
THE DALLESPORT/MURDOCK NEWS

*SERVING THE PENINSULA COMMUNITIES
OF DALLESPORT AND MURDOCK*

GOLDENDALE ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT ADVANCES THROUGH FEDERAL LICENSING

As Washington State moves toward legally required clean-energy goals, utilities across the region are planning for how electricity will be produced, managed, and stored in the decades ahead. Reliable energy storage is increasingly part of that conversation.

One proposal that has advanced in this context is the Goldendale Energy Storage Project. The project recently received a 40-year federal license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), a significant regulatory milestone that allows the project to move forward through future development stages. The proposal has generated both support and opposition.

Under Washington law, electric utilities were required to eliminate coal-fired power by 2025, become greenhouse-gas neutral by 2030, and supply electricity from 100 percent clean sources by 2045. Meeting those requirements involves not only how electricity is generated, but also how it is stored and delivered when demand is highest. Large-scale energy storage projects are one of several approaches being considered to support that transition.

The Goldendale project would use pumped storage hydropower, a form of long-duration energy storage that functions much like a large battery for the electrical grid. When electricity supply exceeds demand, power would be used to pump water uphill into an upper reservoir more than 2,400 feet above the Columbia River.



The water would remain in a 61-acre upper reservoir until energy is needed. At that point, water would be released downhill to turbines via underground tunnels and into a 63-acre lower reservoir, generating electricity on demand. When excess energy is again available, water could be pumped back to the upper reservoir for reuse.

Unlike traditional hydropower projects, the Goldendale proposal is described as a closed-loop system, meaning it relies on moving water between two constructed reservoirs rather than damming an existing river.

The project is proposed on the former aluminum smelter site outside Goldendale. If built, the facility would be capable of generating up to 1,200 megawatts of electricity, allowing energy to be stored during periods of excess generation and released during peak demand.

Supporters of the project point to potential local benefits, including union construction employment, long-term operational jobs, and ongoing tax revenue for Klickitat County. They also cite the project's potential role in supporting grid reliability and efficiency, particularly relevant in areas like Klickitat County, which generate significant amounts of wind and solar power. Those resources can produce large volumes of electricity when conditions are favorable, but less at other times, making energy storage one strategy to balance supply with demand across the grid.

Concerns have been raised by the Yakama Nation and others regarding the cultural significance of areas near the proposed upper reservoir, including Juniper Point, also known as Pushpum. Additional concerns focus on construction-related impacts, such as traffic, noise, visual changes, and environmental disturbance.

The Goldendale Pumped Storage Project remains a complex proposal with both potential economic benefits and community concerns. Residents are encouraged to conduct their own research, review publicly available information, and stay informed as the project continues through regulatory and development processes.

Pumped Storage Hydropower Quick Facts

Nearly 100-year-old technology

Pumped storage has been used in the United States since the 1930s.

Relatively uncommon today

There are about 43 pumped storage facilities operating across 18 states.

Largest form of grid storage

Despite their small number, these facilities provide roughly 22–23 gigawatts of utility-scale energy storage capacity nationwide.

Very few new facilities built

Most pumped storage facilities in the United States were built between the 1960s and 1990s, and no entirely new facility has been constructed in decades, making new proposals relatively uncommon.

Not common in the Pacific Northwest

There are no operating pumped storage facilities in the Pacific Northwest. The closest large examples are located in central California near Fresno and in southern California near Santa Clarita.

A LOOK AT DALLESPORT WASTEWATER SURVEY RESPONSES

In early December 2025, Klickitat County Public Works partnered with the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) to gather feedback from Dallesport residents about the local wastewater system and a potential change in ownership.

The wastewater system is currently owned by Klickitat County and operated by Klickitat PUD. The purpose of the survey was to understand how customers rate their current service and whether they would support transferring ownership of the system from the County to the PUD.

Klickitat County Public Works assisted by providing MCEDD with a list of approximately 432 residential customers, along with a corresponding service map. On Tuesday, December 2, 2025, three survey teams, consisting of one Klickitat County Public Works employee and one MCEDD employee, conducted door-to-door surveys in Dallesport.

