



**Public Utility District #1 of Whatcom County**

**Bellingham, WA**

**GENERAL MANAGER**

**\$175,000 - \$225,000**

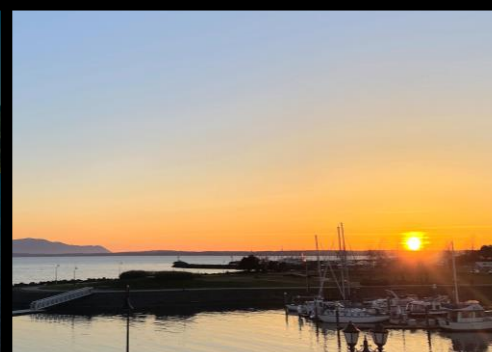
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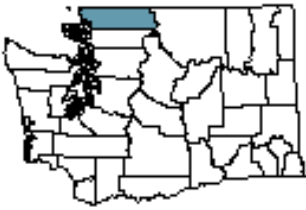
**September 27, 2021**

*(First Review, Open Until Filled)*

***PROTHMAN***



## WHY APPLY?



Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County (PUD) is an innovative, well-run agency with a dedicated team of employees and a supportive

Board of Directors. The PUD is highly regarded in the community for its organizational integrity and the quality of services provided. The new General Manager will have the opportunity to join a stable organization that has only had two general managers over the last 32 years, and shape the administration of the district by hiring key staff positions for retiring staff. This exciting opportunity will allow the next General Manager to positively shape the future of the PUD in one of the most vibrant, beautiful areas in the Pacific Northwest.

## THE REGION

Whatcom County is located in the northwest corner of Washington State. With its proximity to Mt. Baker, beautiful Puget Sound and the world-renown San Juan Islands, it is an extremely desirable place to live and work. Situated just south of the Canadian Border, Whatcom County (population 229,000) is made up of several rural communities and smaller towns including the cities of Ferndale, Everson, Nooksack, Blaine, and Lynden, as well as Bellingham, the county's largest city and county seat.

The City of Ferndale is located about 90 miles north of Seattle and 51 miles south of Vancouver, British Columbia. Ferndale offers natural beauty, exceptional schools, many parks, and endless recreational activities with Mount Baker close by. Everson and the nearby city of Nooksack lie near the foothills of the Cascade mountains and have served primarily as small bedroom communities that have a quiet friendly charm that is inviting to many families. The city of Blaine sits in northwest Whatcom County at the Canadian border and is known for its close connection to Canada and the Vancouver metro area. The city offers residents an abundance of parks, an excellent school system, affordable housing, low crime, and a unique community that brings recreation and tourism that is centered on the city's historic downtown and harbor area, which boasts a rich maritime history.

Lynden, the second largest city in Whatcom County lies in a broad valley along the winding path of the Nooksack River, which empties into nearby Bellingham Bay. The region saw significant Dutch immigration in the early and mid-1900s, spurring the growth of dairies which today have been converted into raspberry, blueberry, or strawberry fields. The city's parks and flat terrain are ideal for bicyclists looking for an easy-going ride. Golfers can play at Lynden's renowned Homestead Golf & Country Club, featuring an island green on the 18th hole, or 10 other courses within 30 minutes.

Bellingham, the County's largest city enjoys a wide variety of lively community events, including a Farmers Market, food and music festivals, and recreational races for runners, kayakers, skiers, cyclists, and more. Bellingham is home to an award-winning school system, and a historic downtown area that consists of restaurants, art galleries and specialty shops, along with a mix of brew pubs, wine bars and cafes. Nearby institutions of higher learning include Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, Northwest Indian College and Whatcom Community College, all of which call Bellingham home. With 15,000 students, Western Washington University (WWU) is the largest employer in Bellingham, as well as a major contributor to Bellingham's liveliness and culture.



As a whole, Whatcom County is a recreational haven. Skiers, hikers, kayakers, cyclists, golfers, boaters and other adventurers enjoy unparalleled access to the outdoors. The county also supports a thriving cultural community, with a lively theater and music scene and an eclectic mix of museums and annual festivals.



Bellingham's climate is typical for the Pacific Northwest. While cloudy and rainy days are not uncommon, Bellingham receives less annual precipitation (36 inches) than Miami, New York City or Boston. A typical winter may bring one to five days of snowfall. More commonly, however, winter highs are in the 40s and 50s. Summer days are often warm, sunny and temperate with highs in the 70s and 80s and cooler temperatures at night.

## THE ORGANIZATION

Public Utility District #1 of Whatcom County (PUD) serves greater Whatcom by ensuring water, electrical, and telecommunication infrastructure is available to serve a growing and robust regional economy. Today, beyond its core mission of providing power and water to industries in the Cherry Point and Grandview industrial areas, the PUD maintains an active role in addressing water rights and resource allocation across the County and is advancing clean and renewable energy solutions. The PUD also supports new green industry and is partnering with the Port of Bellingham to extend broadband access to underserved areas.

