

Methow Recycles Announces Selection of Sarah Jo Lightner as New Executive Director

Twisp, WA – March 1, 2021 – Today, Methow Recycles announced Sarah Jo Lightner will succeed retiring Executive Director Betsy Cushman in leading the organization. Lightner’s non-profit leadership experience, her many years of business ownership, and her enthusiasm for the organization’s mission made her the stand-out candidate in a strong field of applicants.

“As a longtime resident of the Methow Valley, I am deeply passionate about the long-term health, vitality, and sustainability of our community,” said Lightner. “I am very excited to become part of an organization that is a cornerstone in our community’s work for a better future for everyone.”

Born in Missouri and raised in Nebraska, Sarah Jo studied agricultural economics at the University of Nebraska and silversmithing at Oregon College of Art and Craft. Lightner worked in the restaurant business for 23 years, spending 12 running her own Creole restaurant, Acadia Bistro, in Portland, Oregon. Following her move to the Valley in 2010, Lightner built a silversmithing studio at TwispWorks and became the mom of twin girls. Sarah Jo joined the staff of The Confluence Gallery in 2015 and became its executive director in early 2018.

“Sarah Jo’s impressive work at Confluence Gallery and her energetic vision for the future of Methow Recycles really won us over,” said Missy LeDuc, Methow Recycles board president. “The board, staff, and I are very eager to work with Sarah Jo to expand our mission.”

Lightner was selected following a rigorous process that included feedback from staff, board, and community volunteers all of whom are passionate about waste reduction and recycling being critical components to a healthy community. “We so are grateful to the entire team participating in the interview and selection process,” said Shirlee Evans, Methow Recycles vice president. “Their expertise and commitment to Methow Recycles and its place in the community is truly inspiring.”

After preparing for new leadership since mid-2020, Methow Recycles is on track with its plan to bring on Lightner prior to Cushman’s spring retirement and ensuring a smooth transition for both Methow Recycles and the Confluence Gallery. “I am thrilled that Sarah Jo will lead Methow Recycles into its next chapter,” said Cushman. “I have so much respect for her skills and contributions to the community. I expect the strength of both organizations to shine during this transition process and am excited to watch how Methow Recycles evolves in the years to come.”

About Methow Recycles

Founded in 2001, Methow Recycles inspires and facilitates resource conservation through recycling, waste prevention, and materials reuse in the Methow Valley. To accomplish its mission, Methow Recycles delivers educational programs in the schools, to local businesses, and to the community at-large to decrease the amount of waste going into the landfill, and to drive greater awareness and understanding of the importance of recycling. These innovative educational programs, combined with materials reuse, a tool library, repair cafes, and a successful recycling center help create a healthy and sustainable Methow Valley.

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