

# A River of Fun



Photo by Jim Craven | www.jimcravenphoto.com

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The Wild West as far as recreational adventure and excitement—but the business community was friendly, resourceful, and interested in helping local companies succeed.

Despite Rogue Wilderness's rapid growth early on, Brad says he felt like the captain of a ship without a map or direction. It wasn't until he met Ron Fox, the director of Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Inc. (SORED), that he found his business's edge—access to the local resources to assist in making the business financially viable.

by Chris Cook

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Brad also found personal balance in Southern Oregon. A former executive in medical sales, Brad traded his business suit and constant travel for the casual lifestyle of the Rogue Valley.

To help Brad's business, SOREDI called upon its TAG Team (Technical Advisory Group), a collection of volunteer professionals in all areas of business. The TAG Team members range from serial entrepreneurs to retired and working professionals in niche fields. It was here that Brad found a mentor and CFO consultant. Still in frequent contact with his mentor, he's now working with the financial consultant for "good, clear advice." According to Brad, "We were going out of business. We had a good amount of business but we were running it poorly. All of these professionals came together to help make us a better company. Now we're growing smart."

Once a small rafting company, Rogue Wilderness Adventures expanded to include hiking, fishing, wine tasting and sightseeing tours. You can hike along the Rogue River for four days supported by a raft with food and supplies, spending evenings at riverfront lodges. There's a tour where there's a winemaker along, offering different wines each evening. On other tours, it's beer and boots. Here, all camping gear and equipment is shuttled down river in a raft and is all set up for guests when they arrive after their day of hiking. Meals are designed to complement beer tasting, with the featured brewer explaining their craft and sharing interesting facts about their beers.

Well known for salmon and steelhead, the Rogue River's specialty is single and multi-day fishing trips with guides that have expertise in fly fishing, spin casting, bait bouncing and pulling plugs. All fishing rods and tackle are furnished by the guides, who double as chefs experienced in the art of riverbank cooking. There are special trips for couples only, as well as corporate fishing trips and team building retreats.

Brad's edge—taking advantage of local business resources—has helped expand and grow his business threefold and solidify his success. He provides local jobs, brings revenue to the local economy and gives visitors a true flavor of Southern Oregon's friendly, welcoming environment.



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THE SOUTHERN OREGON  
EDGE

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