



Mid-Columbia Economic Development District

Community Profile

County Wasco, Hood River, Sherman (Oregon)
 Klickitat, Skamania (Washington)

City The Dalles, Oregon

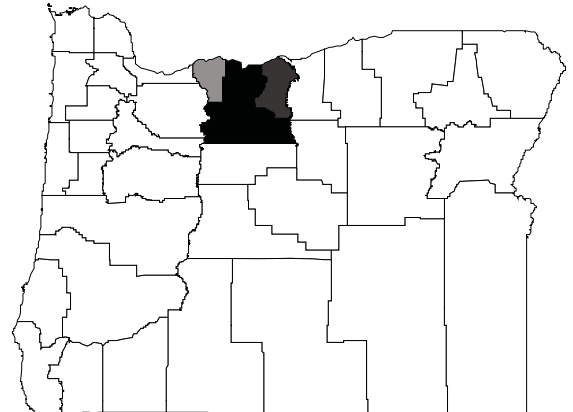
Population 80,000 (all five counties)

Assignment

Organization Mid-Columbia Economic Development

Supervisor Amanda Hoey

RARE Member Mark Heystek



About Mid-Columbia Economic Development District

The Mid-Columbia Economic Development District was established in 1969 by its five member counties who realized that by sharing a common workforce, a common geography and a number of other important factors, their economic fates were tied together. They realized that by joining together they would benefit from better access to economic development loans and grants, pooled technical assistance, marketing, and administrative resources, and most importantly, they would be able to bring a regional approach to their economic development efforts. Over the years Mid-Columbia Economic Development District’s membership has grown to include cities, ports and chambers of commerce within the five county region.

The RARE participant placed with Mid-Columbia Economic Development District will work on developing an updated Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy framework that incorporates Agora investment principles. In addition, the RARE participant will work with projects in the MCEDD region, supporting projects that require additional technical assistance, serving as support to Platform users as well as a liaison between users and the development team, and working directly with projects identified as high regional priorities through the MCEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Finally, the RARE participant will support the rollout of the Agora Investment Platform to additional regions in the state of Oregon by providing trainings in regions as they come on board for the Platform rollout.

Meet Mark Heystek

Mark received his Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Spanish from Aquinas College. After attaining his bachelor’s degree, Mark worked through the Conservation Corps as a Crew Leader at El Ranchito in Austin, TX, where he led high school students in hands-on conservation work to maintain hiking trails and protect and restore wildlife habitats, and he developed an environmental education curriculum and trainings. During his year with RARE AmeriCorps – Resource Assistance for Rural Environments, Mark would like to gain expertise in sustainable development and gain professional experience in conservation, organizational management, and economic development. Following the RARE program, Mark wants to attend graduate school starting in fall of 2016 in a program that inspires new and creative approaches to sustainable economic development with an emphasis on local communities.