



Eugene Water & Electric Board

April 16, 2024

Contact: Adam Spencer, Adam.Spencer@eweb.org, 541-685-7539

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EWEB to host McKenzie Valley Customer Appreciation Dinner on May 23

New meeting format intends to bring guests, EWEB Commissioners and Staff together for meaningful conversations

Walterville, Ore., – The Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) is hosting its annual upriver event on Thursday, May 23 at the Walterville Community Center.

The meeting format will be different than in previous years. The event will begin and end with an Open House, allowing guests opportunities to speak with EWEB Staff to address individual account issues, get updates on EWEB projects, and learn about customer programs, loans, and incentives.

The main portion of the meeting will be in the style of a Customer Appreciation Dinner. The overall theme is “Improving communications with the community.” Customers, EWEB Commissioners and staff – and guests from partner organizations – will dine together and discuss how we can improve our communications through future challenges to the McKenzie Community.

The goal is to create constructive conversations, with each table working as brainstorming groups. Conversation topics will include:

- threats to the McKenzie River.
- how public agencies can effectively send updates during severe weather events.
- how upriver customers receive updates during power outages.
- and in what ways can EWEB demonstrate its commitment to preserving the community's quality of life despite the closure of the Leaburg Hydroelectric Project?

“We’ve heard from our upriver customers that they want to engage in real dialogue with our Commissioners, but the Board Meeting format limits testimony to three-minutes,” said EWEB Communications Specialist Adam Spencer. “We also have a special relationship with the upriver community because we must work together to protect the McKenzie River. So we’re excited to try out this new format that acknowledges how our cooperation on complicated decisions depends upon mutual respect – and that starts with everybody feeling heard.”

At the end of the dinner conversation, Commissioners will report out to the entire group about

their tables' ideas, concerns, and follow-up questions. EWEB staff will take notes during the conversations to record the groups' ideas for further development. After dinner, the Open House format will resume.

What: EWEB McKenzie Valley Customer Appreciation Dinner

Where: Walterville Community Center (39259 Camp Creek Rd.).

When: Thursday, May 23.

- Open House – 5:30-6:00 p.m.
- Dinner – 6:00-7:20 p.m.
- Open House – 7:20-7:45 p.m.

Who: All are welcome to attend. Please RSVP to Adam Spencer at adam.spencer@eweb.org or by calling 541-685-7539 by May 7 so we know how many meals to provide.

What else: During the Open House portion, EWEB staff can answer questions about:

- Landowner resources including Holiday Farm Fire resources and programs for McKenzie Valley customers.
- Conservation incentives and other EWEB service offerings.
- Pure Water Partners programs.
- EWEB McKenzie River hydroelectric projects and dam safety.
 - Carmen-Smith recreation facilities timeline updates.
 - Leaburg Decommissioning Action Plan.
 - Walterville Canal outage.
- EWEB powerline Tree Management Program.
- Emergency preparedness.
- EWEB's response to the ice storm.
- Individual account concerns.

###

About the Eugene Water & Electric Board

The Eugene Water & Electric Board is Oregon's largest customer-owned utility. Founded in 1911, EWEB provides water and electricity to approximately 96,000 customers in the Eugene-Springfield area. EWEB's service area covers 236 square miles with a population of more than 200,000 people, including major institutions such as the University of Oregon. A five-member elected Board of Commissioners governs the utility, which does not operate to earn a profit or to serve the investment needs of stockholders. Employing approximately 500 people, EWEB serves the people of Eugene by embodying core values of safety, reliability, affordability, environmental responsibility and community/culture. EWEB owns four energy generation facilities, including hydroelectric projects on the McKenzie and Clackamas Rivers, and leads watershed protection measures with local landowners and environmental organizations. With one of the greenest energy supplies in the nation, approximately 90% of EWEB's power comes from carbon-free sources, and EWEB is committed to achieving a 95% carbon-free energy portfolio by 2030.