

# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

*Protecting the Gorge Since 1980*

*Summer 2010 Newsletter*



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to Shutdown

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# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

FOUNDER NANCY RUSSELL, 1932-2008

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Link to us on Twitter and Facebook  
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The middle ridgeline seen here from Nestor Peak would  
be lined with turbine towers if this project is approved.

Photo: © Chris Carvalho / Lensjoy.com



# Take Action Today!

## Proposed Wind Project Threatens the Gorge

SDS Lumber Company is proposing to build massive wind turbines along the scenic ridgeline bordering the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area above White Salmon.

If approved, up to fifty turbines – 420 feet tall with blinking lights – would cover more than 1,000 acres of Gorge skyline and be visible from several designated key viewing areas. These ridgelines include designated northern spotted owl habitat and support numerous other raptor species. The SDS plan is projected to have far higher adverse impacts on wildlife than any other wind facility in Washington.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge supports responsible development of clean renewable energy, but the Whistling Ridge proposal is not responsible. It is not critical to our energy needs and not worth sacrificing wildlife and the scenic beauty of the Columbia Gorge.

**Take action:** Contact the Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council today. Urge them to deny this project because of harm to natural and scenic resources in the Columbia Gorge.

Comment by calling (800) 622-4519 or email comments to: [efsec@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:efsec@commerce.wa.gov). Submit comments before August 27. More details at [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org).

*Active citizen support makes the difference! Your actions for Gorge protection are crucial to our success. Contact your Senators and Representatives using the information below, or check [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) for other offices.*

### Oregon

**Sen. Ron Wyden**, (202) 224-5244

<http://wyden.senate.gov/contact/>

**Sen. Jeff Merkley**, (202) 224-3753

[senator@merkley.senate.gov](mailto:senator@merkley.senate.gov)

**Rep. David Wu**, (202) 225-0855

**Rep. Earl Blumenauer**, (202) 225-4811

**Rep. Greg Walden**, (202) 225-6730

**Rep. Peter DeFazio**, (202) 225-6416

**Rep. Kurt Schrader**, (202) 225-5711

### Washington

**Sen. Patty Murray**, (202) 224-2621

<http://murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm>

**Sen. Maria Cantwell**, (202) 224-3441

<http://cantwell.senate.gov/contact/>

**Rep. Brian Baird**, (202) 225-3536

**Rep. Doc Hastings**, (202) 225-5816

**Rep. Norm Dicks**, (202) 225-5916

Email your **Congressional Representative** by logging on to [www.house.gov/writerep/](http://www.house.gov/writerep/)

Cover photo: Cedar Falls, on our Land Trust's recently acquired Campfire property (see page 6).

Photo: Jozsef Urmos / panojoe.urmos.net

# Director's Letter

As I write this, I'm in an airplane somewhere between Chicago and Seattle. The 30,000-foot perspective is a fitting finish to a conference I just left that explored steps that Friends of the Columbia Gorge has taken that may be replicated nationwide.

I was invited to participate in a group of prominent land trust leaders, land use experts, and academic heavyweights at the Rockefeller estate in New York, to discuss whether land trusts should engage in the land-use regulatory planning process. Rand Wentworth, the executive director of the Land Trust Alliance, which represents over 1,700 land trusts around the country, opened the conference by discussing Friends of the Columbia Gorge founder Nancy Russell. He described Nancy as a woman who deftly moved between advocating for land-use regulation and championing land conservation.

Across the country, in the race to save land from development, Friends of the Columbia Gorge is one of the few

organizations using both land acquisition and land-use advocacy as tools for protection. Land trusts have generally turned away from the land-use planning process because of potential controversy, but some are seeing that conservation of large landscapes cannot be accomplished with purchases and conservation easements alone. Strong zoning must be part of the equation.

As the conference ended, one leader challenged land trusts to engage in the world of land-use regulations and zoning, making the simple statement, "If not us, then who?"

That's a difficult question we often face on the issues we care about most. If not us, then who?

