

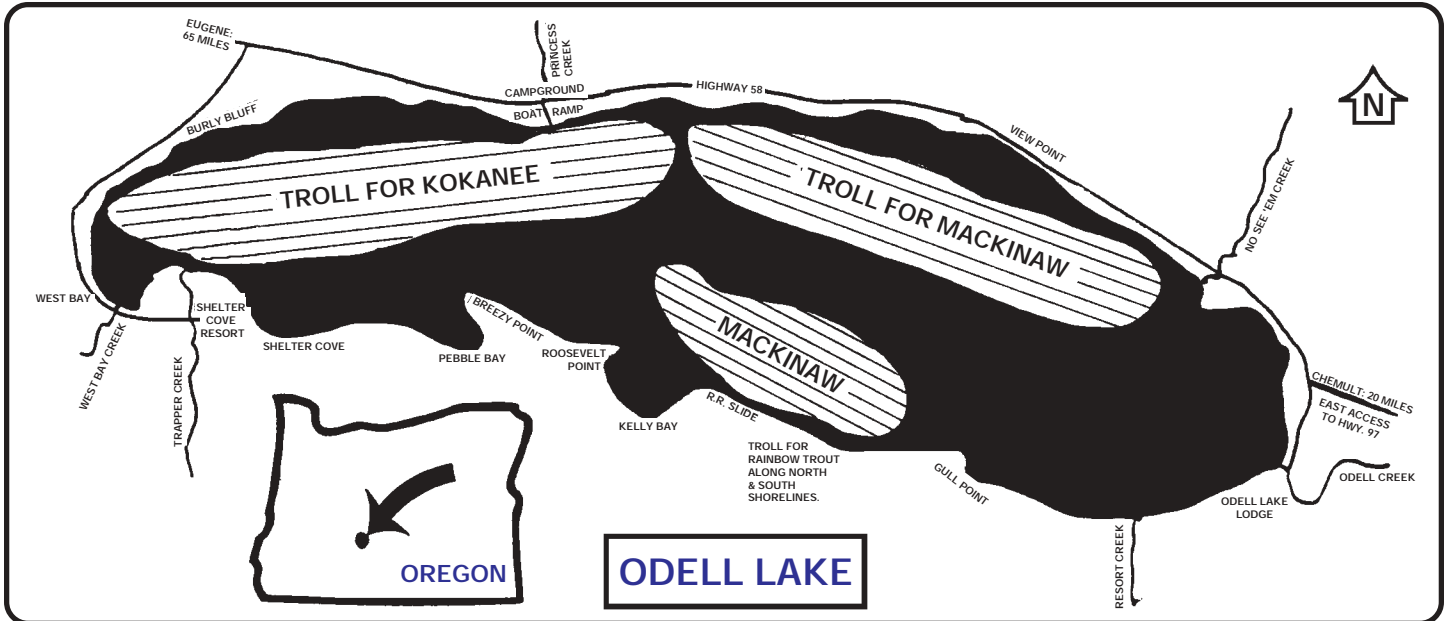


# TECH BULLETIN

## OREGON

# ODELL LAKE

Compiled from the Diaries and Logs of the Luhr Jensen Fishing Research Team.



*Mackinaw to 30 pounds-plus, kokanee to 20 inches and rainbow trout weighing several pounds! Those are the attractions which draw anglers to Odell Lake in Central Oregon. Whether you're new to Odell, or have fished it in the past, the following information will help you have a more productive outing. Note that Bull Trout (the inland form of Dolly Varden) are now a federally listed Threatened Species. No target fishing effort or harvest is allowed for them in Odell Lake.*

Odell Lake is located adjacent to State Highway 58, which leads southeast from Eugene to intersect U.S. 97 at Chemult. It's about 65 miles from Eugene to the lake and about the same distance via U.S. 97 south from Bend and then west on 58.

With over 3,300 acres of water available, this large, natural lake can be troublesome for the first-time angler, or those who have made only occasional trips. As pointed out on the map, there are specific areas which consistently produce fish and deserve your attention.

The following is a rundown on the various fish species and techniques proved effective for catching them at Odell.

### KOKANEES

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife manages Odell Lake for wild fish only. They no longer plant these land-locked sockeye salmon each spring as fingerlings. The kokoes caught are native, with most being spawned in the spring-fed areas around the lake. A lesser amount of spawning occurs in Trapper Creek where the ODFW has instituted a year-round closure at the mouth within 200 feet. The average Odell kokanee runs in the 10- to 13-in. range, with some up to 16 inches.

