

Lake Pend Oreille Fishery Update



Lakes Commission Meeting
Priest River, ID
June 3, 2025



Lake Pend Oreille

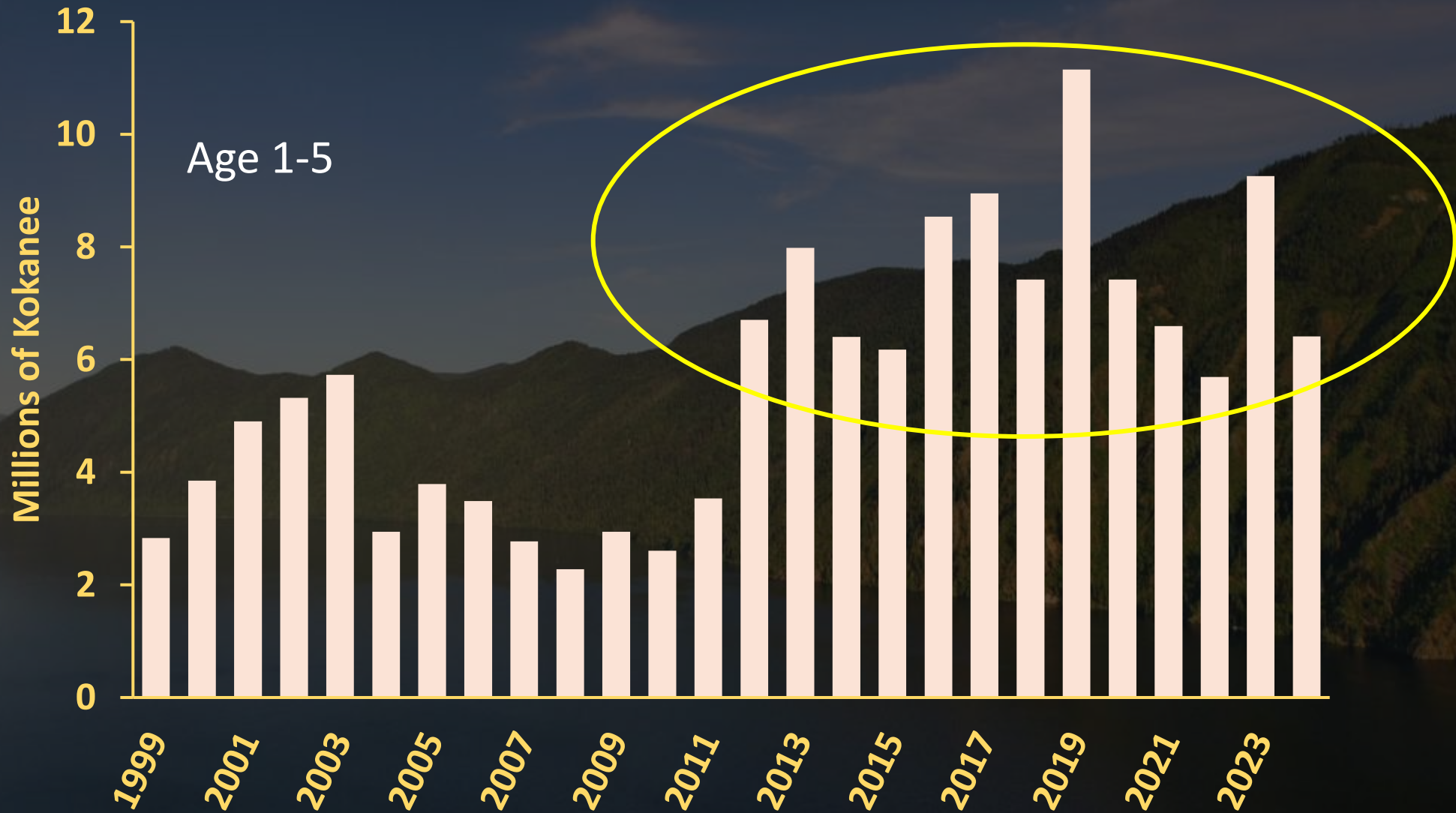
STATE OF THE LAKE

