



Media Release

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Mason PUD 1 Celebrates Completion of Rural Water Projects

POTLATCH, WA- Mason County PUD No. 1 recently hosted a ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of their water construction project in the Vuecrest neighborhood of Union. The PUD's Vuecrest system was one of several systems that had longstanding wait lists for connections due to system constraints on mainline and water storage capacity. Thanks to federal funding that became available in recent years through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the PUD was able to partner with Mason County, the Washington State Department of Health, and the 35th District representatives to piece together funding packages to construct these projects that sat on the PUD's Capital Improvement Plan for years.



Ribbon Cutting at Vuecrest Water System in Union

Vuecrest, Ripplewood, Agate Beach, and Shadowood water systems all received funding from 35th District sponsors Travis Couture and Drew MacEwen in the state capital budget, along with additional ARPA funding from the Mason County Commission and the Department of Health Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. The first three projects have been completed and Shadowood is currently under construction. These projects replaced leaking mainlines, built new water reservoirs, assisted in the deployment of rural broadband in Agate and Union through joint trench opportunities, and opened more connections for property owners to connect to the public water system and finally sell or construct homes on their properties. Vuecrest also received emergency power and water interties to loop feed the development with the neighboring Union Ridge community, creating system redundancy in case of emergencies. "These PUD 1 projects are great examples of how the County and the State can partner with our special purpose districts to invest in rural infrastructure, so the high cost of construction doesn't fall solely on the public ratepayers," said Mason County Commissioner Sharon Trask, who voted to approve awarding over \$1.5 million in ARPA funding to support PUD 1 water projects.

PUD 1's General Manager, Kristin Masteller, agreed. "These partnerships have delivered extraordinary outcomes for our water customers- over \$23 million in total water system funding so far," she said. The PUD water department is already processing new applications for service on the systems that previously had wait lists and has received funding for seven additional water construction projects that are in various phases from planning to active construction. "Our water department is going to be very busy for the next several years," said Masteller. "I'm proud of the extra effort our team has put in to achieve these savings for our customers."

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For 90 years, PUD 1 has provided non-for-profit electric, water, telecom, and wastewater services to approximately 9,000 customers in Mason and Jefferson Counties. The District's mission is to provide customers with safe, reliable and valued utility services.

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