In August, Friends is launching our *Step Up for the Gorge* Matching Gift Campaign, made possible by a visionary donor who embraced the question "If not us, then who?" This donor has agreed to match new and upgraded contributions up to \$50,000 this year. This campaign



Kevin Gorman with Friends member Dorothy Burdick at Catherine Creek. See page 9 for an update on the Catherine Creek Recreation Plan.

Photo: Sandy Wright

could give our organization a \$100,000 boost, and it will only succeed if a whole lot of people also embrace that question.

Our comfort zones make it very easy to stay in one place. But to stretch, to take a leap of faith for something we believe in – that's the sort of action that can take us to places we might have never imagined.

Step Up. Stretch. If not you, then who?

*Friends of the Columbia Gorge works to ensure that the beautiful and wild Columbia Gorge remains a place apart, an unspoiled treasure for generations to come.*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Gorman".

Kevin Gorman  
Executive Director  
kevin@gorgefriends.org

# Shutting Down Boardman

## Regulatory Agencies Propose 2015 Closure

Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org

Federal clean air laws, legal action, and public sentiment favoring conservation and clean energy over aging coal plants are converging to press for an early shutdown of Portland General Electric's coal-fired power plant in Boardman. The Boardman plant is the single largest source of air pollution affecting the Columbia Gorge.

The possibility of an early closure represents a remarkable change, considering that four years ago, when Friends of the Columbia Gorge asked PGE if they would consider closing Boardman before 2040, the answer was an emphatic, unequivocal no.

The Boardman plant, owned and operated by Portland General Electric, is

the largest stationary source of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) in Oregon. These haze-producing pollutants cloud views in the Columbia Gorge and eleven other federally protected regions in the Northwest, and contribute to severe acid rain and fog in the fall and winter months. U.S. Forest Service studies confirm that the acidity of fog water in the Gorge during those months is sometimes equivalent to vinegar. Nitrogen and acid deposition are contributing to ecosystem damage and probable deterioration of Native American cultural resources.

In addition, the PGE Boardman plant emits up to 5 million tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per year, making it the largest point source of global warming gas in Oregon.

### No pollution controls

In the thirty-year history of Boardman, PGE has passed up many opportunities to reduce emissions. Instead, the company has consistently evaded pollution control laws ever since the plant was first conceived in the 1970s, even refusing to install pollution scrubbers during construction. Friends and our allies have documented that major modifications to the plant made since that time should have triggered stringent pollution controls, yet none were ever implemented. Recently, we have asked a federal court judge to determine if PGE has violated the Clean Air Act. If we prevail on these claims, PGE would be required to install the "best available control technology" to reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, or to shut down the plant. These emission-control technologies are very costly and yet they do nothing to control carbon dioxide emissions. The best option for Columbia Gorge air quality, PGE ratepayers, and the global climate is early closure of the Boardman plant.

In January of this year, PGE announced its "2020 Plan," whereby it would close the aging plant in 2020 if allowed to continue operation until then without installing pollution controls. In June, at the urging of the federal Environmental Protection Agency, Oregon air quality regulators rejected that plan.

### Regulatory confusion

Now Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has proposed revisiting the regulations that require pollution controls on the plant. The DEQ



*PGE's coal-fired plant at Boardman is a major source of Gorge air pollution and climate change gases.*

Photo: Arnold Paul / Wikimedia Creative Commons



*Much of the winter haze that chokes the Gorge, as seen from the Columbia Hills, is generated at Boardman.*

Photo: Darryl Lloyd / LongshadowPhoto.com

has released a plan including three options for early closure, plus a 2040 option. The proposed regulation would require closure of the plant in 2015 if PGE chose not to install SO<sub>2</sub> scrubbers in 2014. It would require plant closure in 2018 if PGE installed less expensive dry sorbent injection (DSI) systems to remove up to 40% of sulfur dioxide emissions by 2014. It would require closure in 2020 if PGE installed SO<sub>2</sub> scrubbers in 2014 to remove up to 90% of sulfur dioxide emissions. PGE would be allowed to continue operation until 2040 if it installed both SO<sub>2</sub> scrubbers in 2014 and selective catalytic reduction in 2017 to remove 80% of nitrogen oxide emissions. All of these options fail to address the massive amounts of carbon dioxide emitted at Boardman, and ignore current rules that require reductions of hazardous air pollutants by 2015.