March 27, 2025 | 6:00pm

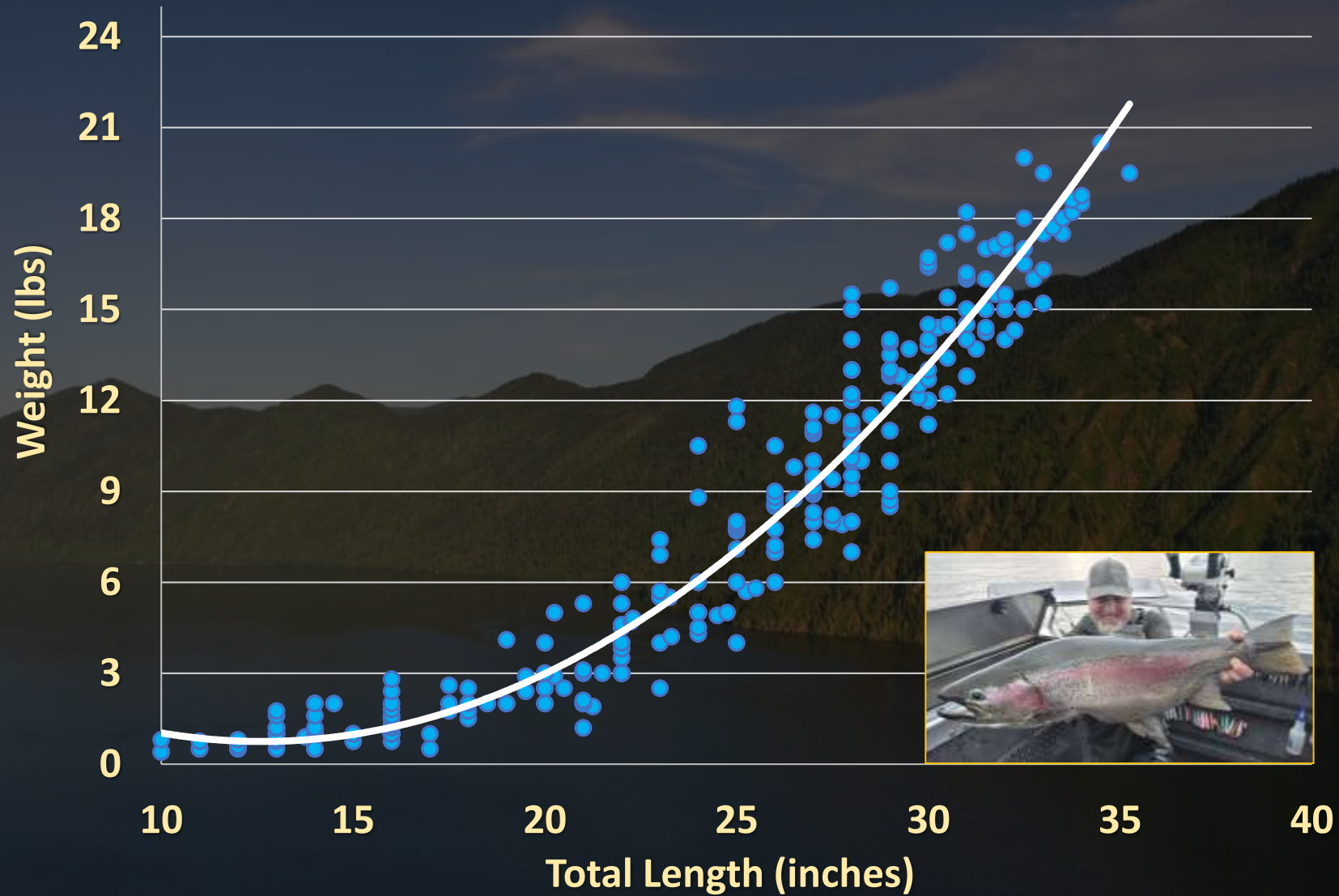
University of Idaho Sandpoint Organic Agriculture Center
10881 N Boyer Road, Sandpoint, Idaho 83864



