

## **Methow Conservancy Press Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Methow Conservancy Leadership Team in Place**

After a five-month search for a new Executive Director, the Methow Conservancy announced this week that it has its leadership team in place.

Katharine Bill, the current Executive Director, has agreed to remain as the Executive Director as part of an organizational restructuring that will provide her with increased assistance and more flexibility in her schedule.

Sarah Brooks, hired last spring as the Communications Director, has been promoted to Associate Director. Her responsibilities have been expanded to oversee the Methow Conservancy daily operations. Bill will now have more time to focus on land protection projects, develop partnerships with other conservation organizations, and guide the long-term vision and plan for the Methow Conservancy.

“I believe that the Conservancy has tremendous potential, and I have never lost my passion for the mission of the Conservancy,” says Bill. “Through the search process we have done a thorough inventory of all the strengths of the staff and board, and this process has allowed us to see alternatives for leadership and organization that were not apparent last fall.”

In late October, Bill announced her intention to resign from her role as Executive Director, but was clear that she intended to remain involved in the Methow Conservancy’s land protection programs. The Conservancy launched a local and nationwide search for a new director.

“The search process has been an objective, positive, and fruitful exercise for our organization,” notes Board Member and Search Committee Chair Bernard Wathen. “We had excellent external candidates from which to compare and contrast, though we determined after going through this process our favored choice was the management team of Katharine and Sarah.”

Bill brings exceptional expertise and experience to her role as Executive Director. She began with the Methow Conservancy as an intern while working on her Master’s in Forestry from the Yale School of Forestry. After completing her degree, she returned to the Methow Valley and

became the Conservancy's Stewardship Director. In 2002, she became Executive Director and under her leadership, the organization's land protection and education programs have grown significantly.

Brooks is also poised to help the Methow Conservancy continue to grow. She brings to the organization experience working with nonprofit organizations in the areas of fundraising, public relations, and strategic planning. She has a Master's in Public Administration from the Daniel J. Evans School at the University of Washington.

"Sarah is a wonderful colleague, and the fact that we can share in the leadership of the Conservancy makes it possible for me to reshape my job in a way that will work better for everyone," says Bill.

"We are delighted that through this reorganization, we have been able to work out a way for Katharine to stay on as the leader of the Methow Conservancy," reflects Wathen. "We value her passion for the mission, professional experience, and integrity. We are collectively excited about our future and our ability to work with the Methow Valley community."

The Methow Conservancy is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring people to care for the land by accepting voluntary conservation easements in the Methow Valley, providing conservation education opportunities for visitors and residents, and assisting with community-based conservation projects. To date, the organization has worked with more than 60 families to protect more than 4,000 acres of critical habitat in the Methow Valley.

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