arsenic detected in soil. EPA is reviewing results from 2025 and prior sampling events to identify properties eligible for potential cleanup in 2026. They are targeting to complete 50 properties in 2026 and 50 in 2027. EPA is performing the early cleanup actions under

News Categories

- [Agency Updates](#)
- [All News](#)
- [Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
- [Cleanup - Soil & Waterfront](#)
- [Columbia River Systems Operation Review](#)
- [Columbia River Treaty](#)

Lead (Pb) Fishing Tackle
Exchange – Outreach &
Education Subaward:



Lead Fishing Tackle

- The Lead Exchange Program is currently underway on the Spokane Reservation and along the upper Columbia River. To date, the program has engaged more than 35 Tribal and non-
- Tribal anglers, resulting in collection and removal of 1,695 grams of lead tackle. In exchange, the Spokane Tribe has purchased and provided 11,536 grams of lead-free fishing tackle.
- The exchange began during the Inland Lakes Fishing Derby kickoff event and continues throughout the duration of the project in accordance with the timeline outlined in the Detailed Work Plan. The Lead Exchange Program officially began on April 6, 2026.

Lead Tackle Exchange



How does the program work?

- STI is working to **reduce lead** entering local waters by promoting the use of non-lead fishing tackle.
- Youth **ages 16 and under** can bring in their lead weights and swap to get a new tackle box
- Schedule for Trade Out
 - **April 6-9**, DNR Water and Fish Bld, 8am – 4pm: Bottom Floor
 - **Saturday April 11**, Alfred E. McCoy Admin Bld, 10-2pm
 - **April 13 -16**, DNR Water and Fish, 8-4pm: Bottom Floor
- The new tackle box measures 11 x 7.5 inches, is compartmentalized, and includes most essential gear for **fishing**.
- Participation is voluntary, and only a **limited number** of boxes are available for exchange.

Contact

STI DNR Toxics Reduction Team Lead
Grant Gollehon
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Guardians of The Land

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho is working to restore habitat and populations of fish and wildlife as well as implement programs for the benefit of its citizens and the community.

Outreach and Education
Subaward:

Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Idaho Conservation League (ICL)



ICL Outreach and Engagement on the Elk River Watershed

VISION

A future in which the Kootenai/Kootenay River watershed is governed as a unified ecological system guided by Indigenous leadership, scientific integrity, and cross-border accountability—ensuring clean water, healthy ecosystems, and thriving cultural resources in perpetuity.

OBJECTIVES

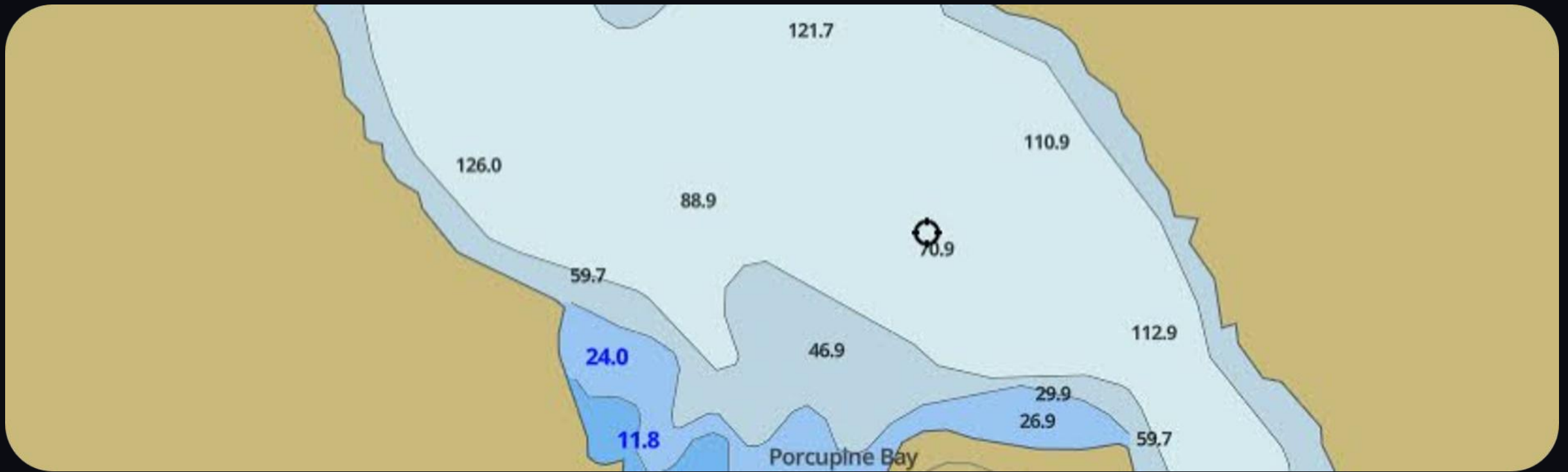
- 1. Increase public awareness about watershed impacts from Elk Valley coal mining*
- 2. Elevate KTOI and Ktunaxa perspectives and leadership*
- 3. Strengthen alignment among indigenous, conservation, angling, faith, and environmental justice communities*
- 4. Inform and enhance U.S. regulatory engagement related to transboundary water quality*
- 5. Generate measurable civic engagement through screenings, digital engagement, and partner mobilization*
- 6. Build and strengthen the coalition working for watershed protection*

Outreach and Engagement on the Elk River Watershed

The success of this project hinges on meaningful collaboration with KTOI, effective storytelling and education, a compelling film that gets attention, and public advocacy through accessible tools and channels.

