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Media Release

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Portland Water Bureau shifts water supply from Bull Run to Columbia South Shore Groundwater system due to high turbidity event

Today the Portland Water Bureau is turning off the Bull Run water supply system and activating the supply system from the Columbia South Shore Well Field. Recent heavy rains and increased stream flows have contributed to a rapid increase in turbidity, or suspended sediments, in the Bull Run system. The Bull Run water supply is not filtered.

"We are blessed to have two high quality sources of water available to us," said Portland Water Bureau Administrator David Shaff. "When Mother Nature hits us hard, it's tremendously comforting to know that we can turn to our Columbia South Shore Well Field when the Bull Run system is shut down due to turbidity. It is extremely rare to have a backup system such as Portland's and it is one of the primary reasons we have been able to retain the Bull Run as an unfiltered source."

It will take about 24 to 60 hours, depending on a customer's location, for groundwater to move through the distribution system. Users will experience water quality beginning with the water quality of 100% Bull Run and shifting to 100% groundwater as the water moves through the distribution system. The Columbia South Shore Well Field provides a high quality water supply for Portland Water Bureau customers, which meets or surpasses all federal and state drinking water regulations.

The bureau will operate the groundwater system as long as weather conditions and water quality dictate. Notification will be distributed when the well field is shutdown and the system returns to 100% Bull Run water.

Customers with questions can call the Water Line at (503) 823-7525.

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