



Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

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Pend Oreille PUD Takes a Look at Spring Conditions Spring runoff and impacts to the Pend Oreille River

Newport, WA – Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County (PUD) is constantly monitoring current and forecasted weather along with snowpack conditions in order to anticipate water levels in the Pend Oreille River. April typically marks the beginning of spring runoff, with the peak usually occurring the last week of May to the 1st week of June and continuing through mid-July.

Current snowpack data and the forecast for the Pend Oreille River indicate near normal conditions for the spring and summer drainage. Mountain snowpack levels typically reach their peak moisture content by early April. Water for the Pend Oreille River comes from snow in the mountains of Montana, including the Upper and Lower Clark Fork and the Flathead basins. Current snowpack levels are above average with the Lower Clark Fork at 106%, Upper Clark Fork at 107%, Bitterroot at 107% and Flathead at 114%.

The latest forecasts prepared by the US Army Corps of Engineers indicate high flows this spring between 70,000 – 90,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) (flood stage is 95,000 cfs). Currently, the Pend Oreille River flow at Box Canyon Dam is 14,500 cfs.

“Given that this year’s winter snowfalls will likely cause runoff to be at near normal conditions, other influences for snowmelt runoff can certainly impact predictions, including fall soil moisture, storage conditions, and weather during the spring”, said Tim McMaster, PUD’s Power Production Manager. “Please remember to stay safe and stay out of rivers during high water.”

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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