



Photo by: Lisa Hemphill



Photo by: Carol Mack



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Photo by: Susan Hobbs

Pend Oreille River Water Trail

20 River Miles

Waterfall

Rapids

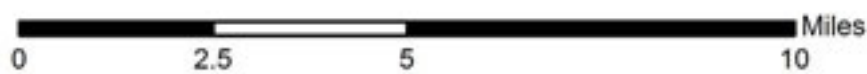
Public Access Site

Private Business

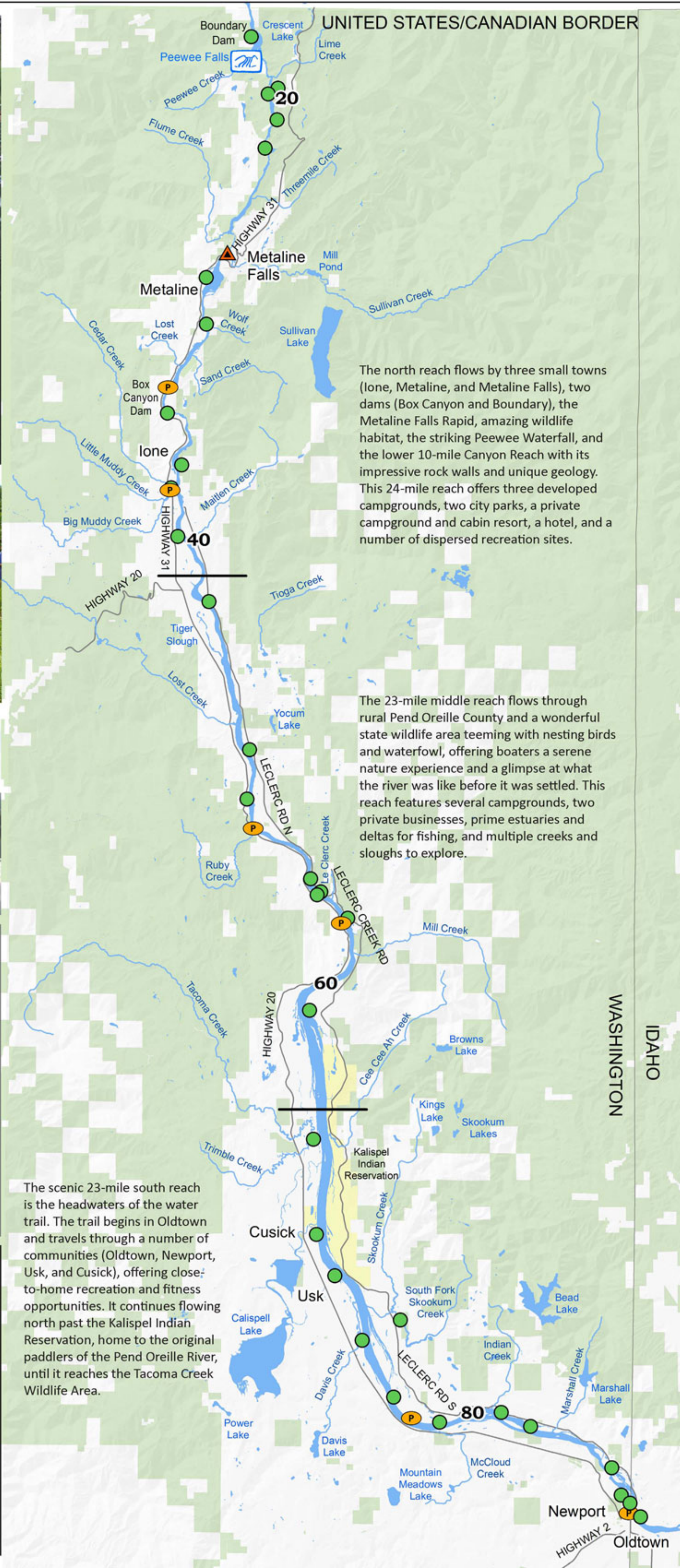
Public Land

Tribal Land

Private Land



UNITED STATES/CANADIAN BORDER



The north reach flows by three small towns (Ione, Metaline, and Metaline Falls), two dams (Box Canyon and Boundary), the Metaline Falls Rapid, amazing wildlife habitat, the striking Peewee Waterfall, and the lower 10-mile Canyon Reach with its impressive rock walls and unique geology. This 24-mile reach offers three developed campgrounds, two city parks, a private campground and cabin resort, a hotel, and a number of dispersed recreation sites.

The 23-mile middle reach flows through rural Pend Oreille County and a wonderful state wildlife area teeming with nesting birds and waterfowl, offering boaters a serene nature experience and a glimpse at what the river was like before it was settled. This reach features several campgrounds, two private businesses, prime estuaries and deltas for fishing, and multiple creeks and sloughs to explore.

The scenic 23-mile south reach is the headwaters of the water trail. The trail begins in Oldtown and travels through a number of communities (Oldtown, Newport, Usk, and Cusick), offering close-to-home recreation and fitness opportunities. It continues flowing north past the Kalispel Indian Reservation, home to the original paddlers of the Pend Oreille River, until it reaches the Tacoma Creek Wildlife Area.

