



February 15, 2010

Dear Community Members,

In the last two years we as a nation have seen the collapse of our economy and banking system. Despite what may or may not happen in Washington DC to address the current economic situation, we in Eastern Oregon need to define our own economies and plan for a sustainable economic future. In response to the loss of economic stability and vast amounts of wealth by individuals, communities, and local governments in Eastern Oregon, Oregon Rural Action (ORA) is hosting a process called “Building Wealth in Local Communities: A Program for Change” in five counties in the region. This is a facilitated community-based process for attaining short- and long-term sources of revenue and employment by identifying local resources, engaging local initiative and talent, and designing a locally endorsed and sponsored vision of community quality of life. Veteran community facilitator Jeff Goebel specializes in facilitating solutions to community problems through consensus building, sustainability planning, and scarcity management. This approach involves developing a holistic *community vision* and using a decision-making process that emphasizes financial planning for the triple bottom-line: people, profit, planet.

This is not just another workshop that cuts into your weekend. This process results in creative action that can rebuild wealth for individuals, businesses, communities, and governments. This process has been the catalyst for tremendous change. One county in Eastern Oregon had a 93% “new business” success rate over 5 years since participating in this program. A rancher who used this program increased net profit by \$2 million per year. A county in West Texas increased tax revenues through successful businesses by 27%. These are just some of the results. And the Building Wealth in Local Communities is just the first in a series of steps that ORA and the community will embark on to improve our local economic lot.

Oregon Rural Action invites you to participate in this process, which will occur throughout Eastern Oregon in March and April 2010. The table below shows the dates and locations. Your experience in business, government, schools, the community would be very informative to this process. This is your opportunity to help shape an economic vision with our community and create a roadmap to achieve it.



Town	Pendleton	Ontario	Baker City	La Grande	John Day
Date	March 13	March 20	March 26	April 3	April 17
Time	10am-5pm	1pm-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm
Venue	Pendleton Art Center	TVCC Weese Building	Baker City Hall	Cove Ascension School	Outpost Restaurant

The Building Wealth in Local Communities program is open to the entire community and will be most relevant and effective if it includes a diverse cross-section of our community. We need the input of small business owners, farmers, ranchers, city and county government, teachers, youth, retirees, and others. Please invite others who you think would be key participants in this process. For more information or to become a part of this process, review the information and websites listed on the following page or contact Oregon Rural Action.

I sincerely hope to see you there.

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### **About Oregon Rural Action**

Oregon Rural Action is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership-based community organization working to promote social justice, agricultural and economic sustainability, and stewardship of the region's land, air and water. We're bringing people together to build strong communities by providing information and tools for local people to use in addressing the issues affecting our communities. Oregon Rural Action has chapters in Malheur, Umatilla/Morrow, Baker, and Union counties. For more information or to join ORA visit our website: [www.oregonrural.org](http://www.oregonrural.org).

### **About Jeff Goebel and Goebel & Associates**

Jeff Goebel is the owner and facilitator of Goebel & Associates, a Portland-based organization. Jeff has 29 years experience in human development and uses the consensus building skills he and others have developed to enhance the work of delivering quality service, planning for growth and change, managing people and programs, grant writing, sustainable resource management of land, wildlife and recreation, agriculture, water quality and environmental education instruction. Jeff has facilitated for many rural communities across in the west including Eastern Oregon communities and organizations to great success. For more information visit [www.aboutlistening.com](http://www.aboutlistening.com).

### **What does the Building Wealth in Communities process involve?**

The following six steps are a comprehensive process for building wealth throughout an entire community – from change for individuals, to business and organizations, and local governments. While all six steps are optimal, communities may choose to start with one or two processes, then add as needed.

1. Develop three elements of *community vision* – quality of life; means to support that way of life; and means to sustain that way of life.
2. Introduce and adapt a process that evaluates whether actions are sustainable from a social, economic, and ecological perspective simultaneously.
3. Incorporate the principles of cultivating community wealth
  - a. Plug the leaks of community wealth
  - b. Shore up existing businesses
  - c. Create new local businesses
  - d. Recruit new outside businesses that are consistent with the *community vision*
4. Institute processes that allow community members with passions to successfully enter entrepreneurial opportunities, through a network of passionate people who fulfill the three legs of a successful business: product / service, financial management, and marketing.
5. Adopt a financial management process that ensures the triple bottom line; people, profit, and planet. This approach will lead to economically and ecologically sustaining means to achieve individual family, business, organizational, governmental, and community-wide visions.
6. Of critical importance, the recognition that unresolved community conflicts carry a very high price tag, AND the commitment to changing those limiting beliefs that prevent movement toward the *community vision*.

For more information about the Building Wealth in Communities program visit the Goebel & Associates blog at <http://www.aboutlistening.com/blog/building-wealth-in-local-communities-a-program-for-change>.