

HIGH TECH. HIGH REC.



Washington's Pend Oreille County is a **recreational paradise** filled with lakes, rivers, forests, mountains and rural land. It also happens to have **incredible fiber optic Internet service** for its businesses and citizens.

In fact, we boast speeds so fast they're simply unavailable in most areas—even large cities.

The dichotomy between such a rural area enjoying world-class internet capabilities is astounding, and residents and businesses alike are just beginning to realize how special and rare this development is for the community.

Enclosed in this Pend Oreille County media kit are specifics regarding the fiber network, plus recreational attractions and useful information for learning more about our abundant opportunities.

We invite you to visit us here in Pend Oreille County, where we've bridged the digital divide—all while enjoying the view!

Check out POCEDC.org for a photo gallery, plus more information on doing business in Pend Oreille County, demographics, housing stats, healthcare and more.

Don't hesitate to give us a call or contact us online—we're connected and ready!

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Pend Oreille County melds tech-driven, outdoor-seeking lifestyles

NEWPORT, WA—Blessed with rare beauty that's naturally in abundance, Pend Oreille County in Northeast Washington is fast becoming a haven for adventure-seekers who also require an elusive feature that can be hard to find in rural locales: a sophisticated fiber infrastructure that's second-to-none in the realm of technology.

It's a stunning blend of both worlds, and Pend Oreille County has emerged at the forefront in its appeal towards those who seek a high tech, high rec lifestyle. Today, more than 400 square miles of rugged, forested land in Pend Oreille County has been connected to the "outside world" with the recent installation of high-speed, robust fiber. It's crazy fast, in an area that's jaw-droppingly beautiful.

"Visitors and residents alike are astounded by the fact that this state-of-the-art technology exists in such a beautiful, forested corner of the world," said Jamie Wyrobek, director of the Pend Oreille County Economic Development Council. "It's something we're really proud of."

Partly funded with grant monies, all fiber-served locations in Pend Oreille County enjoy 100 Mbps minimum bandwidth broadband speeds in homes and 10 gigabytes for businesses (something that's unavailable in most areas, even some large cities).

In addition to top-notch technology service, Pend Oreille County boasts a stellar public school district with an average student to teacher ratio of 16:1, along with a 24/7 hospital employing world-class primary care physicians. Businesses are thriving, thanks to one of the best tax rates in the state, and land is affordable compared to other regions. A vibrant downtown scene in Newport, arts and culture including the active Kalispel Tribe in Usk, and outdoor scenic attractions are just waiting to be explored.

Take a hike to Sweet Creek Falls, or visit the Pend Oreille County Museum for a glimpse into this area's frontier past. Browse through the fun and interesting retail shops in downtown Newport or visit a local microbrewery. If it's winter, ski the slopes at nearby resorts, and if it's summer, try your luck fishing the Pend Oreille River. Or simply stroll through one of the forested lands.

With no shortage of things to do, and unlimited business potential, Pend Oreille County is truly a vast wonderland that's out-pacing the rest of the world in both technological finesse and outdoor appeal.

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Fiber To The Premise (FTTP)

Pend Oreille Public Utility District (PUD) has helped “bridge the digital divide” by installing 33,000 strand miles of high speed, robust fiber over 400 square miles of rural land.

The Fiber To The Premise project, partly funded by grant monies, enabled PUD to extend fiber infrastructure to reach over 3,800 homes and businesses in the southern half of Pend Oreille County. In collaboration with the private sector, the Pend Oreille County Community Network System (CNS) provides wholesale broadband to multiple retail service providers who use the common infrastructure to compete for residential and business customers. Pend Oreille County now enjoys 100 megabit minimum broadband speeds in homes and 10 gigabytes or better for businesses, speeds that are simply unavailable in most areas—even large cities.

The fiber optic footprint has been expanding over the past four years. CNS is enabling service to nearly 1,500 retail customers. In our rural county, many residents were isolated, without basic phone or cell service. The fiber has connected them to the world and changed their lives. CNS facilitates families and businesses moving to our area. The customers using the network are thrilled with the high speeds and appreciative of the opportunity to live and work in scenic Pend Oreille County. The system has proven to be stable and reliable, with a redundant line on a separate path that virtually eliminates down time for fiber services. Consumer response has been robust and exceeded District expectations.

