



View of the Olympics from Potlatch.

THE CONNECTOR SPRING 2022

MANAGER'S ARTICLE

IT'S PROJECT SEASON!

The weather is finally getting nicer, and our power and water crews are beginning rebuild projects throughout our systems. The power crew has already rebuilt the Eells Hill Road power line in Skokomish Valley, thanks to a grant from FEMA. They also replaced a large section of pole line and upsized the wire on Wawa Point Road in Brinnon. In April, the work at McReavy Road started where it intersects with Manzanita Drive and Arrellem Drive. We are boring under the roadway in two sections to replace that aging section of underground line that keeps having voltage issues for the customers in that area. From there, the crew will focus their attention on replacing the underground wire at Galloway Lane and hopefully start Bee Mill Road this summer. 4 Wheel Drive Road and Love Road are also on our to-do list for 2022, if time and budget allow.

While these projects are occurring, part of our line crew is still working up at Colony Surf with Hanson Excavating and Hood Canal Communications on replacing underground electrical simultaneously with HCC's broadband deployment project. We're getting in while the ditch is open as part of our "Dig Once Partnership" with local telecom companies and utilities. The Colony Surf project is expected to continue through April, perhaps into May.

The water department has already replaced aging main line in Alderbrook at Blackberry Lane and on Hwy 106 in Union just past the Union Country Store. Since main line replacement is the focus for 2022, they have

various projects lined up all over the county at multiple water systems, in addition to the contractor work that will begin at Lake Arrowhead this summer, and hopefully at Eldon's Canal View water system if we can get that project bid out in time to start the work. Both are grant-funded main line replacement projects.

Other contractor projects that are occurring this spring are the pole replacements from Eldon to Forest Drive in Brinnon. Several poles will be replaced as part of the Hood Canal-101 Broadband project to deploy fiber along the canal. Once the pole line is installed and materials are finally on site, the fiber contractor will begin installing the fiber and soon afterward, individual homes and businesses can begin their internet service through Hood Canal Communications. I want to thank CERB for increasing our original \$797,080 grant amount by another \$232,000 to offset the rampant inflation we are experiencing. We also have a local logging contractor clearing our easement area at the end of Jorstad Creek Road. Logging and hauling activity will occur in April and May along with permitted burning (or burning may wait until the fall, depending on weather).

We have put our annual tree trimming project out to bid. This year will focus on Highway



Replacing main line on Blackberry Drive in Alderbrook.

106 in Union from the Classic Garage to Hunter Farms. Our line crew has a list of side roads that they will tackle as well in between their rebuild projects and customer service work.

We intend to augment our crews with summer helpers again this year. If you or someone you know is over 18 years of age, likes to work outside, has a good attitude, has a driver's license with a safe driving record, and can pass a drug and alcohol screen, please check out the job description on our website: www.mason-pud1.org/employment. These summer jobs pay pretty well, and they can lead to good references for future PUD careers!



Kristin Masteller
General Manager

CROSS CONNECTIONS AND YOUR WATER SUPPLY



Everyone wants safe drinking water. One way to protect the water that PUD 1 supplies to you is to identify “cross connections” or “potential cross connections”. Cross connections are physical or potential physical connections that could allow liquid, solid or gas to flow into the water system if the system lost pressure or if the pressure on your side was greater than the system’s pressure.

Potential residential cross connections include: irrigation systems, garden drip systems, swimming pools, decorative ponds, private wells, hose bibs and fire sprinklers. Cross connections can contaminate the water supply and make you and your neighbors ill and potentially cause death. Not only are backflow devices important to public safety, but the PUD is actually required by WAC 246-290-490 to have a Cross Connection Control Program and require our customers to have backflow assemblies installed.

Several residential customers have filled out Water Use Questionnaires over the last few years and each year, we choose a couple new water systems to begin inspecting properties to determine which customers need to install backflow prevention assemblies. If your property has not been inspected and you have any of the potential cross connections listed above or a home-based business that uses water, please contact the PUD to schedule an appointment for a free inspection with one of the District’s Cross Connection Control Specialists (CCCS).

The CCCS will determine the type of backflow prevention assembly that needs to be installed. Customers will be responsible for hiring a certified backflow assembly installer to install the device and perform the initial test. We have a list of certified installers and our own certified installer/ tester on staff. Once a backflow prevention

assembly is installed, customers are required by law to have annual testing by a certified tester. PUD 1 will send you a reminder notice when it is time to test with a list of certified testers.

The Cross Connection Control Program is designed to protect you and your drinking water. We appreciate your efforts to help us keep the water clean by reporting potential cross connections and having your property inspected. Please contact us with questions or to schedule your free inspection.



