



INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
2006ENV0043-000667
May 25, 2006

Ministry of Environment

TRIAL KOKANEE FISHERY REOPENS AFTER DECADE-LONG CLOSURE

PENTICTON – The Ministry of Environment is announcing a limited kokanee trial fishery this summer in Okanagan Lake because kokanee numbers have rebounded and are now at their highest level since 1988.

The kokanee fishery in Okanagan Lake was closed in 1995 to conserve dwindling stocks. Since then, kokanee numbers have recovered due to a combination of the fishery closure, habitat restoration and protection work, and the development of a program to remove from the lake the exotic mysis shrimp that compete with kokanee for food.

In 2005, the Okanagan Lake kokanee spawning population doubled from the previous year to 227,000, the highest level since 1988, and a significant increase from the all-time low of 8,700 in 1998.

The Okanagan Lake kokanee trial fishery will be open to all members of the public and monitored by creel survey technicians working at boat ramps around the lake. Aerial boat counts will also be used to determine the angler effort during the period of the fishery opening.

Details of the kokanee trial fishery are as follows:

- The kokanee trial fishery will open June 17, 2006 and close Aug. 12, 2006.
- A total fishery quota has been established and each angler will have a daily quota of two kokanee.
- The fishery will be halted early if the kokanee fishery quota is reached prior to Aug. 12.
- The existing single barbless hook restriction remains on the lake to conserve rainbow trout stocks.
- The kokanee fishery will be halted early if a kokanee summer kill occurs prior to or during the fishery.

The 2006 kokanee trial fishery will provide key information needed to develop a long-term Okanagan Lake fishery management plan. Stakeholder and First Nations consultation on this plan will be initiated in December 2006, once data from the trial fishery is compiled and analyzed.

-30-

Media Andrew Wilson
contact: Senior Fish Biologist
 Ministry of Environment
 250 490-8267

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.