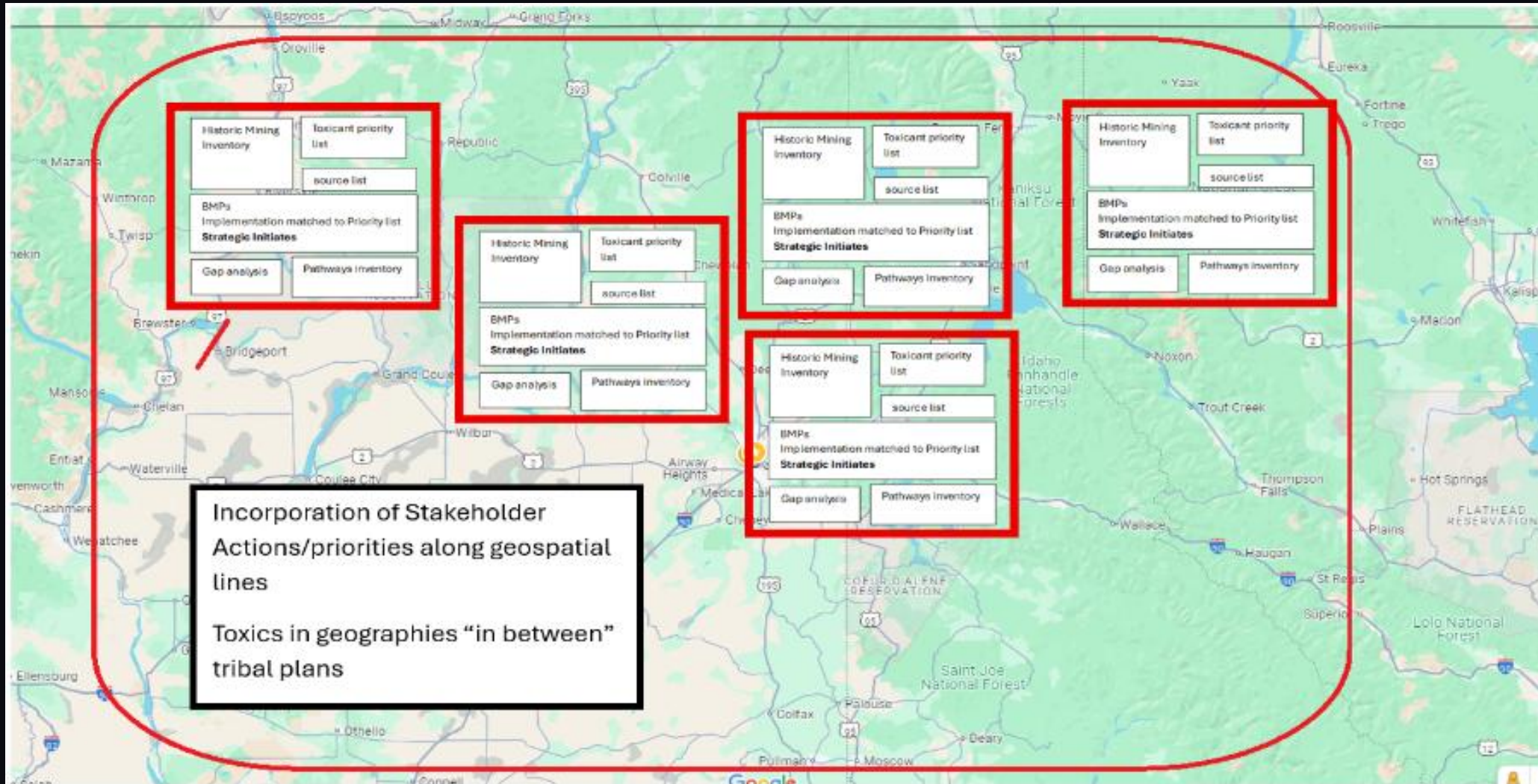
- Goal 1: Produce Short Film
- Goal 2: Develop Impact Plan
- Goal 3: Host Screenings with Engagement
- Goal 4: Strengthen Tribal Collaboration
- Goal 5: Evaluate & Report Impact





QUESTIONS?

UCUT Comprehensive Toxics Reduction Strategic Plan:



**A Rough SCHEMATIC of Planning Universe for the UCUT
Comprehensive plan to Reduce Toxics & the Tribal Plans**