



River bed below Rocky Brook falls



# THE CONNECTOR FALL 2018

## COMMISSIONER CORNER

# Are we taking the right Initiative?

Our PUD was formed by an initiative of the people. Initiative No. 1, to be exact. It was passed in 1930 and made us the very first operating PUD in our state. If it wasn't for this surgency in the 1930's where the public demanded access to affordable electricity in non-urban areas, we wouldn't be here. We wouldn't have locally elected community members serving on the boards of your utilities and exercising local control over rate making and management of the PUDs.

Initiatives, however, have become a double edged sword. Drafters of these initiatives frame things in a way that tug on citizens' emotions without clearly outlining what the net impact will be for the cause. We as voters, as signatories on these ballots, must be good consumers of information. We need to make sure that we ask the trickle-down questions of "what is the end result?" and "what will it cost me and my family?", "can I afford it?" and finally "is the cost worth it?" Sometimes they are unquestionably worth it, but sometimes we altruistically support causes where the taxes and fees go to offset other non-related

things that don't even make an impact on the causes we care about.

On September 25th, your PUD 1 board of commissioners will discuss the impacts of Initiative 1631, the "Carbon Emissions Fee Measure", which would be a first of its kind in the United States, if passed. We are mixed on the subject right now. Mason PUD 1, along with all of the other PUDs in our state, are leaders in environmental stewardship and we all tout energy portfolios that are over 90% clean and carbon free. This is why we are taking our time to discuss this initiative before we decide if we want to take a stance as a utility either for or against it, or if we want to remain neutral. We have previously opposed carbon tax initiatives because they weren't going to actually do what they said they were going to do, which was reduce carbon.

We know we need to protect our planet and leave behind clean air and water for our children and grandchildren. We need to continue to do our part as an industry to help guide our state in that direction. I also know that it is unfair to tax an industry, especially a publicly-owned industry, without allowing them

to have a seat at the 15 member Public Oversight Board table to discuss the best way to serve their ratepayers. I know I am not in favor of initiatives that erode our community's local control over their utility. I know I am not in favor of the pancaking of taxes on hydroelectricity, that don't result in an overall reduction in carbon emissions.

I'm looking forward to hearing more from our staff about how the initiative will impact our PUD. I also invite you, as the PUD's owners and ratepayers, to send your comments to the board and attend the September 25th meeting if you're able. We need to make sure that we are all taking the time to look past the emotion and delve into the actual issues and the impacts. From there, we can decide if we can make a difference and if we can actually afford to make the difference. Please feel free to contact your commissioners by phone or email with any questions on this important issue.



Jack Janda,  
Commissioner, District 3







## MANAGER'S REPORT

Linework on Duckabush Rd.

As the editor of this newsletter for the last seven years, it's a strange turn of events that finds me writing to you all from the desk of the General Manager. After a thorough search process this summer to find a replacement for our departing GM, the board eventually decided to look at internal leadership. To my amazement, they chose me for the role! I am humbled and excited and very proud that our board subscribes to the idea that if the culture is strong and folks are happy, don't mess with a good thing-promote from within! We have a fantastic team here at the PUD and I am proud to be a part of it.

For those that may not have heard, Steve Taylor accepted the GM position at Okanogan PUD after 11 years at Mason PUD 1. He leaves behind some pretty big shoes to fill. Luckily, he also left a pretty good roadmap for his successor to pick up

and run with. Under Steve's leadership, the PUD developed a strategic plan, a long-range capital work plan for water, electric, and facilities, began Cost of Service Analyses (COSAs) for water and electric, and most importantly, he left the District in strong financial health.

I don't want to imply that this is an easy "plug and play" job; I do have my work cut out for me, as evidenced by the growing to-do list on my desk. However, it's fair to say that the transition is easier because of the work we did on the front end to plan and prepare. That's basically the way we approach all our business functions. Do the hard work and the planning up front to ensure that our customers don't experience frustration or poor service down the road. It's even better when our customers help us in the planning process by attending meetings, asking questions, and providing feedback.

I am excited to begin this new role serving you all in a slightly different capacity than before. For our team here at PUD 1, it's business as usual. I hope you'll join us at our Customer Appreciation Event on Friday, September 28th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at our shop. In addition to the BBQ, we have some great conservation items and other PUD swag. I know I speak for our board and employees when I say that we always enjoy this opportunity for the personal interactions with our customer-owners. Hope to see you there!

Sincerely,



Kristin Masteller  
General Manager

# SCAM ALERT!



It seems like every couple of months we end up with a new utility bills scam rolling through the PUDs in our state. The most recent one hit us at the end of August where scammers called our Hoodspport customers demanding payment via a pre-paid VISA card. They even took the time to look up that there was a Fred Meyer store in Shelton where they could buy a pre-paid card, they knew all three of our commissioners' names, and they forwarded their call back number to the PUD's phone number to make it seem more legitimate. They realize we tell you to hang up and call us if you're suspicious and they're adapting their methods to sound more believable.

We do contact you with both robo-calls if your account is past due and personal calls if you're on the disconnect list to help you

avoid being disconnected. However, **we will NEVER demand payment over the phone, nor will we demand that you pay with a pre-paid VISA card.** You have several options to pay your bill, including driving up to our office and discussing your account in person. Luckily, two business owners in Hoodspport did just that and helped us get the word out to the rest of our customers.

Please help spread the word to friends, family, and especially our more vulnerable neighbors, that these types of payment demands and disconnect threats are not from your PUD. If you ever question why you are being contacted, please call us directly at the office with the numbers we provide you (800) 544-4223 or (360) 877-5249. If you're still not sure if you're being scammed, stop by and talk to us in person.



