



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Jon Hanian
(208) 334-2100

GOVERNOR OTTER ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT TO EXTEND FULL POOL ON LAKE PEND OREILLE

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter announced today that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) have agreed to operations at Albeni Falls Dam that will keep the level of northern Idaho's Lake Pend Oreille full through the summer and longer into September.

Clarification of operations at the dam and related processes will help address community concerns about lake level fluctuation and help ensure that the community has an appropriate role in working with the federal agencies. Albeni Falls Dam is located on the Pend Oreille River between Oldtown and Priest River.

"Working with our state, federal and tribal partners, as well as the many local citizens who commented on proposed lake operations, I am pleased to say that we have achieved a new process going forward that I think will maintain and enhance the scenic and recreational value of Lake Pend Oreille," Governor Otter said.

Specific lake operations are detailed in a letter to the Governor from David Ponganis, Regional Director of Programs for the Northwestern Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Greg Delwiche, Deputy Administrator of the BPA. The Corps operates Albeni Falls Dam, which controls the level of Lake Pend Oreille and provides flood control for rivers downstream. The BPA sells electricity generated at the dam.

"This will give the public greater certainty about summer lake levels and the timing of any necessary drawdowns for flood control or other purposes," Governor Otter said. "In addition, meeting the objectives will ensure that kokanee spawning nests or 'redds' near the shoreline are not left high and dry, and habitat for bull trout downstream is protected."

Ford Elsaesser, Chairman of the Pend Oreille Basin Commission, said the new arrangement shows that good will and collaboration among many parties with diverse interests can yield good results. "Coordination and cooperation got us to where we are today," Elsaesser said. "These new operations reflect the economic value our region derives from increased recreation on the lake."

Bill Booth of Coeur d'Alene, an Idaho member of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, represented the Governor in the discussions and helped facilitate the new arrangement.

"The high level of public involvement by the Lakes Commission and the Lake Pend Oreille Alliance was crucial to the effort, as was the willingness of the Kalispell Tribe and federal agencies to consider alternatives for downstream bull trout protection," Booth said. "These were the keys to success."

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