During the survey effort, 187 parcels were visited, representing approximately 43% of the residential customers provided on the survey list. Of those:

- 83 parcels had no response
- 104 households participated, representing 24% of all addresses on the survey list.

Residents were asked the following two questions:

Question 1: "Your wastewater system right now is owned by Klickitat County and operated by Klickitat PUD. On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy are you with your current wastewater service?"

Question 2: "Klickitat County is considering turning over full ownership of the wastewater system to Klickitat PUD. Would you support the change in ownership, feel neutral, or not support the change in ownership?"

Survey results showed:

- Respondents rated their current wastewater service an **average of 7.51 out of 10**
- Regarding a potential ownership transfer:
 - **12.6% said they would support the change**
 - **61.2% said they felt neutral**
 - **26.2% said they would not support the change**

Participants were also invited to share additional comments. The most common concern raised was cost, particularly whether wastewater rates would increase under a new ownership structure. Many residents indicated their support would depend on pricing, while others said they needed more information before forming an opinion. In addition, some respondents expressed concerns about Klickitat PUD, including past experiences and perceived responsiveness. Others suggested that local control, such as ownership by a Dallesport Water or Wastewater District, could be preferable. A number of comments also raised issues related to system maintenance, oversight, and spill reporting, reflecting a desire for clearer accountability regardless of who ultimately owns the system.

Have questions or want more information?

Residents with questions about the survey or future discussions can contact Jeff Hunter, Klickitat County Public Works Director, at jeffh@klickitatcounty.org or by calling Klickitat County Public Works at (509) 773-4616. No decisions have been made at this time, and the survey results are intended to help inform future discussions.

Artemis and the Return to the Moon

Why we went, why we stopped, and why we're going back

More than fifty years after humans last walked on the Moon, the United States is preparing to return. Through the Artemis program, NASA aims to send astronauts back to lunar orbit and eventually to the surface. This time, the effort reflects a very different purpose than during the Apollo era.

Between 1969 and 1972, six Apollo missions successfully landed astronauts on the Moon. Twelve astronauts walked on the lunar surface, collecting samples and proving that humans could travel beyond Earth orbit and return safely. Those missions were driven largely by Cold War competition and national prestige and relied on single-use spacecraft built for short, high-risk journeys. Apollo achieved its objective, but it was expensive, dangerous, and never designed for long-term continuation. After Apollo 17 in 1972, human missions beyond low Earth orbit came to an end.

The pause that followed was not because NASA forgot how to reach the Moon. Apollo hardware was never intended to be reused, and modern human spaceflight operates under far higher expectations for safety, redundancy, radiation protection, and long-duration reliability. Meeting those standards dramatically increases mission complexity and development time.

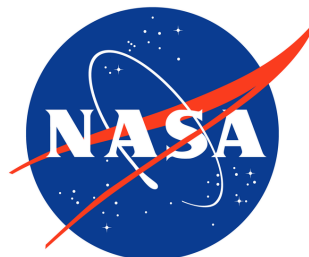
The Artemis program reflects that shift in approach. In 2022, Artemis I launched as an uncrewed mission, successfully testing NASA's new Space Launch System rocket and Orion spacecraft on a deep-space flight around the Moon. The mission validated critical systems and confirmed that Orion could withstand the extreme conditions of lunar travel and high-speed reentry to Earth.

The next step is Artemis II, the first crewed mission of the Artemis program. Rather than attempting a lunar landing, the astronauts will fly around the Moon and return to Earth. During this mission, the crew will travel farther from Earth than any humans have ever gone, passing well beyond low Earth orbit and even beyond the distance reached during the Apollo missions. This flight allows engineers at NASA to test life-support systems, navigation, communications, and crew operations in deep space before committing to a surface mission. Artemis II is currently targeted to launch no earlier than February 6, 2026, with additional launch opportunities expected later in March and April 2026 if needed.

Looking further ahead, Artemis III is planned to return astronauts to the lunar surface, targeting the Moon's south pole. This region has never been visited by humans and is believed to contain water ice in permanently shadowed areas. Long-term plans include repeated missions, reusable landing systems, and the development of a small space station in lunar orbit known as Gateway. Together, these efforts are intended to support sustained lunar exploration and help lay the groundwork for future human missions to Mars. Artemis III is not expected to launch before mid-2027.

