



Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

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Pend Oreille PUD Statement on Ponderay Newsprint Company

Newport, Washington – Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County (“PUD”) General Manager Colin Willenbrock issued the following statement regarding the indefinite idling of Ponderay Newsprint Company (“PNC”):

“Ponderay Newsprint has long been an outstanding employer and community partner in the Pend Oreille valley. While recent news of the mill being indefinitely idled has long been anticipated, it still hits us hard to know this chapter in our community’s story may be coming to a close.

We will be creating a page on our website for customers – including PNC employees who live in Pend Oreille County – to learn about energy assistance programs, financial resources, and other helpful information as we make this transition together. Customers experiencing financial hardship are also encouraged to contact Rural Resources or the PUD’s customer service representatives for more information. This has been a tough year for everyone, and the news about PNC’s current situation certainly doesn’t make it any easier. But if there’s one thing we’ve learned this year, it’s that we are strongest when we work together to move our community forward.

The PUD has long sought to keep PNC in our community, and has made significant efforts over the past several years to assist as much as possible. Actions the PUD has taken on behalf of PNC include the following:

- Passed through to PNC more than \$1 million in bill credits over the past 12 months by optimizing the carbon-free attributes of Box Canyon power in other markets;
- Provided more than \$2.3 million in energy efficiency savings to PNC through our BPA energy conservation program;
- Made more than \$86 million in power sales on PNC’s behalf, which significantly reduced PNC’s power bill during high-price market events; and
- Provided PNC with a \$50,000 monthly credit on its power bill for every month PNC stayed in business following the 2018 legal settlement.

Rest assured, Pend Oreille PUD has been working tirelessly over the past several years to lessen the blow to our ratepayers by building strong financial reserves and a rate stabilization account, making targeted cost cuts, improving our financial position through debt refinancing, and mitigating the potential loss of PNC by finding alternative purchasers of our hydroelectric resources. While challenging times certainly lay ahead for our community, the PUD is ready to face those challenges head-on.”

About Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

Pend Oreille County Public Utility District 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>.