If the above regulations seem confusing, it's because they are. And

beyond this confusion, the future of the entire coal energy industry is an open question. With all the uncertainty regarding costs and regulations of coal energy production, PGE's best option is to implement early closure and begin the transition now to cleaner, more reliable energy sources. Closure of the plant would mean an immediate reduction of Gorge air pollution on the worst air quality days by more than 50%, and it is safe to assume that the acidity of rain would be similarly reduced.

### **Ratepayer boondoggle**

On another front, PGE has asked the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) to approve a plan that would allow the company to charge ratepayers for the costs of necessary pollution controls to keep the plant in operation until 2040. That expense could easily exceed \$500 million, and ratepayers could conceivably be on the hook even if the plant closed earlier.

*The best option for Gorge air quality, PGE ratepayers, and the global climate is early closure of the Boardman plant.*

Friends of the Columbia Gorge and other environmental groups, along with consumer advocates and faith-based groups, have asked the PUC to adopt a plan that requires early closure of Boardman. Continued operation until 2040 is a high-risk scenario.

Friends and our allies, represented by the Pacific Environmental Advocacy Center, believe that closure in 2014 is the best balance between risks and costs. We know that early closure of the Boardman plant is definitely the best option for air quality in the Columbia Gorge.

For more details see [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org).

# Acquisition and Transition



*Cedar Creek on the Campfire property.*

Photo: Jozsef Urmos / panojoe.urmos.net

## Protecting Gorge Lands

Kate McBride, Land Trust Manager, [kate@gorgefriends](mailto:kate@gorgefriends).

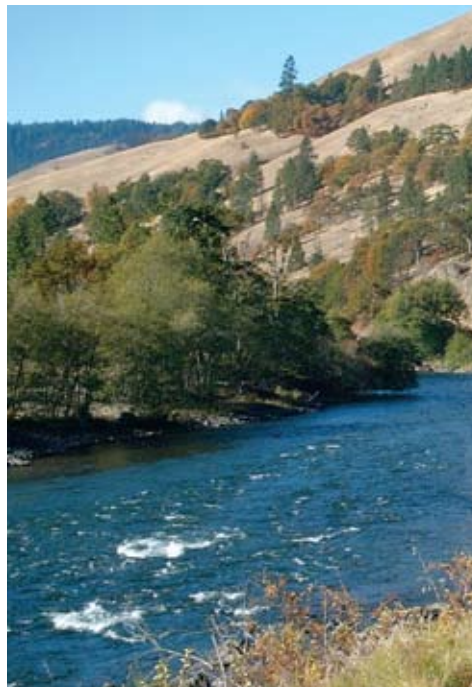
Summer has been busy for Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust. On June 15, we acquired the beautiful 80-acre Campfire parcel in Skamania County, surrounded by U.S. Forest Service property and Beacon Rock State Park. Less than a week later, we sold a 27-acre parcel along the Klickitat River to Washington State Parks.

The Campfire property had been owned by the Mt. Hood Campfire Council, but due to limited access it was never used. The Forest Service ranked this beautiful property as a high priority for acquisition, but deed restrictions prevented them from acquiring it. The Land Trust was able to negotiate a contract that removed those restrictions, enabling the Forest Service to again set a high priority on purchasing this land.

*Our oak-studded 27-acre property above the Klickitat River is now owned by Washington State Parks.*

Photo: David Melody

The property features Cedar Creek, Cedar Falls (see our cover photo), and an old grove of towering cottonwoods. In the future, the property could provide an



ideal connector in a proposed trail between Washougal and Stevenson.