Apollo demonstrated that humans could reach the Moon. Artemis is focused on learning how to return safely, operate in deep space for longer periods, and build the foundation for exploration beyond Earth orbit. The return to the Moon is not about repeating history, but about extending it.

Those interested in following the Artemis II mission will be able to watch live coverage online through NASA's official channels, including nasa.gov/live and NASA's official YouTube and social media channels as launch windows approach.



February History: The Only State Named for a President

February marks the birthday of George Washington, born on February 22, 1732. Washington State holds a unique place in that legacy as the only U.S. state named after a president.

When this territory was created in 1853, lawmakers considered naming it Columbia, after the river that defines much of the region. The name was never officially adopted, in part to avoid confusion with the District of Columbia. Instead, Congress selected Washington, honoring the nation's first president. While many places across the United States bear his name, Washington remains the only state to do so!

The Winter Olympics Begin with a Local Thread

The Winter Olympics are almost here! When the world tunes in for the opening ceremony on February 6 in Milan, Italy, our athletes will parade into the stadium and represent the United States on the global stage. Once again, Team USA will be wearing a piece of our greater region.

Team USA's ceremonial uniforms feature wool from Shaniko Wool Company, sourced from sheep raised in north-central Oregon. Their wool has now been featured five times in official Team USA Olympic uniforms, designed by Ralph Lauren.

That story can be explored closer to home through the new exhibit "A Sense of Place" at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center & Museum, which traces the 154-year history of the Imperial Stock Ranch, founded in 1871, and the journey that led to the creation of Shaniko Wool Company. The exhibit features ranching and textile artifacts that connect local history to the Olympic stage, including past Olympic uniforms.

Nine athletes from the Pacific Northwest are heading to the 2026 Winter Olympics, representing Washington and Oregon in events ranging from skiing and snowboarding to speed skating and curling. From Milan to north-central Oregon, it's a proud reminder that when Team USA takes the world stage, our region is part of the story.

KEY CONTACTS

Dallesport-Murdock Fire Dept - KCFD # 6

630 Central Ave. PO Box 215
509-767-1252

Dallesport Water District

302 Sixth Ave, Dallesport, PO Box 131
541-980-6514
dwdclerk@dallesportwater.org
dallesportwater.org

Dallesport Post Office

Monday-Friday 8:00am-2:00pm
Saturday 7:30 am-11:00 am (package pickup only) 509-767-1577

Dallesport/Murdock Community Council

136 Sixth Ave, PO Box 8
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If you have ideas for this newsletter, would like to contribute content, or would like to be added to the email distribution list, contact Editor Colton Smith at dallesportcouncil@gmail.com.

LYLE SCHOOL NEWS



Important Dates

February 7th – High School Basketball Senior Night

February 16th – No School; President's Day

February 27th – Elementary Dance-A-Thon Fundraiser

Here are some of the great things that are happening in Lyle School District!

December Students of the Month – December was all about empathy! The following students were named student of the month by their teachers: Ruby Cich, Kashton Neal, Kase Smith, Zanna Abbott, Wacey Towle, Rylie Thomas, Westin Loredon-Harth, Quentin Ramon, Bella Tennison, Marissa Smith, Avenelle Dobson-Huerta, Annalyse Williamson, and Mylee Jones.

December Secondary Attendance Awards – *High School: 100% - Kaden Clark, Melanie Barajas, Morgan Bachtell, Matthew Nelson, Henry Rodriguez-Gomez, Abel Walker; 96.67% - Kaylynn Adams. Middle School: 100% - Aiden Barajas Vargas, Tyrina Comstock, Luna France, Cash Henrichs, Everett Lacefield, Harley Vermeire; 96.67% - Blakely Clark, John Harvey, Charlie Henrichs, Gigi Pouillon, Dylan Spalding. These students receive a "5-minute early release" lunch pass!*

Free Family STEM Night – Our recent Family STEM Night was a great success, bringing together students, families, and staff for an evening of hands-on learning and connection. The event was a collaborative effort between Lyle School, REACH, and Title I.

