



Media Release

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Mason PUD 1 Launches Second Community Solar Project



Potlatch, WA- In response to customer interest, Mason County PUD No. 1 is rolling out a second community solar project. Community Solar II, will be approximately 55 kilowatts in size and sited atop the PUD's new vehicle storage warehouse that is starting construction this winter and scheduled to be completed in April. PUD 1 electric customers have the option to purchase up to 100 units of the project at \$100 per unit, until all 965 units are subscribed. The PUD also received a generous \$50,000 grant from Bonneville

Environmental Foundation (BEF), along with BEF's free project management services. The grant funds purchased 500 additional units that are set aside for qualifying low-income electric customers.

"Bonneville Environmental Foundation has been a critical partner for both of our community solar projects. They've guided us through every step from siting the arrays, to scoping the projects and reviewing bids", said Kristin Masteller, PUD 1's general manager. "Now they've assisted us even further with this grant which allows us to open the project to customers who likely wouldn't be able to participate otherwise. These customers will receive a new type of energy assistance that we haven't been able to provide before. This low-income program we've developed with BEF is really creative and we're excited to roll it out in 2020."

PUD 1 electric customers have until February 28, 2020 to register online. Customers who want to register for the low-income portion of the project, must make an in-person registration appointment with the solar project manager, Julie Gray, to get prequalified. In March, registered participants for both portions of the project will be selected by randomized drawing to determine who has first opportunity to participate. The project is slated to be commissioned in April of 2020.

"The newest state incentive rebate that runs through 2028 is much lower this time around" stated Julie Gray. "The total payback period on our 2016 project was less than four years, not including any federal tax benefits. This project is looking at 15-18 years for a return on investment, without considering any federal tax incentives which may help shorten the payback period. Regardless, our customers have continued to ask us to do another project, so we listened. We're pleased to be able to provide this opportunity to our customers and we hope that we are able to fully subscribe our project in March."

The online registration and other participant information, including a project "Frequently Asked Questions" sheet, are available on PUD 1's solar website at solar.mason-pud1.org.

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Incorporated in 1934, Mason County PUD No. 1 was the first public utility district formed in Washington State. PUD 1 provides non-for-profit water, sewer and electric services to approximately 7,200 customers in both Mason and Jefferson counties. The District's mission is to provide customers with safe, reliable and valued utility services.

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