

An aerial photograph of a large dam and reservoir. The dam is a long, concrete structure with multiple spillways, situated in a deep valley. The reservoir is a large body of water that fills the valley, extending into the distance. The surrounding landscape is rugged and mountainous, with brown and tan hillsides. A road runs along the left side of the reservoir. In the foreground, there are some industrial or utility structures near the dam. The sky is clear and blue.

2020 Customer & Stakeholder Feedback

November 2, 2020

Why are we here?

To review recent customer and stakeholder input and responses by the District

We received feedback on three key issues:

- Rates
- Fiber expansion
- Technology improvements

Rates

District responses:

- Communication that a majority of customers prefer smaller, annual rate increases versus deferring them and risking a larger rate increase later
- Highlight Chelan PUD as having some of the lowest electric rates in the U.S.
- Continued use of charts showing state and national comparisons of kilowatt-hour charge and monthly charges, as well as comparisons to inflation
- Multiple communications channels: customer newsletters, website, press releases, social media
- Continued plan development in Q4 2020

Fiber Expansion

District responses:

- Fiber expansion is a top priority; recently the Board of Commissioners agreed to funding the acceleration of the expansion and complete the majority of the buildout by the end of 2024
- This month we re-organized the Fiber operations group to work under Customer Utilities to leverage resources to support acceleration of the Fiber expansion
- Ultimately the PUD's Public Power Benefit (PPB) program will provide 85-90% of county residences with access to high-speed broadband by end of 2026

Technology Improvements

District responses:

- The District technology roadmaps are the foundation for delivering valued customer enhancements and are focus in several business unit plans
- 2020 we installed a new customer information system in support of the 2021-23 advanced metering project and other complimentary technology. Customer benefits and value include:
 - Outage alerts
 - Customer usage information, high bill alerts, information supporting conservation choices
 - Improved customer portal for accessing information and doing business with the District

Stakeholder Feedback Outreach

- District staff have connected with many of the 52 external stakeholders that were interviewed in March 2020.
- Common themes include an appreciation for the District's openness, accessibility, support of community efforts, and willingness to partner.
- Many stakeholders requested more engagement and communication, District participation in agency meetings/activities, and increased coordination.
- The District is being receptive to these requests and will continue to seek meaningful engagement and strong relationships with our stakeholders.



Questions?

Appendix

Customer Utilities: Feedback and Responses

Feedback Theme	Chelan PUD Response by John Stoll
Frequency of outage/ Reliability concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability improvement a 2020-2024 Strategic Plan goal • Outage Management System coupled with AMI in the works
Customer requests (discounts, billing/payment options, lower rates, streetlights, increased undergrounding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate customers on discount options, billing options, payment options during pandemic, District financial policies, streetlight ownership, and undergrounding policies and processes
Customer service improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee communication an emphasized element of individual development plans • Reinforce goal to leave job sites in the same or better condition than originally found
More electric usage information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMI implementation will meet this demand
AMI meter disapproval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform of opt-out program commitment
Timeliness of meter connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New dispatch software to reduce process gaps

District Services: Feedback and Responses

Feedback Theme	Chelan PUD Response by Justin Erickson
Communication preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assure customers mail correspondence will continue • Inform customers that many District publications are already provided in both English and Spanish
Customer requests (outage alerts, diesel/solar alternative, free Discovery pass)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outage alerts planned to roll out in the future • Diesel/solar is not a cost-advantageous investment • Advise of District's free parking pass to select parks
Customer concerns (Service Center, Lake Chelan levels, environmental impacts, parks, material suppliers, transparency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Service Center is the lowest long-term cost option and is centrally located based on population • Educate customers on lake level factors, park security measures, environmental stewardship commitments, large quantity of local materials purchases, and availability of PUD finance/budget documents online
Dislike for survey/survey format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform customers that the survey is optional, available in multiple formats, and request the survey consultant use a local number in the future

Energy Development & Conservation: Feedback and Responses

Feedback Theme	Chelan PUD Response by Andrew Grassell
Energy program information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An updated solar program focused on increased participation is scheduled for release in 2021• The PUD website is very informative. Virtual audits are another option for customers to learn more
Request for increased rebates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rebates are reviewed and updated frequently based on cost-effectiveness, technical requirements, and market data
Concern for heat pump water heater program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The PUD rebate coupled with the estimated annual savings of \$50 means customers will see payback after approximately eight years. They are noisier than a standard water heater however and thus are not a good option for every home.
Streetlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate customers that street lighting is typically handled on the city or county level

Fiber & Telecom: Feedback and Responses

Feedback Theme	Chelan PUD Response by Bob Shane
Keeping rates low for seniors and low-income customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• End-user rates are established by service providers• Wholesale rates are evaluated annually and adjusted to reflect operational needs
Fiber expansion interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The PUD's Public Power Benefit (PPB) program will provide 85-90% of county residences with access to high-speed broadband by end of 2026
Network security concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The PUD's online payment site is secure. The fiber system is operated using industry best practices to ensure the end-user's data is secure between them and their retail service provider
Missed fiber expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The PUD is looking for operational improvement opportunities and is considering the use of contractors to meet resource demands
5G wireless concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternative wireless broadband options are evaluated to serve the needs of rural areas of Chelan County

Human Resources: Feedback and Responses

Feedback Theme	Chelan PUD Response by Lorna Klemanski
Request that the PUD hire more disabled workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10.4% of District employees have reported disabilities • The PUD implemented a program in 2019 to hire developmentally disabled individuals
Inquiry regarding the diversity of the PUD's workforce and how closely it mirrors the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District strives to reflect the diversity of the community, has an affirmative action plan, and conducts outreach events for underrepresented groups
Comment regarding the age of employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PUD's rigorous selection process does not factor in age. The average age of our workforce is 47+ years old. • The median age of employees hired from 2017-2020 was 38, and for some jobs, the average age is above 50.
Request that the PUD compensate staff fairly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District uses market data to fairly compensate employees while not exceeding pay for similar work in the labor market
Request that the PUD hire qualified workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We welcome comments or concerns about the performance/abilities of staff so they can be addressed

Information Technology: Feedback and Responses

Feedback Theme	Chelan PUD Response by Kelly Boyd
Website login issues/ Internet reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improving the customer experience is a priority and you can expect continuous improvements from us to meet our customer needs. This includes implementing high quality technical solutions that benefit our customer-owners and deliver long term value

General Manager's Office: Feedback and Responses

Feedback Theme	Chelan PUD Response by Steve Wright
Rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response plan is to work with Justin to develop a communications plan between now and December with an emphasis on our low electric rates
Financing/Spending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with Justin to increase communications around our annual report which can be translated into a report to customer-owners