### Changing hands

In 2003, Dave and Christine Vernier, under the inspiration of Friends founder Nancy Russell, purchased a 27-acre parcel along the Klickitat River. The property includes a quarter-mile stretch of the Klickitat Trail. The Verniers removed an old house and other structures from the property, and then generously donated the property to the Land Trust in 2008. This spring, volunteers helped remove an old trash dump and fencing from the property.

The upper portion of the Vernier property is blanketed with oak woodlands, which provides excellent habitat for western gray squirrels. Washington State Parks intends to create an upstream trailhead for the Klickitat Trail. To see the property, join us on October 17 with the Klickitat Trail Conservancy for their eighth anniversary celebration hike (see enclosed brochure).

# Klickitat Trailhead

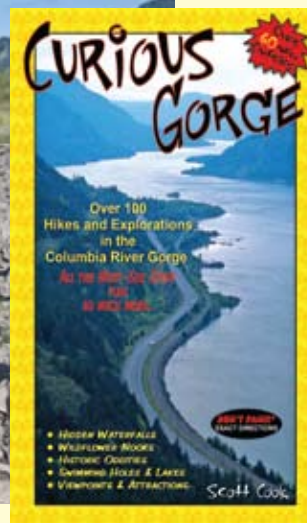
Maegan Jossy, Outdoor Program Coordinator  
meagan@gorgefriends.org

The long-awaited work on the new Klickitat Trailhead in Lyle, WA has finally begun. The new trailhead at the entrance to the 31-mile rails-to-trails Klickitat Trail will include parking for a dozen vehicles and several horse trailers, rest rooms, an information kiosk, and a viewpoint over the Klickitat River. Interim parking is available at the Balfour-Klickitat Day Use Park, one-quarter mile west on Hwy. 14, or at Milepost 1 up the Klickitat River, at the County Park. Trailhead work should be completed by Labor Day.

Join us to bike the 13-mile section of Swale Canyon (Oct. 9), or to hike on Oct. 17 and Oct. 31. See our Fall Hiking Brochure for details.

*The new Klickitat Trailhead in Lyle will open in September.* Photo: Maegan Jossy

## Outreach and Activities



Scott Cook, left, is passionate about the Gorge and its history. Join Scott to learn about Columbia River Fish Wheels on Sunday, Sept. 26. See Fall Hiking Brochure for details.

Photo: Peter Cornelison

Purchase Scott's book online at [www.gorgefriends/store.org](http://www.gorgefriends/store.org). Proceeds benefit Friends of the Columbia Gorge. Thanks, Scott!

# Scott Cook's Curious Gorge

Peter Cornelison, Field Representative, peter@gorgefriends.org

Scott Cook is passionate about the Columbia Gorge – so passionate, in fact, he has dedicated his livelihood to sharing that passion.

Scott's new guidebook, *Curious Gorge, 3rd Edition*, features over 100 Gorge hikes and adventures. He packs loads of information and nuance into this backpack-sized volume with detailed instructions for getting the most out of your Gorge travels.

A strong advocate for the Gorge, Scott has given public testimony, written letters, and rallied people to support Gorge protections. He dedicated *Curious Gorge* to

Friends founder Nancy Russell, who has inspired his enthusiasm. "The Columbia River Gorge is worth protecting," says Scott, "and it needs friends, not just acquaintances."

Local reviewers lavish praise on *Curious Gorge*. According to *The Dalles Chronicle*, "It's a labor of love and highly recommended." *Portland Monthly* concurs, "The updated *Curious Gorge* guide is this summer's must-read book." *Friends* Executive Director Kevin Gorman agrees, "Anyone who loves the Gorge will love this book."

## Banff Radical Reels

**Baghdad Theater**  
**September 15, 2010**

Doors open at 6 p.m., Show at 7 p.m.  
3702 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland  
\$12 REI members, \$17 REI non-members

*Proceeds benefit Friends of the Columbia Gorge*

The Radical Reels Film Tour is a special screening of the wildest high-adrenaline films from the Banff Mountain Film Festival, featuring sports such as skiing, climbing, kayaking, snowboarding, and mountain biking. Catch these amazing films at this benefit screening to support Friends.