WASHINGTON
IDAHO

The water trail will link communities to each other and connect people to the river valley's rich cultural history, as well as its unique geological features and abundant wildlife. The water trail plan links 32 existing public river access sites and six private businesses along the Pend Oreille River through uniform signage and comprehensive maps and identifies future needs for restrooms, interpretive displays, portage routes, and access sites.



Photo by: Lisa Hemphill

Since the Kalispel Tribe first paddled its scenic route of transportation through Pend Oreille County, drawing in explorers, miners, loggers, and homesteaders. The Pend Oreille County Community Development Department, Pend Oreille River Tourism Alliance, and the Washington State University Extension Program are working with numerous public and private stakeholders to create a plan for a 70-mile Pend Oreille River Water Trail that will provide a high-quality regional recreational experience, an educational opportunity, a vehicle to spur economic activity, and a means to tell the stories of the Pend Oreille River Valley.

What is the Pend Oreille River Water Trail?

Pend Oreille River Water Trail



Photo by: Curt Gillespie

A mapped and annotated travel route along the Pend Oreille River for recreational boaters which will enhance the culture and economy of our communities, ensure preservation of habitat, and establish destinations for research and education within our river environment

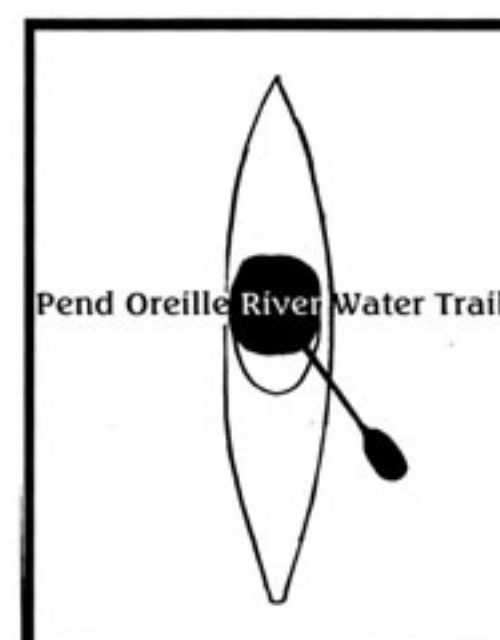


Photo by: Carol Mack

It is planned that the land owners and managers will continue to manage their sites along the water trail. Recommendations in this plan are strictly voluntary and are meant to provide input to land managers as to how they can modify and manage their sites to be more water trail-friendly. Some recommendations may also need to undergo an environmental review process. The water trail coordinator, land managers, and water trail committee will all work together to implement the trail.

Besides state boating registration and permits, there are no fees or permits needed to paddle or boat the Pend Oreille River. Many of the access sites do require fees for day-use and overnight camping, and some private sites require advanced reservations. Users can visit the website for the water trail or the land managers to learn about any fees involved.

Water Trail Management



Photo by: Joyce Aikens

Water Trail Action Plan

- Establish a Water Trail Coordinator
- Create uniform signage along the river
- Develop a printed trail guide
- Promote the water trail in various national media and trade publications
- Reach out to recreationists and visitors using the website

For more information about donations and how to get involved with the water trail, please contact Michael Lithgow at (509) 447-6457 or mlithgow@pendoreille.org. Maps and more information are available on the water trail website: <http://www.porta-us.com/pages/activities/watertrails.asp>



Photo by: Lisa Hemphill

Volunteers inventoried more than 90 potential existing public sites. Workshop participants identified the regional "gaps" for river access sites, amenities (parking, restrooms, and signage. The committee selected 32 of the 90 sites inventoried to be part of the water trail and made recommendations to improve some of these sites. The committee also identified methods to promote the water trail through the website, trail guide, and media. During the planning process, communities held river celebrations to bring awareness to the river and water trail development.

The Water Trail Steering Committee held a series of workshops with the land managers and interested stakeholders to develop the trail plan. Participants broke the river into three planning reaches: south, middle, and north. County staff and volunteers inventoried more than 90 potential existing public sites. Workshop participants identified the regional "gaps" for river access sites, amenities (parking, restrooms, and signage. The committee selected 32 of the 90 sites inventoried to be part of the water trail and made recommendations to improve some of these sites. The committee also identified methods to promote the water trail through the website, trail guide, and media. During the planning process, communities held river celebrations to bring awareness to the river and water trail development.

The water trail begins in Oldtown, Idaho near the Idaho-Washington border and flows 70 miles until Boundary Dam, located in the scenic corner of Northeast Washington—just one-mile shy of the U.S.-Canadian border. The water trail is designed for paddle craft and small motorized boats, providing opportunities for multiple experiences ranging from a couple of hours out on the river to multi-day expeditions.

Water trails have many benefits for relatively little investment. They provide opportunities for recreation on and near the river that boost tourism and the economies of communities linked by the trail. Recreation on the river and education about its history and natural resources will foster a sense of stewardship, which is a primary goal of the trail.



Salish for "broad stream"

Interpretive signs with maps, river etiquette, Leave No Trace principles, stories about the river valley's cultural and natural resources, and other important information in Salish, Spanish, and English could be placed only at main river access sites to maintain the rural character of the river. This signage would be both easy-to-use and low-maintenance, and would allow communities along the river to spread common messages about safety, invasive species, protecting wildlife, and other issues.

The water trail can be used today, and improvements are intended to be developed over time as funding and opportunities arise. Grants, private donations, and gifting programs could all help fund the trail.



Photo courtesy of Pend Oreille FUD