The PUD is governed by a Board of Commissioners comprised of three local citizens elected on a nonpartisan basis by Whatcom County residents. A PUD Commissioner is elected every two years during the general election to serve a six-year term. The Commission establishes PUD policies, set rates, adopt system plans for electric and water utilities, and approve expense obligations. In addition to guiding PUD operations, the Commissioners appoint the General Manager. The PUD operates on a 2021 budget of \$21.8 million and is supported by 21 employees who help carry out Commission policies and conduct PUD business.

## THE POSITION

Under the general direction of the Board of Commissioners, the General Manager manages the operation of the PUD in accordance with the priorities, policies, and general direction of the Commission; ensures conformance with applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations; and recommends strategies and plans to accomplish the mission and vision of the PUD. For a full job description, please view the attachment found [here](#).

## INITIATIVES

The development and adoption of a multi-year strategic plan affords the PUD an opportunity to reflect on its progress, assess changing conditions, and plot a new course forward. In December 2018, the PUD adopted its '2025 Strategic Plan'. That strategic plan has guided the PUD forward, but conditions and circumstances change. In light of that change, the PUD must remain nimble in its pursuit of new initiatives, while at the same time remaining reliable for its customers that have long-term reliance on the delivery of critical infrastructure services. This tension between flexibility and stability will require constant attention by the staff and Commission and therein lies the success of the PUD.

Among its priorities, the PUD has and continues to take many actions that impact the community's resilience to a changing climate. The PUD is actively engaged in water conservation, re-timing water flows, education regarding water resource stewardship, and overall support of a healthy regional ecosystem. In the future, the PUD will continue to explore effective policies and actions in response to important climate related challenges.



Recent and anticipated changes in leadership at the PUD have necessitated that the PUD reaffirm its prior commitments while exploring and embracing new initiatives in serving its community into the future. FY 2022 and beyond initiatives include develop a plan and policies in 2022 to define the PUD's role in advancing clean and renewable local energy, exploring a pilot project with Ecology funding and other partners to demonstrate the feasibility of providing water supply to those in need, analyzing and advancing "clean" industry throughout Whatcom County, updating the *Strategic Plan 2025* with the new General Manager, and updating a community impact analysis to quantify and qualify the PUD's historic and ongoing impact on the Greater Whatcom.

To view the PUD's strategic initiatives, please view the attachment found [here](#).

## IDEAL CANDIDATE

### Education and Experience:

A bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university in technical studies, public or business administration, or a related field, and ten (10) years of senior, relevant supervisory and management experience in a private firm or public agency is required. Candidates must be able to obtain security and safety clearances required to gain access into Whatcom PUD's customer's facilities and electric substations, i.e. Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), and have or obtain a valid Washington State Driver's License with a driving record free from serious or frequent violation. Any equivalent combination of minimum education and experience which shows the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful at the job may be considered.



While the utility industry operates in a technical environment, the PUD is fortunate to have highly skilled staff professionals experienced in its core services. Because of that strength, the PUD's next General Manager does not necessarily need to have significant utility industry experience but should have refined experience in managing in a complex environment as a trustee of public or private assets. Like all public agencies, the PUD is seeking a highly skilled individual that can effectively navigate the challenges of market realities; varied community interest; regulatory constraints and balancing multiple priorities. The ideal candidate will be a reasoned risk taker with a keen sense of entrepreneurship and vision who has the skills to understand, integrate with, and care for the community the PUD serves. The General Manager will prioritize relationship building with both public and private entities and seeking solutions for complex challenges within a limited resource environment is necessary.

### Necessary Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- Experience leading an organization in transition, evolving with change.
- A productive understanding of organizational development to advance the PUD's goals and priorities.
- Understanding the role of management in working with an elected board in executing their consensus vision.
- The ability to make technical discernments on complex technologies, financial analysis, and risk assessments.
- An appreciation for the value of good customer service and community responsiveness.
- The ability to lead, hire, develop, and retain a professional and technical staff. Retaining the 'best of the best' in key staff positions.
- An ability to effectively communicate with all types of audiences and individuals in a host of settings.
- A working knowledge of complex financial conditions with the vision to be creative in leveraging resources.

## COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

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- **\$175,000 - \$225,000 DOQ**
- Medical insurance with full family coverage.
- Employer paid family dental and vision insurance.
- 12 paid holidays per year.
- 2-5 weeks' vacation days per year based on length of service.
- 12 days of sick leave accrual per year.
- 8.7% added to base salary in lieu of PERS.
- 457 Deferred Compensation
- Cell phone and car allowance
- Annual performance review with salary based on performance



**To learn more about the PUD,  
please visit:  
[www.pudwhatcom.org](http://www.pudwhatcom.org)**

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Public Utility District #1 of Whatcom County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **September 27, 2021** (first review, open until filled). Applications, supplemental questions, resumes and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. To **apply online**, go to [www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com) and click on "Open Recruitments", select "Public Utility District #1 of Whatcom County, WA – General Manager", and click "Apply Now", or click [here](#). Resumes, cover letters and supplemental questions can be uploaded once you have logged in.



**[www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com)**

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