# Gorge Commission Rebuffs Oregon Supreme Court

By Kelley Beamer, Conservation Organizer, [kelly@gorgefriends.org](mailto:kelly@gorgefriends.org)  
Michael Lang, Conservation Director, [michael@gorgefriends.org](mailto:michael@gorgefriends.org)

*The Bonneville Slide, which broke off of Table Mountain (seen here), is not adequately protected.*

Photo: Maegan Jossy

**O**n July 13, the Columbia River Gorge Commission decided to sidestep direction from the Oregon Supreme Court to protect Gorge resources. Instead, they adopted inadequate standards that fail to protect fish and wildlife habitat, rare plants, water resources, geologic features, air quality, cultural resources, and other sensitive resources in the Columbia River Gorge.

The action relates to a 2009 decision by the Court in response to a lawsuit filed by Friends of the Columbia Gorge. The Court found that the Commission is not protecting these resources as required by the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act.

## Protection rulings

In the 2009 decision, the Supreme Court made three important rulings that required the Gorge Commission to revise the Gorge-wide Management Plan. First, the Court determined that the current plan failed to comply with the Scenic Area Act's

*“Establishment of the Ice Age Floods Trail offers a timely opportunity for collaboration with the NPS, the Ice Age Floods Institute, and the academic community in identifying, inventorying, and developing the best protection strategies for pertinent geological features.”*

– United States National Park Service

mandate to protect natural and cultural resources from the “cumulative adverse effects” of land uses and development. For example, while building one house near sensitive wildlife habitat might not cause harm, the cumulative effects of building one house every year for ten years in the same area could result in harm to wildlife. Cumulative effects analysis allows planning agencies to identify problems ahead of time and then avoid harm to fish, wildlife, water quality, scenic landscapes and Native American cultural resources.

Second, the Supreme Court found that the Management Plan contains contradictory definitions for “natural resources” and does not require protection of important geologic resources. Geologic resources are “natural resources” that should be protected under the National Scenic Area Act, but under the current rules, mining and development are allowed without consideration of impacts to important geologic features. An example is the epic landslide in the central Gorge known as the Bonneville Slide, which permanently



changed the course of the Columbia River and created the Bridge of the Gods. The Bonneville Slide is not protected from open pit mining. Another spectacular example would be remnants and scars of the cataclysmic ice age floods that scoured out the Columbia River Gorge.

Third, the Court ordered the Commission to delete language in the Management Plan that allows expansion of industrial development in protected areas in the Gorge.

### Squandered opportunity

At their July meeting, the Commission majority decided to disregard the Court, as well as testimony and written comments from Gorge residents, the National Park Service, Columbia Riverkeeper, and the Ice Age Floods Institute. Instead, they adopted staff recommendations that severely limit analyses of cumulative effects and fail to protect significant geologic features.

This action by the Commission has squandered a great opportunity to improve resource protections throughout the Columbia Gorge. The only bright spot was the Commission's vote to comply with the Supreme Court's order to prohibit expansion of industrial development.

Commissioners voting to strengthen protections for natural resources and important geologic features include former Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts, Jim Middaugh, and Sarah Grigsby, all from Oregon. Friends of the Columbia Gorge applauds their courageous efforts to protect the natural scenic beauty and outstanding natural resources of the Columbia Gorge.

Friends and our allies will review the Commission's decision and consider our options, which include returning the decision to the courts for further review.

*“Neglecting the cumulative adverse impact of these projects is akin to death by a thousand cuts.”*

– Chris Carvalho, nature photographer

*“Probably the single most geologically significant event in the history of the Columbia River Gorge over the past millennium is the great Bonneville landslide, which is important not only to the geological story, but to the environmental and cultural history of the Pacific Northwest as well.”*

– Geologist Pat Pringle, a leading expert in Gorge geology



*Spring wildflowers at Catherine Creek.*

Photo: Tom Nelson

## *Catherine Creek Recreation Plan*

Protects Rare Plants, Wildlife Habitat

By Rick Till, Conservation Legal Advocate, [rick@gorgefriends.org](mailto:rick@gorgefriends.org)

The Forest Service released a revised Recreation Plan for the Burdoin Mountain, Coyote Wall, and Catherine Creek Area, along with an Environmental Assessment of the Recreation Plan. Implementation of the plan will be critical to preventing adverse impacts to natural resources caused by the explosion of recreational use the area has seen over the last several years.

