



Water Collaborative Coordinator

Organization: High Desert Partnership
Location: Headquartered in Hines, Oregon
Start Date: Flexible, as soon as possible
Status: Regular, full-time 1.0 FTE
Compensation: \$75,000 & benefits: 401K match, healthcare, paid holidays & vacation

About the Organization

At High Desert Partnership, we talk a lot about collaboration because it works. Since 2005, by working together we've found practical ways to tackle some of our community's hardest challenges, restoring forests and wetlands, mitigating wildfire, creating opportunities for youth, and growing our local economy. And we'll continue working together to take on whatever challenges lie ahead. Our purpose is simple—we are in the business of finding common ground. Before an issue comes to a head, we start talking with folks. Those who want to be part of the solution take a seat at the table. We come together to listen, share ideas and expertise, and ensure everyone is heard. It's hard work but ultimately our goal is to find an agreeable path forward. This is the Harney County way.

Harney County is the largest county in land area in Oregon. Located in southeastern Oregon, about 75% of the land base is publicly managed. This position will need to regularly be in Harney County to build collaborative relationships with partners and work with a team-based staff environment. Candidates with a love and concern for Harney County are encouraged to apply. To learn more about the organization, visit www.highdesertpartnership.org.

About the Collaborative

Groundwater is a vital resource in the Harney Basin. It supports ecosystems and agriculture, which is foundational to the area's local economy, culture, and ways of life for past, current and future generations. For decades, agricultural groundwater permits were approved for more water than the aquifer can replenish in some parts of the basin. Today, the Harney Basin is designated a Critical Groundwater Management Area, with state rules requiring reductions in groundwater use. While the rules aim to stabilize the aquifer, they present significant challenges for local water users, especially farmers and ranchers. There are pathways within the rules—encouraging voluntary actions and allowing for adaptive management—that leave room for creative, community-led solutions to reduce groundwater use, but success depends on collaboration, trust, and practical implementation.

The Harney Water Collaborative was formed in 2026 to meet this challenge head-on, through a model of community-led cooperation rooted in Harney County. Bringing together agricultural producers, Tribal nations, local governments, state agencies, environmental organizations, and community members, the Collaborative is working to communicate about the issue, answer questions, and find lasting, practical solutions that keep agriculture viable, protect ecosystems, and sustain the Harney County way of life.



About the Role

High Desert Partnership seeks a full-time Water Collaborative Coordinator who will serve and coordinate all the activities of the collaborative. Important in this position is developing strong working relationships with all partners of the Harney Water Collaborative. The Coordinator will work closely with a neutral third party facilitator bringing together diverse partners to build relationships and develop solutions through a collaborative, consensus-based process. The Coordinator will plan meetings with a coordinating committee, ensure deliverables are met, work to create an inclusive and welcoming environment in which all voices can contribute meaningfully, and productive dialogue can lead to shared action and drive on-the-ground sustainable water management practices. Representing High Desert Partnership, the Coordinator will bring intentionality, professionalism, and a commitment to relationship-building to the role, while creating space for partners to work through complex issues, find common ground, and develop durable solutions together.

Duties

Leadership (50%)

- Work with a communications team to establish a resource hub for community engagement and sharing information.
- Coordinate project logistics, including scheduling, meeting facilitation, and partner communications.
- Work closely with the HDP team in cross collaboration with our other collaboratives and collaborative partners to share information.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with partners grounded in trust, accountability, and shared goals.
- Act as liaison between collaborative partners and funding agencies.
- Work closely with Oregon Water Resource Department to align the work in the basin.
- Hire, supervise, and coordinate seasonal staff to support groundwater monitoring
- Participate in community and statewide meetings, initiatives, and projects related to the water collaborative's work, including efforts to address the economic impacts of groundwater reductions and support economic development in Harney County.

Project Management (45%)

- Hire contractors to perform irrigation efficiency and innovation projects, groundwater monitoring, supporting outreach and communication activities and to implement other projects approved by the collaborative.
- Coordinate across partners for necessary resources.
- Visit project work sites to evaluate contractor progress on certain projects.
- Leading collaborative outreach events including field tours, workshops, and presentations.
- Collect and maintain program data to support evaluation and grant reporting.

Other (5%)

- Attend HDP Board meetings to provide regular updates on collaborative initiatives and project milestones.
- Participate in professional development workshops to strengthen technical expertise and industry knowledge.



Qualifications

Below are important qualifications for a candidate. We recognize that diversity of experiences and training can create these skill sets. We encourage you to apply if you have a deep interest in working collaboratively.

Education & Certifications

- *Preferred:* Bachelor's of Science degree in a natural resource related field.
- *Preferred:* Masters of Science degree in groundwater management or groundwater hydrology.
- *Preferred:* groundwater/aquifer management and/or agricultural experience.
- *Required:* Valid driver's license and acceptable driving record.

Professional Attributes

- Passionate about community collaboration and the issues facing Harney County.
- Curiosity to learn and understand more about HDP initiatives and Eastern Oregon lifestyles.
- Ability to empathize with and recognize the value of others.
- Values integrity, inclusivity, trust, and compassion.
- Believes firmly in the value of building lasting relationships.
- Capacity to develop innovative and creative solutions to problems.

Knowledge & Abilities

- Knowledge of tools, terminology, processes, methods, and procedures involved in agricultural groundwater management.
- Skilled in both written and verbal communication to understand, record, and converse with coworkers.
- Effectively communicate with diverse partners, and to listen and consider alternative opinions.
- Excellent verbal and written communication, including technical writing.
- Fluency with standard office software and technology (Microsoft Office, Google Suite, video conferencing, etc.)
- Highly organized with the ability to work independently under little supervision.
- Ability to manage multiple/complex objectives and maintain own deadlines.
- Effective in developing early career seasonal field staff.
- Physical ability to stand and walk for extended periods of time over rough terrain.
- Experience working in rural/remote locations.

Thank you for your interest in the Water Collaborative Coordinator position at High Desert Partnership. If you have questions or would like to learn more about the position, please contact Executive Director Brenda Smith at director@highdesertpartnership.org.

How to apply: Please apply online at <https://podio.com/webforms/30808340/2620243>