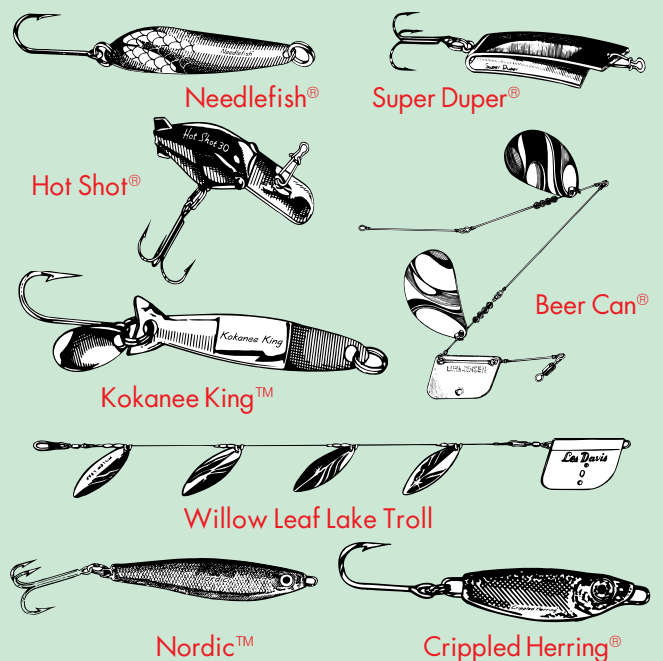
Kokanee fishing begins with opening day, the last Saturday in April, and continues until the lake closes Oct. 31. Early season finds the kokoes in large schools ranging from near the surface, down as deep as 60 feet. Later in the season, after the

water temperature has risen, you'll find them near the surface early in the morning and late in the evening. During warm summer days, they often are found from 25 foot depths down to the bottom (usually near 100 feet).

Trolling techniques work well, with most anglers using lead core line, a lake troll and a small spoon such as a *Needlefish*<sup>®</sup>, *Super Duper*<sup>®</sup> or *Kokanee King*<sup>™</sup>. A size 4/0, 3/0 or 2/0 *Jensen Dodger*<sup>™</sup> is an excellent attractor. Jigging in the early season has also become very effective in recent years. The fish are aggressive and sometimes found in massive schools.

Odell has very clear water, so we recommend a 24- to 48-inch, 4- to 8-lb. test leader between troll and lure. During warm weather, when kokoes can be found near the bottom, a

### TROUT & KOKANEES TACKLE



size 200 *Nordic*<sup>TM</sup> jig in *Mother-Of-Pearl, Chartreuse/Green SBack* or *Nickel/Blue Back/Silver Prism-Lite*<sup>®</sup> or *Crippled Herring*<sup>®</sup> in *Mother-of-Pearl, Pearl White, Nickel/Neon Blue Back, Fire, Pearl White/Flo Red Head* or *Fire Tiger* can be very effective.

One of the biggest mistakes made by anglers is working a lure too fast. Most will not perform correctly at fast speeds and kokanee generally will not hit a rapidly-moving lure . . . they need to be tantalized by it. The best advice we can give you is to troll S-L-O-W-L-Y . . . the slower the better.

**NOTE:** Kokanee have very delicate and tender mouths. Care must be taken to ensure that the shock of the initial strike is absorbed by using a rubber snubber or having a flexible rod tip. They must be carefully played and landed with the aid of a net to prevent the hooks from tearing out.

### RAINBOWS

The same trolling setups and lures suggested and diagrammed for kokanee also can successfully be used for catching Odell's rainbows.

Some of the hottest rainbow action comes while trolling near shore with a lake troll followed by a small spoon or a troll followed by a small *Hot Shot*<sup>®</sup> plug. Popular trolls include the *Willow Leaf, Ford Fender*<sup>®</sup>, *Kokanee Troll*<sup>TM</sup>, *Cowbell*<sup>®</sup> and *Beer Can*<sup>TM</sup>.

Rainbows can be found most anywhere along the shoreline, particularly where a dropoff exists.

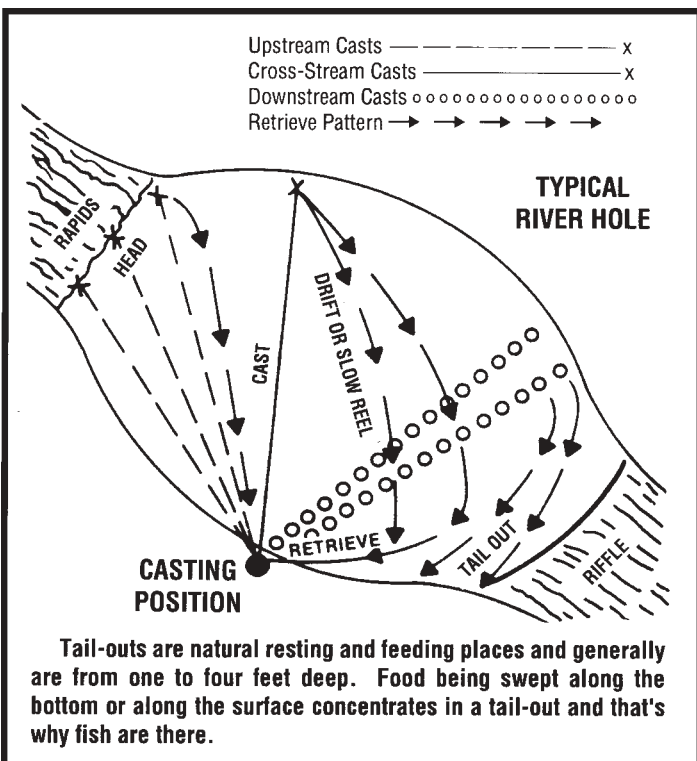
### MACKINAW

Odell Lake is famous for its mackinaw (lake trout) with fish over 30 pounds available. Most macks run 4 to 10 pounds and can be taken with lake trolls followed by large plugs such as a *J-Plug*<sup>®</sup> or a *Kwikfish*<sup>®</sup>.