Brandy Milroy
Water Resource Manager

If you have a backflow assembly device installed already, **you are required to have it tested every calendar year.** Properties connected to the District’s water system and have the following types of plumbing are required by state law to have a backflow assembly device installed:

Irrigation System

Drip Irrigation System

Swimming Pool

Hot Tub

Pond

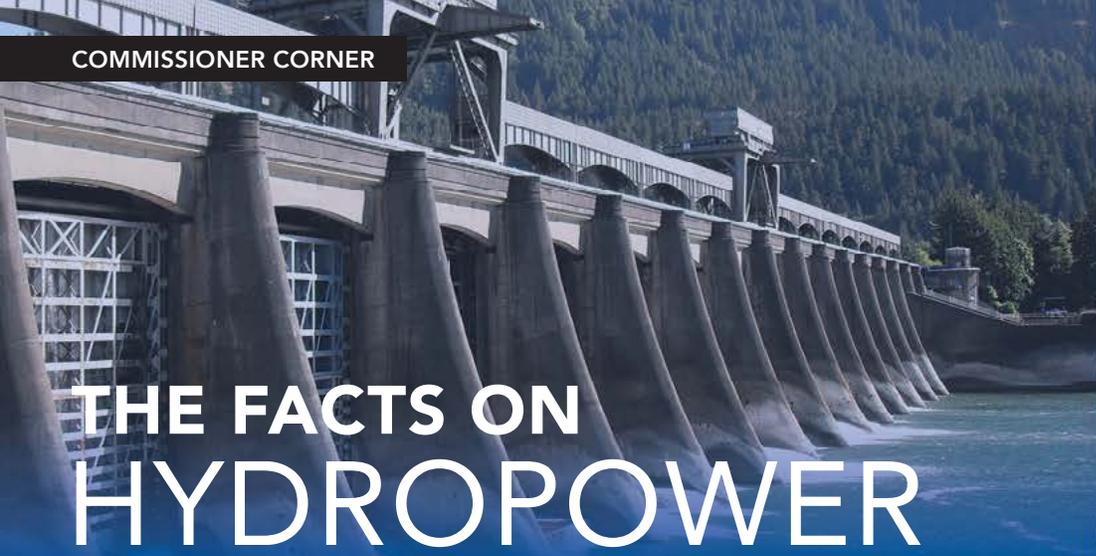
Animal Troughs

Booster Pump

Private Well

Dock with Water Supply

Green House with Irrigation



THE FACTS ON HYDROPOWER

The State of Washington passed a bill in 2019 called the Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA) in an effort to move away from the use of fossil fuels, essentially changing the way we use energy in this country. This is a good thing! But what troubles me is that we are closing down coal plants, which are base load power sources, before we have new baseload resources to replace them. What this means is that every time we turn on our electricity, it has to be produced and ready on the grid just before we use it. The grid has to stay in constant balance. In order to do this, we need to replace the base load resources, like coal, with something that is equally effective before we retire them, or we risk the integrity of the power grid.

Wind and solar are renewable energies and they help during their peak times, but neither are dependable enough to rely on 24/7. They are not baseload capable. In fact, we are only able to bring renewables onto our grid because of the baseload power resources that can be ramped up to make up for when the wind isn't blowing and the sun isn't shining, or they can be tapered off when there's plenty of wind and solar energy coming onto the grid. Again, it must stay in constant balance. In order to bring these renewables online, it will take a combination of hydropower and nuclear energy- which now has newer technology that is promising, but it has not been fully developed yet. These small modular nuclear reactors have much newer technology and less moving parts. It yields a lot of potential to solve our impending energy supply issues but is not yet ready to be rolled on out the necessary scale.

What scares me the most about our power supply resources is the talk about removing the four lower Snake River dams. So much misinformation has been intentionally put out there about the dams, including that the dams are starving the orcas in the Puget Sound. In reality, the salmon which

come back to spawn in the Snake River never even come to the Puget Sound. The Fraser River in B.C., for example, has no dams on it and it also has no better fish return rates than the Snake River. This is true all along the western seaboard. Dammed and undammed rivers have similar rates of salmon population decline.

There are many reasons that I advocate for retaining the Columbia and Snake River dams: the irrigation of our farmlands in eastern Washington that feed our state and nation and are a huge component of our GDP and exports, the transportation of our wheat and agricultural goods which keeps carbon-emitting trucks off of our highways, the flood control for the cities along the rivers, the recreation and tourism that is a big economic driver for the southern part of our state and the Pacific Northwest, and most importantly, the carbon free energy source that powers our region and provides us some of the lowest power rates in the country.

