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Pend Oreille PUD and Clark Public Utilities Sign Long-Term Hydropower Agreement

Newport and Vancouver, WA – Clark Public Utilities and the Pend Oreille Public Utility District have entered into a long-term power sales agreement that provides a steady supply of carbon-free renewable hydroelectricity for customers in one of the fastest-growing counties in Washington State.

Under the agreement, Pend Oreille PUD will sell all energy produced by the Box Canyon hydroelectric project to Clark Public Utilities from Jan. 1, 2026 through Dec. 2041, with contract extensions available under mutual agreement.

The Clark Public Utilities Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the 16-year power sales agreement on Tuesday following unanimous approval by Pend Oreille PUD's Board of Commissioners on Oct. 4, 2022.

The agreement reflects a long tradition of collaboration and cooperation among the state's customer-owned public utility districts to deliver reliable, responsible power to the local communities served, and is a critical piece of Clark Public Utilities' strategy to meet state-mandated emissions reduction targets ahead of schedule.

Under the contract, Clark Public Utilities will purchase power generated from Pend Oreille's Box Canyon Dam, which averages approximately 50 megawatts of generation annually. The utility will also pay the forecasted dam costs and debt service payments associated with the power plant modernization and the environmental mitigation modifications made by Pend Oreille PUD over the last decade.

"Clark Public Utilities has charted a path to exceed carbon-reduction targets ahead of state requirements, and securing this additional clean, renewable energy resource in partnership with Pend Oreille PUD is an important milestone in meeting these ambitious goals," said Clark Public Utilities CEO and General Manager, Lena Wittler. "Public power utilities exist to benefit the customers and communities we serve and this agreement will provide mutual benefits to both districts for many years."

The contract secures a stable, long-term customer for Pend Oreille PUD, which, since 2019 has undertaken a multi-phase remarketing effort of its energy supply, both in anticipation of and following the closure of the Ponderay Newsprint Company, which represented about 70 percent of the utility's historical load.

“This contract with Clark is a great deal for Pend Oreille PUD customers,” said Pend Oreille PUD General Manager Colin Willenbrock. “The agreement sets the PUD up for long-term financial stability, ensuring forecasted Box Canyon costs are paid by a creditworthy and trustworthy public power partner that is also willing to pay for the dam's carbon-free attributes.”

About Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County was established in 1936 and began operations in 1948. The PUD is governed by three locally elected Commissioners. A General Manager and staff operate the utility within policies set by the Board of Commissioners. The PUD has four operating systems: The electric system distributes electricity to the county, the production system produces power from the Box Canyon Hydroelectric Project, the water system consists of nine individual water distribution subdivisions, and the community network system provides wholesale broadband communication services. For more information, visit: <http://popud.org>.

About Clark Public Utilities

Clark Public Utilities is a Washington State customer-owned public utility, formed in 1938 by a vote of the people, that provides electric service to more than 227,000 customers throughout Clark County and water to nearly 40,000 customers in unincorporated areas. For more information, visit: www.clarkpublicutilities.com.

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