



# Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Pend Oreille PUD Prepares to Apply for Broadband Funding**

**Community Participation is Needed – Help Bring Broadband to Your Neighborhood**

Newport, Washington – Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County (“PUD”) is preparing to apply for Broadband, Equity, Advancement and Deployment (“BEAD”) funding and is seeking the help of the community and customers. The state of Washington was allocated \$1.2 billion dollars as part of this national program. The BEAD program’s mission is to facilitate broadband expansion to local communities that lack quality broadband.

The Washington State Broadband Office (“WSBO”) published maps that include data on which areas are served, underserved, or are without services (unserved). To maximize potential funding and priorities, residents and businesses of Pend Oreille County are asked to “challenge” the maps that inaccurately show adequate service. The following outlines the three categories that are represented on the map: 1) Served (represents speeds of 100 mbps download/20 mbps upload, shown as green on the map); 2) Underserved (is 26-99 mbps download/4-19 upload, shown as yellow); and 3) Unserved (is less than 25mbps download/3 mbps upload, shown as red).

All county agencies are encouraging community members to take part in what is called the “broadband challenge”. It is a simple check of your service address against the broadband map to verify the information and report inaccuracies. Only six challenges per census block are needed. The website with the map and detailed information on how to complete a challenge is available at <https://wa.broadbandnavigator.com/>. Alternatively, more information can be found by visiting the PUD’s website at <https://popud.org/services/broadband-internet/help-bring-broadband-to-your-neighborhood>.

The results and data from the map will dictate where funding is allocated, with unserved areas given priority. This challenge process is now open and will close on May 14, 2024. “We encourage customers to participate in this challenge, particularly those in the northern portion of the county where there is a need for broadband as much of the area falls into the “underserved” category” said Sarah Holderman, the PUD’s Director of Customer Services. “The PUD maintains a goal of providing greater connectivity opportunities to all customers and we are hopeful this is a step in the right direction.”

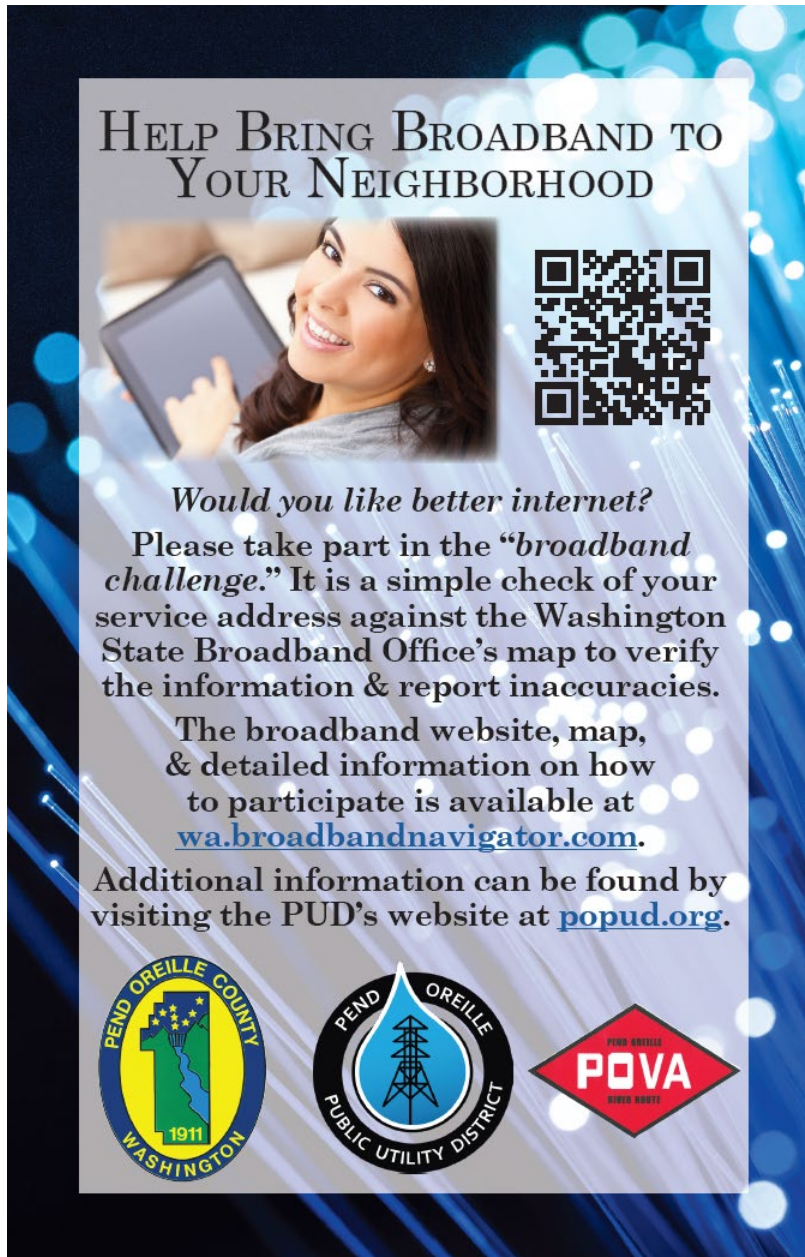
### **About Pend Oreille County Public Utility District**

Pend Oreille PUD 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>.

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\*\*\*The below advertisement/flyer will be distributed throughout the county as is feasible to bring awareness to this process.\*\*\*



**HELP BRING BROADBAND TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

*Would you like better internet?*

Please take part in the “*broadband challenge*.” It is a simple check of your service address against the Washington State Broadband Office’s map to verify the information & report inaccuracies.

The broadband website, map, & detailed information on how to participate is available at [wa.broadbandnavigator.com](http://wa.broadbandnavigator.com).

Additional information can be found by visiting the PUD’s website at [popud.org](http://popud.org).

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