

# New county economic leader takes the reins

Field promoted to fill director position

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Allison Field is the new Grant County economic development director.

"I am enthusiastic about the progress that Grant County is making and look forward to providing continued support to local businesses and work-

ing with community partners to strengthen our economy and encourage community development efforts," she told the Eagle.

Field grew up in a little town on Puget Sound and attended Oregon State University, where she earned a bachelor's in natural resources. She worked for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as a big-horn sheep technician at Hell's Canyon and a wolf

technician out of La Grande.

She also taught school in China and worked as a fish monitoring technician for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. She started working at the county economic development office in December 2017 under Sally Bartlett.

"The Grant County Economic Development Office provides business assistance to retain existing businesses, encourage entrepreneur-

ship and attract new business so that Grant County has a strong economy, thriving communities and broadly shared prosperity," she said.

Field provides technical assistance to community members, local government officials and agencies, and assists individuals with business development, business plans and grant writing.

Marketing for businesses is an important task for the office, which can include

social media, rebranding, logos, signs, banners and business cards. People frequently bring new projects or ideas to the office.

Part of her busy schedule goes to meetings with state and city organizations, community leaders, business owners and other groups or individuals.

"We have a lot going on," she said, adding that advertising for a part-time specialist is underway.

An important project the office worked on was developing a new website for the county, which could be online this month.

"Sally has done a great job laying down the foundation," she said. "I will continue building on her foundation."

The Grant County Economic Development Office is in an office in the L Building on East Main Street in John Day and can be reached at 541-575-1555.

## Economic development coordinator leaves post after 11-plus years

Bartlett will serve as Burns Paiute Tribe general manager

By Richard Hanners  
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After 11-plus years as the Grant County economic development coordinator, Sally Bartlett has left to take a job as the general manager of the Burns Paiute Tribe starting Feb. 1.

"The job is similar to a city manager's," she told the Eagle. "I'm looking forward to the position. It's a new adventure for me and a new opportunity."

Grant County Judge Scott Myers noted that he has worked with four to five economic development coordinators over the past 18 years and was on the interview committee that recommended Bartlett being hired.

"She has a wealth of experience in grant writing and has been a stellar employee," Myers said. "We may keep her on contract to track out Title III dollars in the future. She will be missed."

Allison Field, who has been working part-time with Bartlett in the economic development office, was chosen to replace Bartlett at that position.

Bartlett was hired by the county in November 2007, about three months after Steve Dahl stepped down as economic development coordinator. She came from Boise, Idaho, where she had been the child nutrition programs coordinator for the state Department of Education.

At the time of her hiring, not only was the county facing severe economic conditions but the county government had lost federal timber payments and local businesses contributed funding to maintain the coordinator position.

About 10 months later, Bartlett announced new websites for both the county and the Grant County Chamber of Commerce. Bartlett continued to promote internet connectivity — she served on the committee that is currently overseeing a new website for the county.

"Sally has been a great asset to the county and a wonderful resource," Chamber office manager Tammy Bremner said. "She has been my 'go to' person for so many things. I will miss her very much, and I wish her the very best in her new job."

Bartlett carried her interest in nutrition with her to Grant County, helping to organize hunger assessment surveys in 2008 and 2010. She also played an instrumental role in



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

Sally Bartlett, left, has taken a new job after more than 11 years with Grant County. Allison Field, right, is the new economic development coordinator.

getting the local farmers market and community garden started in 2010 and 2011, former Chamber president Jerry Franklin said.

"Sally is very knowledgeable, well liked, productive and well respected around the state," he said. "She's always had the county's interests at heart."

Through the years, Bartlett promoted business classes through the county's Small Business Management Program, workforce training for local businesses and grants for value-added agricultural companies in the county.

In her time in the office, Bartlett helped about 100 individuals develop their business plans. Many small businesses and micro-businesses didn't have anyone else to turn to for assistance, she explained.

Impacts from the Great Recession hit Grant County hard in 2009, and federal stimulus money was applied to several economic development projects, she said.

One was promoting the John Day Industrial Park near the airport. Bartlett said high land costs and limited suitable locations along the I-5 corridor will eventually drive business developers to rural places like John Day and its industrial park.

Rick Minster, at that time the local business development officer for the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department, worked with Bartlett on promoting the industrial park and other ideas. More recently, Bartlett assisted Minster in applying for a grant to help fund a new office and shelter for the Heart of Grant County.

"Sally always had the best interests of Grant County at heart and served the citizens of Grant County very professionally," Minster said.

Bartlett promoted the Grant County Enterprise Zone as a way to generate jobs and business. In 2011, she assisted seven entrepreneurs establish business

plans through the Grant County Resource Action Team (GREAT).

Her office periodically produced a 20-page newsletter on local economic development projects called "The Percolator, Grant County Business and Industry News," which was inserted in the Blue Mountain Eagle.

She also worked with Irene Jerome and Eloise Boren to develop a detailed and very popular tourist map in anticipation of the 2017 eclipse event. Her office paid for the map, she said.

At one time, Bartlett was an appointee on at least 15 boards, including the South East Area Commission on Transportation and the Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation. She said most of her work took place in the background and was less visible.

"Sally's done great in everything she's done," Lisa Weigum said. "She's helped so many organizations."

## Ford Family Foundation awards \$300,000 for community building in Harney County

Blue Mountain Eagle

Collaboration is the established way of doing business and building community in Harney County, and The Ford Family Foundation is supporting this culture through a three-year, \$300,000 community building grant awarded to High Desert Partnership.

The High Desert Partnership, a community-based organization committed to strengthening the communities of Harney County through collaboration, will use this funding to continue to support several collaborative efforts in Harney County, according to a press release from the group.

"This grant award reflects years of hard work by a diverse group of folks that work tirelessly to solve complex social, economic and ecological issues facing Harney County," said Brenda Smith, High Desert Partnership executive director, in the release. "We're incredibly thankful to The Ford Family Foundation for their support of Harney County's brand of collaboration to continue

building a strong, resilient community."

This grant will enable High Desert Partnership to continue to effectively support several collaborative efforts: the Harney Basin Wetlands Initiative, the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan, the Harney County Restoration Collaborative, the Harney County Wildfire Collaborative, the business development initiative BizHarney and the youth initiative Youth Changing The Community.

These collaborative groups all have a track record and experienced success in community-wide involvement and in solving difficult issues in Harney County.

High Desert Partnership has a community-centered approach to improving the lives of Harney County residents using and supporting collaboration for youth empowerment, economic opportunities and ecological improvements.

This approach directly aligns with The Ford Family Foundation's mission for developing successful citizens and building vital rural communities.

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