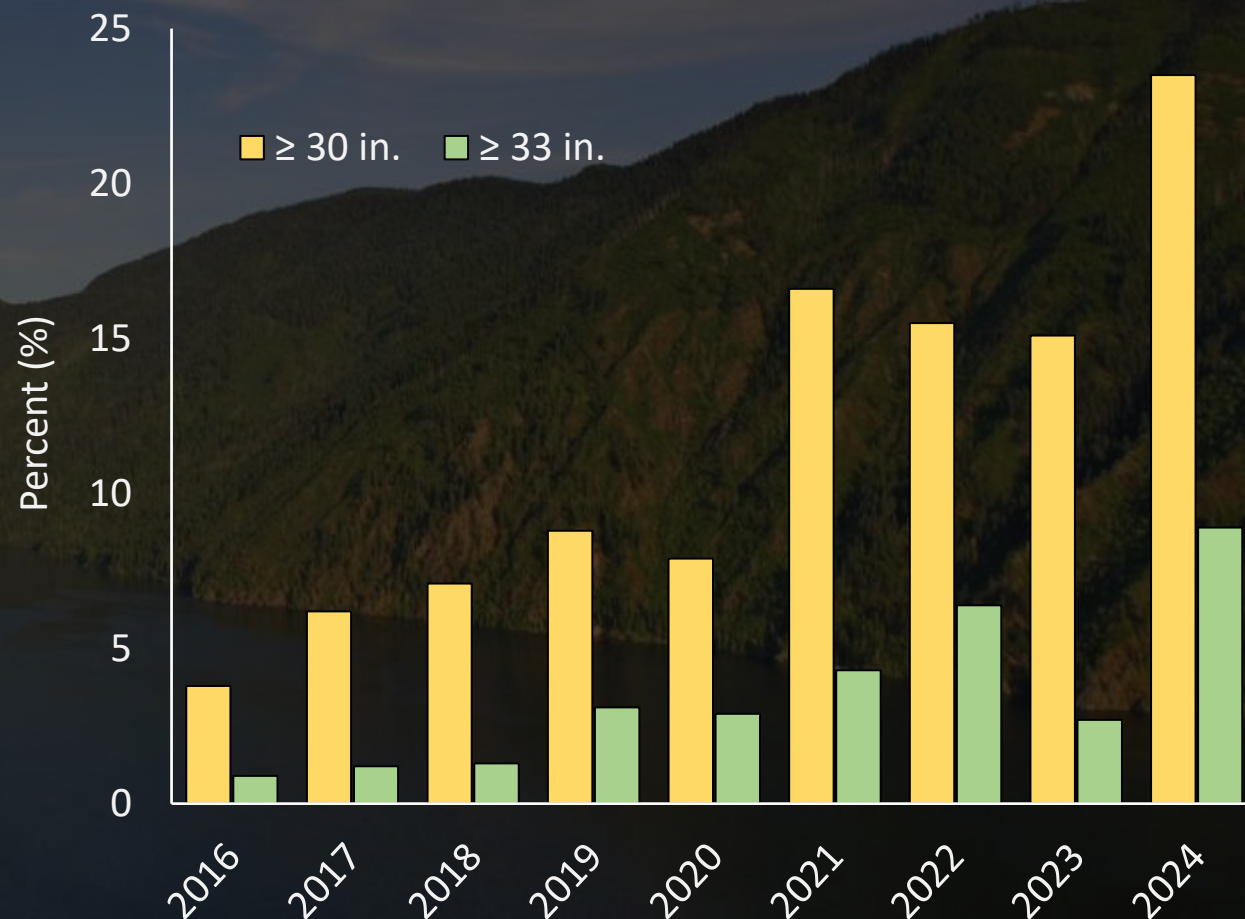
Kokanee Abundance



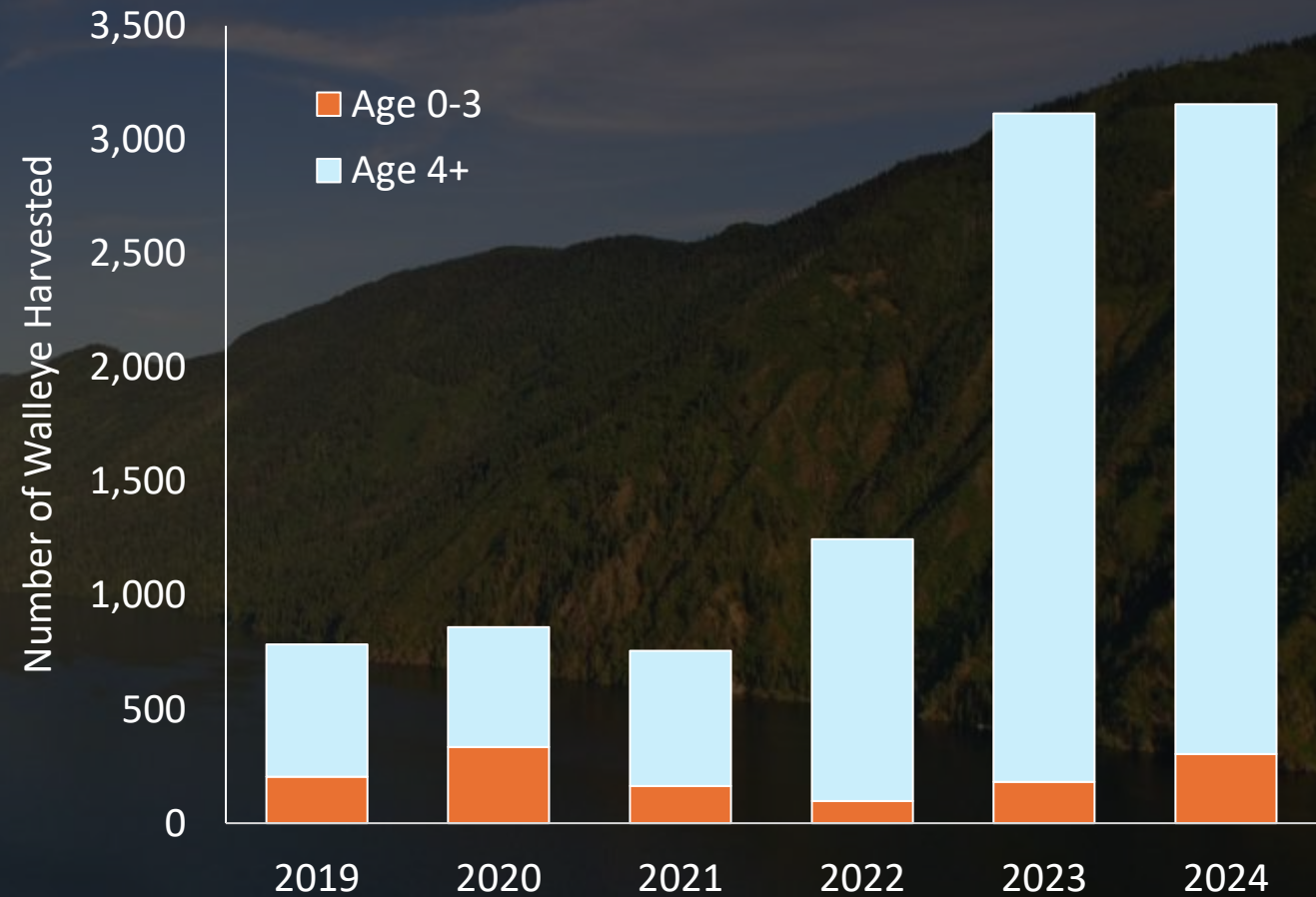
Rainbow Trout Growth



Angler Rainbow Catch



Walleye Angler Harvest

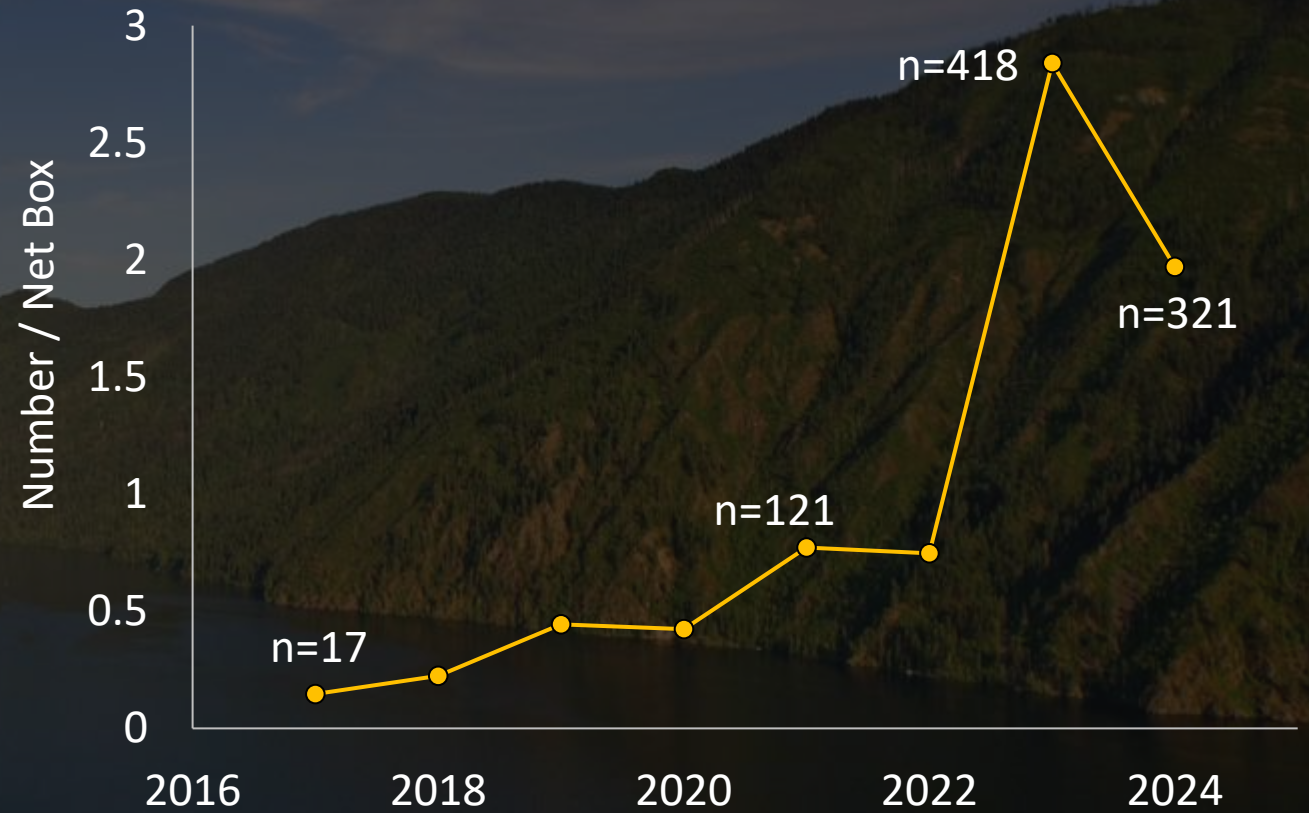


Northern Pike



Photo Credit: Eric Skinner

Northern Pike Bycatch



Angler Harvest – 2023 tagging study

- 52% caught
- 45% harvested



Northern Pike Research Project



- University of Idaho
- Diet, abundance, age structure, growth rates, etc.

Overall Fishery Status


- Species we manage for, objectives largely being met
 - Diverse fishery
 - Very high angler satisfaction
 - Native fish conservation
- Management against Lake Trout, Walleye, Northern Pike generally proving effective
 - More work ahead to keep populations in-check
 - Providing additional fishing opportunity
 - Reasonably high angler satisfaction


Overall Fishery Status

- Recreational fishery performing very well
- Sustaining current fishery will continue to be challenging
- Delicate balance in large and increasingly complex lake
 - Environmental factors, food web dynamics, etc.