PUD has been saying it for years: “Broadband is the next generation utility.” Broadband is here to improve the lives of the people in Pend Oreille County much like electricity did many decades ago. Recently the FCC reclassified broadband service as a utility. The industry is experiencing rapid change and PUD is progressively moving forward with it. CNS will continue to examine future opportunities and improve capabilities for the benefit of both the district and the community we serve.

BENEFITS

- Provides wholesale broadband capacity to the area
- Partners with local RSPs that provide retail services to businesses and citizens
- Pend Oreille PUD offers 100 megabit minimum broadband speeds in homes, and 10 gigabytes or better for businesses, with no data limits
- Currently about 1,500 homes and businesses in the county are connected to the fiber

Technically speaking, Pend Oreille County is highly advanced,

thanks to an incredible fiber-optic network that puts the rural area on par with large U.S. cities in the realm of connectivity.

But don't just take our word for it. The Pend Oreille County Economic Development Council caught up with tech guru Alex Stanton, founder of exBabylon—which offers professional IT, mobile and cloud services. He has lived in Newport, Washington, for 10 years, and plans to continue growing his successful business in the place where he loves to live.



Alex Stanton, founder of exBabylon.

Q. When did you start your business?

A. exBabylon was founded in 2001, but in its current form since 2005.

Q. How did the fiber optic network influence your decision to live—and ultimately stay—in Pend Oreille County?

A. It's been the driving factor for me to invest in Pend Oreille County. We have 18 employees, with 14 now out of Newport. I was part of the key players here who was making an effort to bring it in. We're in the process of investing in a new facility in Newport because of the fiber optics. We've moved positions to Newport because we have a new facility. We're doing all of this because of the fiber optics, and we believe in the community. Newport's a good base for us.

Q. What's the best thing about living in Pend Oreille County?

A. The best things about living here are pretty simple: the fiber optic network, the low cost of living, the low property taxes, no income tax, and an international airport that's an hour away in Spokane.

Q. What do you do for outdoor recreation?

A. Boating, hiking, snowshoeing ... all of the above!

Making the high-tech move

Shannon Hansen is the web and social media manager at Pend Oreille Valley Networks, and also runs her own business. She is thrilled with her decision to move to Newport from Boise, Idaho, two years ago with her husband and children.

Q. How did the fiber optic network influence your decision to move to Pend Oreille County?

A. That was the main consideration. Being Idaho residents, we wanted more of the trees but couldn't find reliable, fast internet in the smaller towns. Pend Oreille County was like a dream come true.

Q. What's the best thing about living in Pend Oreille County?

A. The small-town atmosphere is very welcoming. We have kids in school, and we have all been embraced by the community.

Q. What would you tell others considering a move to Pend Oreille County?

A. It's fantastic; everything you need here is here. We're close enough to Spokane to enjoy big-city amenities like concerts and restaurants. But we get to live in this charming, small-town world in the forest, and have the fastest internet in the nation.

Q. What do you do for outdoor recreation?

A. Kayaking, hiking, mountain biking ... you can do it all here!



Shannon Hansen recently moved to Newport in part for its high-speed internet.

People of the Pend Oreille

The Kalispel Indian Reservation is located in Usk, Washington in Pend Oreille County along 10 miles of the Pend Oreille River with an additional 40 acres of trust land in Airway Heights. The Tribe has over 460 members, with approximately 40 percent of the membership under age 18 and the smallest percentage of members being Tribal elders. About 1/3 of Tribal members live on the Reservation, 1/3 live in Spokane, Washington, and 1/3 live throughout the rest of the United States.

Historically, the Kalispel Indians were semi-nomadic hunters, diggers and fishermen. Often called the “river/lake paddlers” because the Tribe traversed the Pend Oreille River and regional lakes in unique, sturgeon-nosed canoes constructed of cedar frames and pine bark covering. The name “pend oreille”—meaning “ear pendant” in French—was given by French trappers in the early 1800s when they observed the Kalispel Tribe wearing ceremonial shell earrings. Today, members celebrate their heritage through various cultural practices, including the annual Pow Wow held the first weekend in August at the Pow Wow grounds on the reservation.

The Kalispel Tribe believes in being a strong community partner and strives to achieve that through its commitment to supporting its neighbors. The Kalispel Charitable Fund was established to support the work of the numerous non-profit organizations of Spokane and Pend Oreille counties. Over the past decade, the Kalispel Tribe has donated over \$17 million to local communities in Spokane and Pend Oreille counties.

Learn more at KalispelTribe.com.

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