

Columbia Gorge Earth Center and Gorge Grown Food Network

Community Profile

Population 75,000 (Columbia Gorge Region)

Location Hood River

Position Description

Sponsor Columbia Gorge Earth Center
and the Gorge Grown Food Network

Supervisor Ann Kramer,
Steering Committee Member



Assignment As the network coordinator, the RARE participant will take the lead on many projects designed to ensure a sound organizational structure for this new and growing regional initiative. The RARE participant will: manage gorgegrown.com, the group's web site and region's information clearinghouse for data on small farmers, farm resources, and access to food grown in the region; write a monthly e-newsletter and promotional pieces; and help coordinate Gorge Grown's seven active volunteer committees as they develop projects integral to Gorge Grown's 10-year goal. The RARE participant will also work to bring new and diverse stakeholders into the network, while collecting more information on the community's needs in an effort to craft a network action plan. The participant will pursue several available opportunities for the Gorge Grown Food Network to manage land and grow food for members and residents. In the future, this project could provide Gorge Grown with a sustainable funding source through sales to members and at area farmers' markets.

Required Skills The ideal RARE participant should have strong skills as a communicator and will need to enjoy talking in front of groups. The participant should have strong organizational skills and should be able to effectively balance many projects at the same time. The participant should be professional and mature, should be able to work with a wide variety of people and projects and should have strong leadership skills. The participant should also have a passion for food systems work.

RARE Participant



Katie MacKendrick

Katie MacKendrick, a second year RARE participant, is a native of southern Wisconsin and received her bachelor's degree in natural resources from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. During school, Katie worked with several state and non-profit environmental organizations and gained experience in field and lab research, writing, outreach, advocacy, and education. After college, she spent time monitoring endangered plant populations and taught environmental education. In 2005, Katie completed her first term in the RARE program, working for 11 months with the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District in The Dalles where she gained experience working with small businesses in the Columbia Gorge area. This year, she looks forward to combining her past experience in natural resources with her recent experience in community building.