



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 10, 2023

Announcing New Executive Director

Please welcome Wendy Hensley to the Horse Park!



CLE ELUM, WA -- The Washington State Horse Park Authority Board of Directors is excited to announce Wendy L. Hensley has been appointed to the position of Executive Director. Ms. Hensley will succeed Leslie Thurston who will be retiring this spring after fifteen years as the founding Executive Director.

Effective February 1, 2023, Ms. Hensley will begin her orientation with the Authority Board and outgoing ED Leslie Thurston. During the coming months, Wendy, Leslie and other Park staff will continue to deliver the high level of service that visitors have come to expect from the Horse Park. Wendy will also partner with the Board and Leslie in hiring an Operations Manager who will be responsible for the Park's physical assets and readiness for events and other uses.

Wendy is adept at managing two passions simultaneously, as a marketing professional and as a horse owner and enthusiast. She is the former Executive Director of Whispering Meadows Equestrian Center in Junction City, Oregon and the former owner of a landscaping/excavation company in Clark County, Washington.

Educated with a degree in Marketing from Washington State University, Wendy held marketing leadership roles at two northwest firms, WEO Media in Beaverton, Oregon and Comprehensive Healthcare in Yakima, Washington. She also is the owner and editor of NW Rider Magazine which grew to a pre-pandemic print/digital circulation of more than 20,000 users.

Wendy will reside with her family and three horses in Cle Elum, and looks forward to meeting and partnering with the local community and horse enthusiasts all over our region.

Upon completion of a successful Executive Director transition, the Board has requested, and Ms. Thurston has agreed to serve a three-year term on the Authority Board. If you would like to extend a note of thanks and congratulations to Leslie directly, you may do so at this email address: director@wahorsepark.org.

About the Washington State Horse Park: A public/private partnership managed by a not-for-profit Board of Directors, the Horse Park is a 120-acre regional destination and event facility for equine competitions and pleasure riders alike. The Park is in a beautiful and unique setting on the eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountains, amidst tall pine and fir trees reaching up into blue skies. The Park welcomes horses and riders from multiple disciplines, putting out the green carpet for over 30,000 competitors, recreational users, and visitors each year. Located in Cle Elum and Kittitas County, the Park is a major contributor to local businesses and general economic activity.

To discover more about the Horse Park, how to volunteer or donate, and learn about the events on our upcoming season calendar, please check out our website at wahorsepark.org.