



Pend Oreille County

Board of Commissioners

Karen Skoog
District #1

Mike Manus
District #2

Stephen Kiss
District #3

Rhonda Cary
Clerk of the Board

Phone: 509-447-4119
FAX: 509 447-0595

PO Box 5025
Newport, WA 99156-5025

E-mail: commissionersoffice@pendoreille.org

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Precipitation, saturated soils, high water tables, and runoff have caused landslides, erosion and high water levels in lakes, rivers, and creeks. We are very sympathetic to the problems our neighbors are experiencing. Impacts from this wet year have been varied. High surface water has caused bank erosion and damage to infrastructure like retaining walls. A high-water table has caused wet basements and land movement that has put homes in harms way.

The Board of County Commissioners has reviewed the possibility of wake restrictions on various lakes in Pend Oreille County. Each lake has its own specific set of circumstances to consider; from the size and use of the lake to historic lake levels, drainage issues, wind driven waves, winter impacts and social tolerance to both wakes and a ban on wakes.

Due to the small size of Sacheen Lake, the highest lake levels in almost a decade, and a unified request from the lake association, the Board has implemented a temporary wake restriction.

Diamond Lake is currently slightly below the levels experienced during the most recent wake restriction in 2012. Reports we are receiving show the level is dropping slowly. Because Diamond Lake is larger and has areas where wakes would not have as much impact on improved property and because there is less acceptance of a wake ban by residents, the Board has taken a middle-of-the-road approach. We will provide signs to remind people of the Negligent Operation portion of the current County Boating Safety Ordinance which is available in full on the County Commissioner's webpage. We urge the public toward careful and prudent boating operations under the existing conditions to reduce the effects of vessel wakes on private property. Operators with boats designed to produce a large wake should be considerate of others and aware of potential damage done by large wakes.

The Board is reviewing Bead Lake for a wake ban as well. Of concern is the amount of sediment in the lake as it is also the community drinking water supply. Shoreline debris has washed into the lake causing additional risk to boaters.

Shoreline erosion is a concern. Our Community Development Department stands ready to give personalized and site-specific assistance for people looking for ways to protect their shoreline with a project. We have seen some projects completed since the last high water event that have been successful in preventing further erosion.

Our Emergency Management Department has made sand and bags available at the District 3 road shop next to the transfer station on Deer Valley Road. The purpose of the sand is to protect infrastructure and buildings from flood water.

These discussions and decisions require careful consideration. No matter the outcome, citizens can be left dissatisfied. We will continue to receive input and information on the changing conditions of the lakes and adjust as needed.

PEND OREILLE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Karen Skoog, Chair



Stephen Kiss, Vice-Chair



Mike Manus, Member