The group that maintains a data collection for Spokane and other Eastern Washington counties will cross the state line and launch a similar project for Kootenai County next year.

Eastern Washington University’s Institute for Public Policy and Economic Analysis will put together a collection of statistics covering social issues, health data, public safety, recreational activity, economic performance and other activities based in Kootenai County.

The goal is to launch the North Idaho data site next spring.

A Spokane Community Indicators project launched in 2006. It’s at communityindicators.ewu.edu. One role it plays is to give civic groups or agencies benchmarks to determine how fast or slow the community is making progress on addressing key goals.

Institute Executive Director Patrick Jones said the data in the Kootenai database will vary depending on results from focus group meetings later this year. Kootenai County residents and civic officials will be asked to select data they want included in the project.

“We go to the community and present a menu. Then we ask what do they (Kootenai County) want and what are we missing?” Jones said.

Jones said two sources of money for the Kootenai project are Inland Northwest Community Foundation and Congress. The nonprofit foundation is contributing $20,000; a recent federal appropriation included $50,000 for the project, Jones added.

Jones said he made one overture a few years ago to Idaho Sen. Mike Crapo but received no indication of support. The EWU institute then made a request to Sens. Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray of Washington. Both agreed that Kootenai County and Spokane County share the same economy and their social and economic measures should be jointly tracked, Jones said.