# AS THE *Cold Months* APPROACH...



...we begin our campaign to raise donations for the Canal Comfort Fund. This fund is sustained entirely by generous customers who want to assist neighbors and families in need.

The PUD doesn't administer these funds directly. We have partnered with the Community Action Councils of both Mason and Jefferson counties to do that for us. We hold the fund drives and collect the donations and forward them on to those two organizations. What's really great is that 100% of the donations are applied to those in need- there is zero overhead expenses for administration. Each donation is made to that customer's county and is specifically earmarked to help a neighbor in that county with assistance on their PUD 1 bill.

Last year, we reached out to you, our customers, to ask for your help in replenishing the funds for 2017 and you

responded generously. Dozens of low income families and seniors received assistance. Despite the continued efforts and donations, the need is always greater than the supply. We hope that you will consider rounding up your next payment and asking us to set aside the change to the Fund. We also are able to take one-time donations or even set up regular monthly donations on your statement. These donations are tax deductible and you will receive a receipt to file with your taxes each year that show your contribution.

**If you are a family or individual in need, please reach out to your local Community Action Council.** They will help you with the application process to see if you qualify. They also have other programs that can provide energy assistance and even energy efficiency for your home. The CAC of Mason & Thurston Counties has an office on Railroad Ave. in Shelton and can be reached at (360) 426-9726. OlyCap, serving Jefferson County, can be reached at (360) 385-2571.

Thank you again for your continued support of this program!

## CUSTOMER APPRECIATION EVENT

Join us to celebrate YOU, our customers, and kick off Public Power Week!

September 28th,  
11 am to 2 pm

Burgers,  
Soft Drinks,  
Ice Cream,  
LED Light  
Bulbs and  
more.

FREE



**PUBLIC POWER WEEK**  
OCTOBER 7-13, 2018  
Powering Strong Communities

**PUD 1 DISTRICT OFFICE**  
21971 N. Hwy 101 in Potlatch



## *Congratulations* to lineman Mike York

for reaching his 20 year service anniversary with Mason PUD 1. Thank you, Mike, for your service to our customers and to the PUD. We appreciate you!



Pictured above, PUD 1 attorney Rob Johnson also has 28 years with the District and mechanic Lew Parsons with so many years, we stopped counting!

# LAST CHANCE TO EARN FIVE BUCKS BY GOING PAPERLESS!



Customers who sign up through e-pay by September 30th to receive their statements via email instead of in paper format will receive a \$5 credit on their October billing statement. You must stay paperless for one year to keep the credit to your account. Existing paperless customers will also receive the \$5 credit.

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS regularly meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at the PUD 1 office in Potlatch. For more information on meetings, agendas and minutes, please visit [mason-pud1.org/about/meetings/](http://mason-pud1.org/about/meetings/).



[www.mason-pud1.org](http://www.mason-pud1.org)

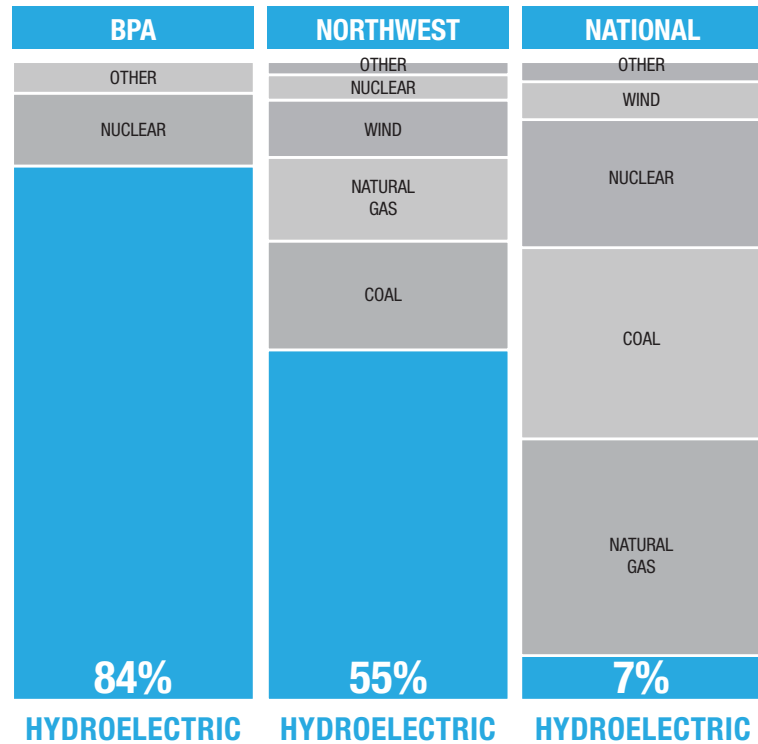
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## Energy Sources



Thanks to an abundance of hydropower, residents and businesses in BPA's service area benefit from cleaner energy.  
**HYDROPOWER FLOWS HERE**

## Have you signed up for the Email Notification List yet?



Be the first to know about scheduled outages and other important PUD information by emailing [kristinm@mason-pud1.org](mailto:kristinm@mason-pud1.org) to join.

Be sure to follow us on social media for more frequent updates.

### MASON COUNTY PUD 1 COMMISSIONERS:

#### District 1

Mike Sheetz ..... (360) 898-7934

#### District 2

Ron Gold ..... (360) 490-1560

#### District 3

Jack Janda ..... (360) 490-1800

#### General Manager

Kristin Masteller ..... (360) 877-5249