- Primarily depends upon
 - Predation management
 - Mysid shrimp
- And, continued public engagement and support!

Public Outreach Tools

<https://idfg.idaho.gov/LPO>

**Idaho Fish and Game**




Lake Pend Oreille Fisheries

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Lake Pend Oreille provides outstanding angling opportunity, making it one of the most popular fisheries in Idaho.

Lake Pend Oreille is the largest lake in Idaho and supports native fishes, such as Westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout, along with more than 10 non-native species.

There are numerous challenges and complexities to managing a sustainable fishery in Lake Pend Oreille. The most notable example is the near collapse of the kokanee population in the 2000s from excessive predation. An ongoing and aggressive predator management program has greatly recovered both the kokanee population, as well as the trophy potential of the species that feed on kokanee.



State of the Lake

Fisheries staff will hold their annual State of the Lake public meeting on April 13, 2023, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. PDT at the Ponderay Events Center (401 Bonner Mall Way) to share updates on latest population trends and research related to kokanee, rainbow trout, lake trout, walleye and more in Lake Pend Oreille.



Management Updates

- 2025-2027 Fishing Regulations
 - Took effect on Jan. 1
 - No changes for LPO or connected waters
 - Priest and Upper Priest lakes can now harvest 2 WCT >16”
- Spearfishing now allowed for some game fish species
 - IDFG Commission now can set spearfishing seasons for game fish
 - Commission has asked IDFG staff to develop proposals
 - Limited to species classified as ‘incompatible’

Management Updates

- Panhandle Region spearfishing opportunities
 - Unprotected non-game species; no limit (existing regulation)
 - Walleye in any water they occur; no limit
 - Lake Trout in Lake Pend Oreille; no limit
 - Lake Trout in Upper Priest Lake; no limit
 - Northern Pike in Lake Pend Oreille, Clark Fork River, Pack River, and Pend Oreille River; no limit
- Takes effect on July 1, 2025

Questions?

