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Of the interior Pacific Northwest Salishan Languages, Coeur d'Alene (or Skitswish) was spoken by an independent group within the border of the present State of Idaho, whereas Flathead, Pend d'Oreille or Kalispell, and Spokane formed another group of Salish dialects. In the early years of the fur trade, two of these bands lived around Lake Pend d'Oreille, which was named for them. These two small bands were known as the upper and lower Pend d'Oreille, and now are merged. They have been absorbed by the Flatheads and live at Saint Mary's, Montana. In the past one of the Pend d'Oreille bands (said to be the native term) sometimes was identified as Kalispell (probably from a place name for camas). The Kalispell and Pend d'Oreille are linguistically the same; both terms became applicable to both bands. When the fur trade began, they wore large shell earrings, so they often were known as the earbob or Pend d'Oreille Indians.

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