Friends and other interested parties appealed a prior version of the plan because it failed to provide adequate protection to sensitive plant species from recreational uses. The revised Recreation Plan provides better protection for sensitive plant and animal habit while still allowing mountain biking, equestrian uses, and hiking in appropriate locations.

Sandy Wright,  
Development Director  
sandy@gorgefriends.org



“We left our beloved Sierra Nevada behind and were wonderfully surprised to discover the Gorge – an awe-inspiring treasure of beautiful vistas, amazing geological history, and fascinating plant and animal communities. We’re stepping up for the Gorge to help keep it a treasure and hope you will too.”

– Norm Enfield, Friends Member

## Conservator Party October 15

Our annual gala Conservator Party will be held Friday, October 15. Conservators are donors who give more than \$1,000 annually to help protect the Gorge. If you’ve been considering our Conservator Society, now is a great time to take that step, as any increase in your annual gift will be matched by our *Step Up for the Gorge* campaign.

## Step Up for the Gorge!

Join us for *Step Up for the Gorge*, an opportunity to leverage your support for Gorge protection. A visionary donor has offered to match up to \$50,000 in new gifts, to entice new folks to join Friends of the Columbia Gorge, and encourage current members to increase their giving. Help us meet this \$50,000 match by making a *Step Up for the Gorge* gift between August 1 and December 31. With the match, it will mean \$100,000 in new funds for Gorge protection efforts.

**New members:** 100% of your donation will be matched dollar for dollar.

**Current members:** Any amount above your total gift last year will be matched.

All gifts must be received between August 1 and December 31. Send in your gift today (see insert),

and invite a friend to *Step Up for the Gorge*, too. Visit us online at [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org) for more information about how you can help, or contact Sandy Wright at 503-241-3762 x102 or [sandy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:sandy@gorgefriends.org).

### Get Involved!

Help Us Kick Off the *Step Up for the Gorge* Campaign

**Hood River Kick-Off Event**  
**Monday, August 23, 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

Learn how you can help make this Campaign an outstanding success!

For details call Sandy at 503-241-3762 x102 or email [sandy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:sandy@gorgefriends.org).

## Special Gifts

April 23 – July 15, 2010

IN HONOR OF MONICA DUPLESSIE  
RITA AND DONALD DUPLESSIE

IN HONOR OF KEVIN GORMAN  
DOROTHY MARTIN BURDICK

IN HONOR OF PHILIP HEID  
HOLLY AND HARVEY SCHMIDT

IN HONOR OF THE WEDDING OF  
WALTER MOBERG AND VONDA KIMELDORF  
VICTORIA BAYOT  
HOLLY DAVIS  
TRINA FRANK

ROBIN PARIS  
MARTHA PFANSCHMIDT  
AND DAVID KELLUM  
MARK PUGLIESE  
JOHN AND LYNNE SELF  
SARA YADA

IN MEMORY OF MARGARET C  
BURNEYAT  
DONNA PRIEBE

IN MEMORY OF OLIVER DALTON  
SANDI AND TOM ROUSSEAU

IN MEMORY OF SUSANNA GABAY  
SUSAN GABAY

IN MEMORY OF JEANNE GATES  
GARDNER  
TRESA MATLACK  
SUE MITCHELL

IN MEMORY OF ALBERTA GEROULD  
STEVE GEROULD  
SUSAN GEROULD

IN MEMORY OF  
ALICE MALARKEY KOEHLER  
EDWIN CASWELL  
WILLIAM AND MEREDITH SAVERY  
PAT AND MACY WALL

IN MEMORY OF MARGERY MEEKER  
MARILYN CARLEO

IN MEMORY OF RICH PENNELL  
LOUIS AND RUTH KAUFMAN  
DR. AND MRS. MICHAEL MCCLUNG  
ANN WHITMYER

IN MEMORY OF PAUL TOM ROCKS  
DONALD AND SHIRLEY CLARK

IN MEMORY OF NANCY RUSSELL  
GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA  
J.C. EDWARDSSEN  
PETER JOHNSON  
SANDI AND TOM ROUSSEAU