Families enjoyed a free pizza dinner while exploring interactive STEM games provided by REACH/ESD 112, with teachers on hand to guide activities and encourage learning through play. Students earned "Paws" for their participation at each station, which were entered into a prize drawing at the end of the night. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the evening such a memorable experience for our students.

School Board Appreciation Month – January was School Board Recognition Month, and we want to take a moment to extend our gratitude to the dedicated individuals who have shaped our district. To our current board members: Traci Waddington, Mark Vorce, Mitzi Moore, Jessica Smith, and Amy Roots, thank you for your leadership and for navigating the complexities of education with grace. To our past board members, thank you for your heart, your time, and your vision.

February Special Election - We would like to share important information with you about the Three-Year Replacement Enrichment Levy that is on your ballot in the current February Special Election. Informational mailers were mailed out on 1/23/2026. The mailer can also be found on the district website at https://lyleschools.org/files/user/48/file/Jan-2026-Levy-Mailer_FINAL.pdf. If you have any questions, you can contact us at 509-365-2191.

Elementary Dance-A-Thon Fundraiser – This is an energetic fundraiser where students will be given the opportunity to dance nonstop for up to 40 minutes to raise money for elementary student body activities. Dancers will collect pledges in ten-minute increments or collect a flat donation for participation. For more details, watch for a flyer coming home with elementary students. More information will also be posted on the district website and social media.

Sub Openings – We are still looking for custodial substitutes.

Bus Drivers Needed – Mid-Columbia Transportation Cooperative is looking for sub bus drivers for the Lyle Hub. Training is paid for. If interested, please call the Transportation Department at 509-493-1590.

PTO Meetings – Meetings are typically held on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM in the school library.

COUGAR ATHLETICS

Double the Celebration! Huge congratulations to our senior basketball players, **Jack Thiemann** and **Carson Ramsay**, for both surpassing 1,000 career points this season! Jack hit his milestone at home against Dufur in December, and Carson followed suit in January at Condon. We are so proud of the leadership and talent these two have brought to our courts over the last four years.

Home Basketball Games – We want to invite everyone to come out and support our students at a home basketball game, whether it is a high school or middle school event. Not only will you get to take in a fun basketball game, but you might also get to hear our amazing pep band or support one of our classes in a fundraiser meal or halftime pop shot! It's really fun to see so many of our students involved!



High School Basketball – Home games:





2/3 Against Lone/Arlington: JV @ 5:00, Varsity @ 6:00 PM
2/7 Against Condon: JV @ 2:30, Varsity @ 3:30 PM – Senior Night!
2/10 Against Wheeler: JV @ 5:00, Varsity @ 6:00 PM – Pep Band!

Middle School Basketball – Home games:

2/2 Against Arlington: @ 4:15 PM C/B/A
2/5 Against Dufur: @ 4:15 PM C/B/A; Pep Band!
2/12 Against Centerville: @ 4:15 PM C/A

FEBRUARY

2026

AA Meetings Wednesdays and Sundays 7pm Lyle School Library 625 Keasey 360-870-3321						
1	2 Lyle Lions Club Meeting 6:00pm	3 County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am Lyle School Board Meeting 5:00pm	4	5 WAGAP Mobile Food Bank @ Dallesport Community Center 12pm-2pm	6  Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony	7 Hood River Farmer's Market 10am-12pm 1 Day Book Sale Goldendale Library 12pm-5pm
8	9	10 KPUD Commissioner Mtg. 2:00pm County Water Conservancy Board 5:00pm County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am	11 Bookmobile @ Dallesport Community Center 1:30pm-3pm	12 Dallesport/Murdock Community Council Meeting 7:00pm	13	14 Love your Library Goldendale Library 10am-12pm Valentine's Day 
15	16 Presidents Day No School 	17 County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am	18	19	20 Airport Board Meeting 7:30am	21 Hood River Farmer's Market 10am-12pm
22  Winter Olympics Closing Ceremony	23	24 KPUD Commissioner Mtg. 2:00pm County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am	25 Dallesport Water District Meeting 2:30pm Bookmobile @ Dallesport Community Center 1:30pm-3pm	26	27	28 Seed Swap Goldendale Library 10am-2pm

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