

Spring forecast for Lake Pend Oreille is slightly above normal

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SANDPOINT – People residing in flood-prone areas should take precautions and be aware that there is potential for flooding this spring if the weather turns warm, especially if that warmth is followed by rainfall.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Seattle District’s Emergency Management Division will be on site conducting, annual flood coordination exercises with state and local agencies. If flooding occurs, the Corps can assist authorities with emergency management activities. The National Weather Service issues flood watches and warnings and should be consulted if flooding appears imminent.

The Corps operates Albeni Falls Dam on the Pend Oreille River. The water supply seasonal volume forecast for Pend Oreille – Albeni Falls Dam is 103 percent of normal. That prediction is the stream flow volume of water which is expected into Lake Pend Oreille, during the spring and summer. The Corps determines reservoir releases and lake fill rates by modeling estimated lake inflows that take into consideration weather and water supply forecasts. The Corps is operating Albeni Falls Dam to manage the lake and keep it below the flood control elevation of 2056 feet through April. The refill is expected to begin in early May.

Although the water supply forecast is near normal, low elevation snowpack is above normal and remains widespread. The current April weather forecast indicates cooler than normal temperatures, which would support a gradual runoff. However, if a quick warm up and/or precipitation occur, small streams and tributaries will see high flows and possible flooding from melting of low elevation snow.

Current lake levels and yearly average lake elevations are available at any time on-line at:

<http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/nws/hh/basins/pend.html>. The water supply forecast is generated by the National Weather Service Northwest River Forecast Center. For more information on water supply forecasting, please see <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wsf/wsf.html>. For actual forecasts, please see http://www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/water_supply/ws_fcst.cgi.

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