IN MEMORY OF MARY LEAF TAYLOR  
JAMES AND BIRTE FALCONER  
LANE AND FRAN CINE SHETTERLY  
ANNE TAGGARD  
HOWARD AND JEAN THOMPSON

IN MEMORY OF KLINDT VIELBIG  
NICHOLAS AND KATHRYN DODGE

IN MEMORY OF DENNY WEST  
DONALD AND SHIRLEY CLARK

IN MEMORY OF MATT WINTHROP  
JEROLD AND DOLORES ANDRUS  
MRS. JIM BLACKMAN

**Credit** – A recent letter to members neglected to credit Chris Carvalho for his excellent photo of the proposed casino site. Chris’s work can be seen at [www.Lensjoy.com](http://www.Lensjoy.com).



More than 240 members and supporters enjoyed a fantastic potluck picnic at our Land Trust’s Mosier Plateau property in July.

Photo: Holly Petersen

### *Our Apologies . . .*

Some of our members received renewal notices very early. We value all our members and regret the error. Thanks for your understanding. If you have concerns, please call Sandy at 503-241-3762 x102 or email [sandy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:sandy@gorgefriends.org).

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DOUGLAS GILDNER  
RUTH AND ROY HALL  
MARSHA AND JIM HOFFMAN  
JAMES A. JOHNSON  
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AMY AND KEVIN KOHNSTAMM  
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WILMA AND DANIEL WEBER  
AMY WINTHROP  
HERBERT WINTHROP  
LORING AND MARGARET WINTHROP

*A view from Silver Star Mountain.* Photo: Gary Martel



### *Featured Hike:*

## **Silver Star Mountain**

**Moderate: 5 miles, 1500-ft elevation gain**

Maegan Jossy, Outdoor Programs Coordinator, [maegan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:maegan@gorgefriends.org)

**S**tunning 360-degree views of five volcanoes reward hikers atop Silver Star Mountain, high above the Columbia Gorge in Washington. The 5-mile Ed’s Trail loop passes through a wonderland of wildflowers and a natural 12-foot high arch. A forest fire in 1902 called the Yacolt Burn left much of this rocky landscape unforested, perfect for alpine wildflowers and expansive views. Experience this classic 5-mile hike on your own, or join our fall hike at Silver Star on Thursday, Sept. 23. See details in our Fall Hiking Brochure.

#### **Directions from Portland/Vancouver:**

- North on I-5, take exit #9, to Hwy 502 for 7.7 miles to Battle Ground. North on Hwy 503 for 5.8 miles.
- Right on Rock Creek Rd. for 8.5 miles, passing Lucia and Moulton Falls.
- Right on Sunset Falls Rd. heading east for 7.3 miles.
- Right on Road 41 into Sunset Falls Campground. The road turns into gravel for the next 8 miles, crossing the East Fork Lewis River, and heads left.
- Right on Road 4109. Left at unmarked 4-way junction, still on Road 4109.



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## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

P.O. Box 40820

Portland, Oregon 97240-0820

# Know Your Gorge: *Then and Now*

## Oneonta Tunnel

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2011. To commemorate the occasion, our quarterly newsletters this year are providing windows to the past, presenting photos from the 1860s through the early 1980s, prior to passage of the Scenic Area Act, in tandem with recent images.

The tunnels of the Historic Columbia River Highway offer an incredible story of engineering marvels created and then destroyed in the name of progress, and then eventually restored in the name of preservation.

