

# Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District

## Community Profile

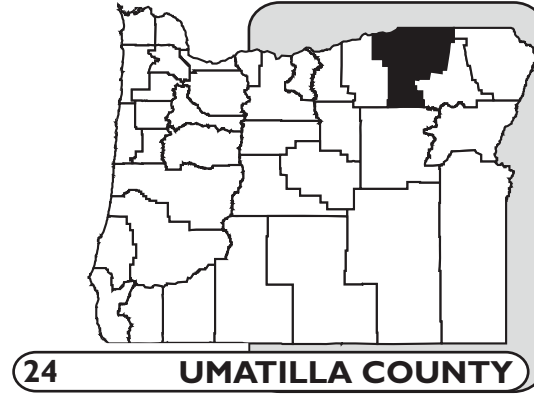
**Population** 770,548 (Umatilla County)

**Location** Pendleton

## Position Description

**Sponsor** Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District

**Supervisor** Bev Kopperud,  
District Manager



**Assignment** The RARE position in Umatilla County focuses on community outreach. Although supervised by the SWCD, the position also requires collaboration with the Critical Ground Water Taskforce (Taskforce). The RARE participant will address the issues of water contamination and low groundwater levels in the Umatilla basin, and allow both the SWCD and the Taskforce to present a consistent and accurate message to citizens living within affected areas. Responsibilities will include implementing an educational outreach plan through the organization of various workshops and events to inform the public about the ground and surface water problem that exists, its implications, and what they can do to lessen the effects and correct the problem. This project will also include various surveys to monitor the progress of the educational outreach program. Publications will also be an important aspect of this educational outreach plan, including the publication of a monthly e-newsletter, a quarterly report, an annual report and brochures. In addition to these three focuses, there will be room for creativity in creating other tasks to enhance the educational outreach plan.

**Required Skills** The RARE participant should have strong communication skills, both verbal and written, and should be comfortable working with diverse stakeholders. S/he should be comfortable presenting in front of groups and enjoy working with the public. The participant should have a background in, or interest in, working with natural resource management issues and should have strong organizational skills. Spanish language skills would be beneficial.

## RARE Member



Vanessa Vissar

Vanessa Vissar is a native of Grand Haven, MI. She received undergraduate degrees in International Studies & the Political Economy and Latin American Studies from the University of Wisconsin. She interned at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association where she carried out research for the National Marine Mammal Laboratory. After graduation, she volunteered with Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic as an Environmental Awareness Education volunteer and addressed natural resource problems in rural economically challenged communities. Through her experiences, Vanessa has developed and strengthened skills that she incorporates in her daily life.