



SHERIFF KOOTENAI COUNTY



SHERIFF **BEN WOLFINGER**

UNDERSHERIFF **DAN MATTOS**

Media Release March 17, 2016

Kootenai County, Idaho: The Kootenai County Sheriff's Office would like to caution boaters who choose to venture onto the waters of Kootenai County during this time of spring runoff.

Kootenai County Ordinance establishes certain bodies of water as "no wake zones" when there is flooding or threat of flooding.

When this occurs, there are certain automatic no wake zone designations for the Coeur d'Alene River and all navigable waters within the Coeur d'Alene River drainage (including the Chain Lakes) which are designated as no wake zones in their entirety whenever one or more of the following conditions exist:

- *The gauge on the Coeur d'Alene River at Cataldo reads forty three feet (43') or higher; or*
- *The gauge on the Coeur d'Alene River at Enaville, in Shoshone County, reads seventy two feet (72') or higher.*

Coeur d'Alene Lake, Fernan Lake, and the Spokane River are also automatically designated as no wake zones in their entirety whenever the gauge on Lake Coeur d'Alene at Tubbs Hill reads two thousand one hundred thirty three feet (2,133') or higher.

It is unlawful to operate a vessel or to swim in a manner contrary to the restrictions or prohibitions of the ordinance and violations constitute a misdemeanor.

As of 2pm today, the gauge readings at Cataldo and Enaville were 51.3 and 72 respectively. These readings currently designate the Coeur d'Alene River drainage (including the Chain Lakes) as a no wake zone per the ordinance. The gauge for Lake Coeur d'Alene is at 2131.5ft., which is only 1.5 ft. below designating Lake Coeur d'Alene, Fernan Lake, and the Spokane River as "no wake." With current runoff rates, this could change at any time. Boaters should also be reminded that regardless of a "no wake" designation, Idaho Code makes them financially responsible for damage to property caused by the wake from their vessel. With the high water levels, shore lines, docks and other property close to shore are very susceptible to damage from vessel wakes.

Boaters need to be aware of the hazards presented by large amounts of floating debris in the water, including logs and docks. These hazards commonly sit just below the water and are very hard to see. In addition, both the Coeur d'Alene River and Spokane River will be experiencing faster than normal current that can affect a boater being able to control their vessel.

Further information on boating safety can be obtained by contacting the Sheriff's Recreation Safety Section at (208)446-2250

Sheriff Ben Wolfinger
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