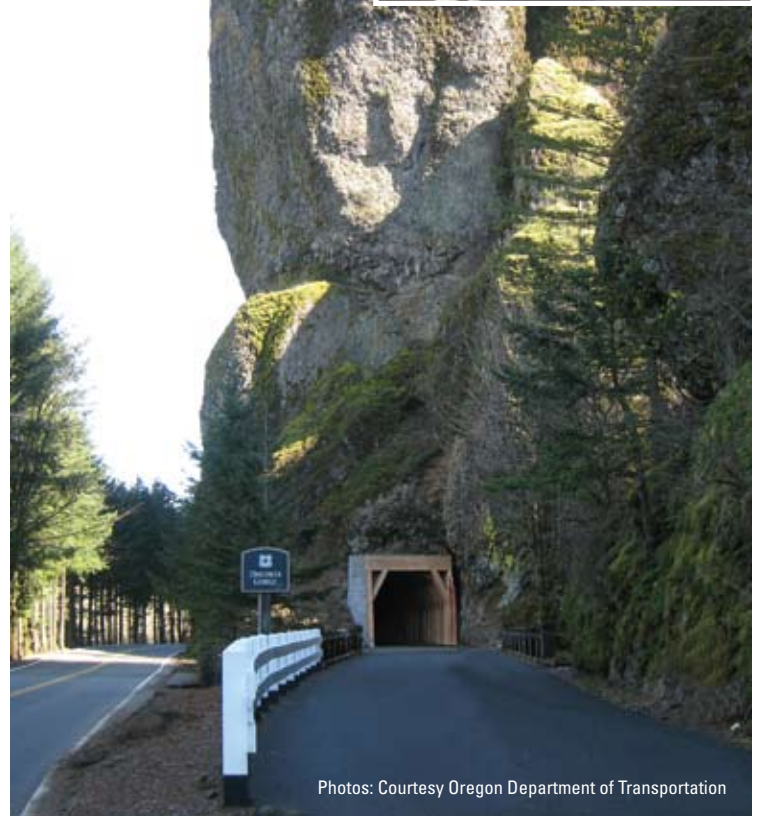
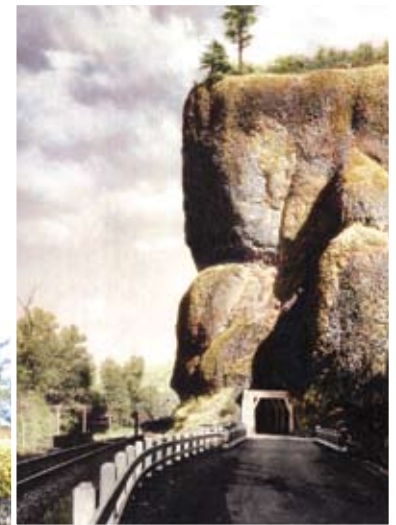
The original “King of the Roads,” as the Scenic Highway was called, featured four tunnels: one at Oneonta Creek, another below Mitchell Point, and the Twin Tunnels near Mosier.

The Oneonta and Mosier Tunnels were filled in with gravel when Interstate 84 was built. In 2000, following two decades of Friends’ efforts, the Twin Tunnels re-opened as a 5-mile paved recreation trail, free of automobiles. In 2009, the Oneonta Tunnel also reopened, providing additional access to the original Historic Highway adjacent to beautiful Oneonta Gorge.

The biggest challenge will be restoration of Mitchell Point Tunnel. Unlike the other tunnels, the Mitchell Tunnel was dynamited, and all that remains are portions of the old road bed. Oregon Department of Transportation plans to “recreate” Mitchell Tunnel to celebrate Oregon State Parks’ 100th anniversary in 2016. A new tunnel will be drilled adjacent to the old one, even reproducing the five portals that looked out onto the Gorge.

With the four tunnels opened again, the entire length of the graceful Historic Columbia River Highway will once again provide a leisurely scenic route for exploring the Oregon side of the Gorge.

*Above: The original  
Oneonta Tunnel.  
Below: The restored tunnel.*



Photos: Courtesy Oregon Department of Transportation