

Lake Pend Oreille not expected to begin lowering until after October 1

Contact: Cathy Hlebechuk (503) 808-3942 or Casondra Brewster (206) 764-6958

SEATTLE--Lake Pend Oreille will begin falling to its winter level after October 1, according to the Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).

The Corps operates Albeni Falls Dam, which regulates the level of Lake Pend Oreille. The winter elevation is expected to be near 2051 feet on November 20, conditions permitting. The start date and the ending elevation are dependent on precipitation.

The winter operation was submitted in a System Operational Request (SOR) by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), National Marine Fisheries Service and the Pend Oreille/Priest Lakes Commission on September 15. It was submitted to the Regional Forum Technical Management Team (TMT), created by the 2000 National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Biological Opinions. Consensus of TMT members was to implement the SOR. The Corps of Engineers has agreed to implement it.

Lake Pend Oreille's winter level is managed in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Idaho fish managers as part of a 10-year test of lake levels on kokanee populations. Kokanee serve as a major food source for Lake Pend Oreille's threatened bull trout.

Information about the lake level for Lake Pend Oreille is on-line at:

<http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/nws/hh/basins/pend.html>