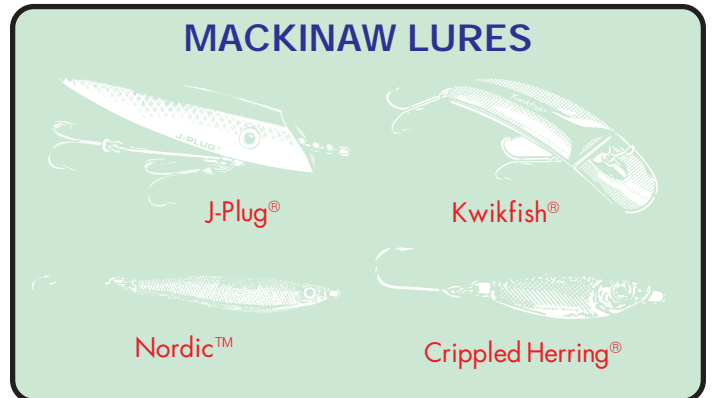
One technique has produced consistent mackinaw results (after a concentration of fish has been located using a depth sounder) is jigging with a *Nordic*<sup>TM</sup> or *Crippled Herring*<sup>®</sup>. Some favorite jigging areas are out from Princess Creek, View Point and the Railroad Slide. *Pink* and *Fire* are the "Hot Colors". See the diagram for jigging instructions.

**NOTE:** Strikes which come when working a jig almost always occur as the lure is falling. Hesitation in the descent of the jig, a twitch of the line, a "tap" or anything else unusual as the lure is falling is immediate reason for setting the hook. Many times you will not be able to detect a "strike" but will feel resistance as you begin to raise the rod. This too signals "set the hook".

The use of a premium quality, high-visibility line such as *Trilene XT* (which also has high knot strength and thin diameter in relation to pound test) is one thing that will aid you in detecting strikes as the jig is falling.



Because of Odell's size, there is just no substitute for a good quality depth sounder, such as one made by Bottomline, in indicating concentrations of fish and especially for pinpointing kokanee and mackinaw schools when you wish to try jigging. Camping facilities, boat rentals, fishing tackle and food are available at both Odell Lake Lodge and Shelter Cove Resort.



### LAKE TROLLING TIPS

- TROLL SLOWLY:** Big fish will not expend any more energy than necessary to catch a meal. Also, most lures will not perform correctly at fast speeds. The best advice is to troll s-l-o-w-l-y -- the slower the better.
- VARY YOUR SPEED:** While slow is the password, this does not mean slow all the time. A lure running through the water at a constant speed, at a constant depth and giving off the same vibration pattern will not catch many fish . . . there's just nothing to indicate an easy meal is available or that something is in trouble. Slowly, yes, but adjust your speed every few minutes to change the lure's speed and vibration pattern.
- WORK IN "S" CURVES:** Consistent trolling results require that you do everything possible to keep from running in a straight line. We recommend an "S" pattern because each time the troll and lure are on the inside swing of the boat, the lure will drop deeper and slow down. On an outside turn, it will speed up and rise. With each turn you will impart a different action to the troll and trailing lure, signaling "Meal Time" to nearby fish.

### PROPER CATCH AND RELEASE

- Play the fish in quickly so it is not too tired.
- Handle the fish as little as possible and never let it flop on a hard or dirty surface.
- Use hemostats or needle-nose pliers to back the hook out the way it went in. Barbless hooks make this easier.
- Never release a fish until it is fully revived and acts strong. A tired fish can tumble and get lodged in rocks or moss and suffocate. Carefully work the fish back and forth to pump water through its gills. You will know when it's ready to leave.
- When taking a picture of your catch, leave it in the water until the camera is ready and then gently cradle the fish in both hands as you lift it out of the water. Never put your fingers in its gills or squeeze it too hard. Keep the fish out of the water only long enough to take the picture.
- Be gentle and release the fish carefully. Never THROW a fish back into the water.

### SHARP HOOKS PAY OFF!

One of the easiest things you can do to improve your fishing success is to maintain super-sharp hooks on your lures at all times. A fine-toothed file such as Luhr Jensen's *Sharp Hook File*<sup>TM</sup> is the absolute best hook sharpening tool available. Hold the file parallel to the hook point and with gentle, one-way strokes, remove a small amount of metal on at least two sides to obtain a sticky-sharp point with a knife-like cutting edge.