We can't meet our CETA goals for 2045 and keep the lights on without hydropower being in the mix. Plain and simple. Building the dams helped build America. We have to realize though that no matter what we do in life, there will always be impacts. We spend over \$200 million each year on fish and wildlife habitat on the Columbia and Snake rivers to mitigate impacts so that fish and hydropower can co-exist. We learn from our experiences and try to provide better outcomes. I hope on this issue for protecting our electrical grid and protecting our environment that common sense will prevail.



Ron Gold, Commissioner District 2



The 2021 Annual Report is Online!

To see the report online, you can visit the PUD's Meetings page for 2021 and click the Annual Report 2021 link at the bottom of the page, or type in the URL: mason-pud1.org/meetings/annualreport2021/



\$TORM DAMAGE

When storm events occur, such as the one at the beginning of this year (what a way to welcome 2022, by the way!!), the District relies on FEMA to declare the event a disaster so that it can get reimbursed for the cost of damages to our service territory. The funding from FEMA is important because it allows the District to continue through its capital work plan without having to cut construction and maintenance work from the budget, in order to offset the cost of the storm damages. Over the past 5 years, we've been able to recover \$302,859, with another \$602,000 in the queue from a November 2021 storm and the big storm at the beginning of 2022. FEMA just recently declared the January 2022 event a disaster, and with the number of damages that occurred statewide, it will be several months before we receive a reimbursement. This is a great reminder of why it's important to have an emergency reserve fund and solidifies the board's decision 4 years ago for the PUD to build its own reserve fund, so that we can handle emergencies just like the one we recently had. Once we receive our funding from FEMA, we'll be able to replenish the reserve account and be prepared for whatever comes next!



Katie Arnold, Director of Business Services

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES TO REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT!

Energy conservation plays a significant role in reducing our carbon footprint to help fight climate change. Our carbon footprint measures the amount of the total carbon dioxide released from our day-to-day activities. Luckily, customers of PUD 1 already use energy that is over 95% carbon free, thanks largely to our hydropower. Upgrading or changing your heating system, switching to energy efficient appliances, and being conscious about the amount of electricity and water you are using, can help reduce your overall household carbon footprint, making a positive impact on our environment and saving money in your

monthly household budget.

If you are ready to make the move towards living an eco-friendlier life, Mason County PUD No. 1 is here to help you! PUD 1 offers various rebates for our customers, including ductless heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, washer, and dryers, and PTCS Air Source Heat Pumps, as well as incentives for commercial lighting and commercial ductless heat pumps.

By making small changes in our daily lives, starting with our energy usage, we can help achieve our state's carbon reduction goals. There is a great carbon footprint calculator

online at: <https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/> to see how these small changes can add up to positive results.

If you would like to learn more about the rebates we offer, please call our office at (360) 877-5249 and ask for Trisha.



Trisha Martin
Customer Service &
Conservation Representative

Choose the RIGHT SPOT!

One of the things we really dislike doing is cutting someone's decorative trees and plants that grow into our electric and water lines and infrastructure. We know that people enjoy their trees and foliage, and we would rather help customers choose the right spot when planning their spring planting, rather than have to cut it or replace it down the

road. Remember-it's not just about power lines and transformers! Roots also cause damage to our water mains and reservoirs. It's best to keep even low growing plants about 10-15 feet away from utilities. And remember! Call 811 before you dig! If you hit the lines without locates, you can be charged for the time and materials to make the repairs. 811 is free and takes up to 48 hours (2 business days) to get the locates completed. Much easier than breaking a water pipe or dangerously making contact with an underground power line.

KEEP CLEAR
Do not fly objects near power lines.

LARGE TREES AREA
Plant large trees (over 35 feet high when mature) at least 50 feet way from overhead power lines.

PRUNING AREA
To help prevent outages, trees and shrubs will be pruned if they are within 10 feet of overhead power lines.

MEDIUM TREES AREA
Plant medium trees (25 - 35 feet high when mature) at least 25 feet away from overhead power lines.

KEEP CLEAR
Keep the area around the meter clear for reading and safety.

CLEARANCE AREA
Trees and shrubs should be planted at least 10 feet away from ground-mounted transformers.

LOW TREES AREA
Plant low growing trees (15 feet high when mature) and shrubs at least 10 - 25 feet from overhead power lines.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS regularly meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. Meetings are now held both in person and remotely. The call-in instructions for the public are posted on the PUD website along with the meeting packets. For more information on meetings, please visit mason-pud1.org or call the PUD office.

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www.mason-pud1.org

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