



## Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

Administrative Offices - P.O. Box 190 • Newport, WA 99156 • (509) 447-3137 • FAX (509) 447-5824  
Box Canyon Hydro Project - P.O. Box 547 • Ione, WA 99139 • (509) 446-3137 • FAX (509) 447-6790

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 16, 2025**

Media Contact: Joe Hathaway

[jhathaway@popud.org](mailto:jhathaway@popud.org) / 509-447-6354

### Pend Oreille PUD Board Approves 2026 Budget

**PEND OREILLE COUNTY, WA** – The Board of Commissioners for Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County (PUD) unanimously approved the utility's 2026 budget totaling \$89.9 million during its December 16, 2025, meeting. The budget funds PUD operations, infrastructure improvements, and investments that support safety, affordability, reliability, wildfire mitigation, and the community's long-term energy needs.

Most of the PUD's expenses next year are related to power costs, totaling \$32 million. These costs include power purchases from Seattle City Light's Boundary Dam and market energy purchases needed to meet customer demand.

Of the total budget:

- Power supply costs: \$32 million
- Debt service payments: \$11 million
- Taxes: \$3.6 million
- Protection, Mitigation, and Enhancement (PM&E) measures under the Box Canyon FERC license: \$5.5 million

Together, these costs account for nearly 60% of the PUD's total projected expenses for 2026.

The budget also addresses operational needs across the Electric, Production, Community Network, and Water systems. Funding is included for continued design and equipment for the Bare Mountain Substation, wildfire-mitigation efforts such as vegetation management and new protective equipment, and capital improvements across all systems. Administrative and general costs remain at 2025 levels, despite continued inflation affecting materials, insurance, equipment, and services.

"The budget gives us a clear picture of where resources need to be directed next year," said Chris Jones, General Manager of the PUD. "It's about keeping our systems strong, preparing for future challenges, and making thoughtful investments for our customers and the community."

#### Other Board Actions

- Adopted the PUD's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, outlining long-term priorities for reliability, financial stability, safety, and customer service.
- Elected Board officers for 2026, establishing commissioner leadership roles for the coming year.
- Adopted the 2026 Board Meetings Calendar (Resolution No. 1504).
- Approved organization representation for 2026, designating PUD participation in

regional, statewide, and industry groups.

- Approved a 2026 Safety Consultant contract to support employee safety training and regulatory compliance.
- Authorized the purchase of six new power circuit breakers (Contract No. 25-309) to enhance protection of the electric system and improve reliability.
- Approved a winter power supply transaction to ensure adequate energy during periods of higher seasonal demand.

For more information on the 2026 budget, please visit [popud.org](http://popud.org) or email [information@popud.org](mailto:information@popud.org).

**About Pend Oreille County Public Utility District**

Pend Oreille PUD 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>.