

# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

*Protecting the Gorge Since 1980*

*Summer 2012 Newsletter*



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Fighting Coal and  
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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  
from our website: [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org)

Coal or pet coke dust spews from a train in the Columbia Gorge. Photo: Julie Coop



# Take Action!

## Write to your Representatives!

Coal companies are threatening the Columbia Gorge with proposals to transport 150 million tons of coal annually through the Gorge by rail and barge. Enroute to coastal export terminals for shipment to Asian markets, these shipments would dramatically increase diesel pollution and spew toxic coal dust all along their route.

In June, Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley joined Governor John Kitzhaber and Washington Senator Patty Murray to call for a regional look at the cumulative effects of the proposed export facilities. Please thank Senators Merkley and Murray (see contact information below) and Governor Kitzhaber (go to [www.oregon.gov/Gov](http://www.oregon.gov/Gov)) for taking a stand.

Unfortunately, coal companies have significant resources to defend their proposals. We need our elected leaders to stand together to protect the Columbia Gorge. Senator Wyden and Congressman Blumenauer have been powerful voices for Gorge protection in the past, taking strong stands on Gorge issues.

Now, we need their leadership again. *Please write to Senator Wyden and Congressman Blumenauer today.* See contact information below. Urge them to join their colleagues in calling for an area-wide environmental impact statement before permits are issued on any of the proposed facilities. ■

## Citizen Action Makes the Difference!

Your action to protect Gorge air quality is crucial to our success. Visit our website today to oppose this coal export plan. Follow the "Protect the Gorge" link to write a letter to stop coal trains in the Gorge.

[www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org)

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

**Rep. Suzanne Bonamici**, (202) 225-0855

**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. Jamie Herrera Beutler**, (202) 225-3536

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

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

**Rep. Jay Inslee** (202) 225-6311

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

Cover photo: Aerial view of the White Salmon River Valley, threatened by development (see page 4).

Photo: Darryl Lloyd / longshadowphotos.com

# Director's Letter

While on a Friends' hike up Table Mountain recently, a member asked what was the most pressing issue I was facing. Although she expected a response like "coal trains," I immediately launched into the behind-the-scenes work I've been focused on to keep our "train" going. Scintillating stuff? Not really, and I quickly changed the subject.



Photo: Michael Horodyski / mjhpdx.com

But anyone who runs a non-profit or a business understands the challenge of keeping your eye on the mission while at the same time building and rebuilding infrastructure to allow your mission work to thrive.

For the last eight months, we've spent considerable time and resources building that infrastructure, and it

has positioned us well for the future. In January, we created a finance and operations director position and hired Nanita Sammons, who, as a consultant, guided Friends through a ten-year financial forecast in 2008. Nanita's financial acumen greatly increases our capabilities as our organization becomes more complex, and allows me to focus on bigger-picture issues. We also hired Stan Hall as our content specialist, increasing our web and social media presence. And finally, after years of research, we've upgraded our member database, better tying it into our activist work to enable us to do so much more to engage members, activists, hikers, and volunteers.

How does all of this apply to our real work of protecting the Gorge? Well, in August, we are opening our third office, thanks to support from developer and member Wes Hickey. Opening this office, located in Washougal, Washington, is a strategic move that will help us continue building member and activist support in Clark County. However, without the steps we had taken over the previous six months, we would not be able to support the new office, deal with related technology challenges,

*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.*

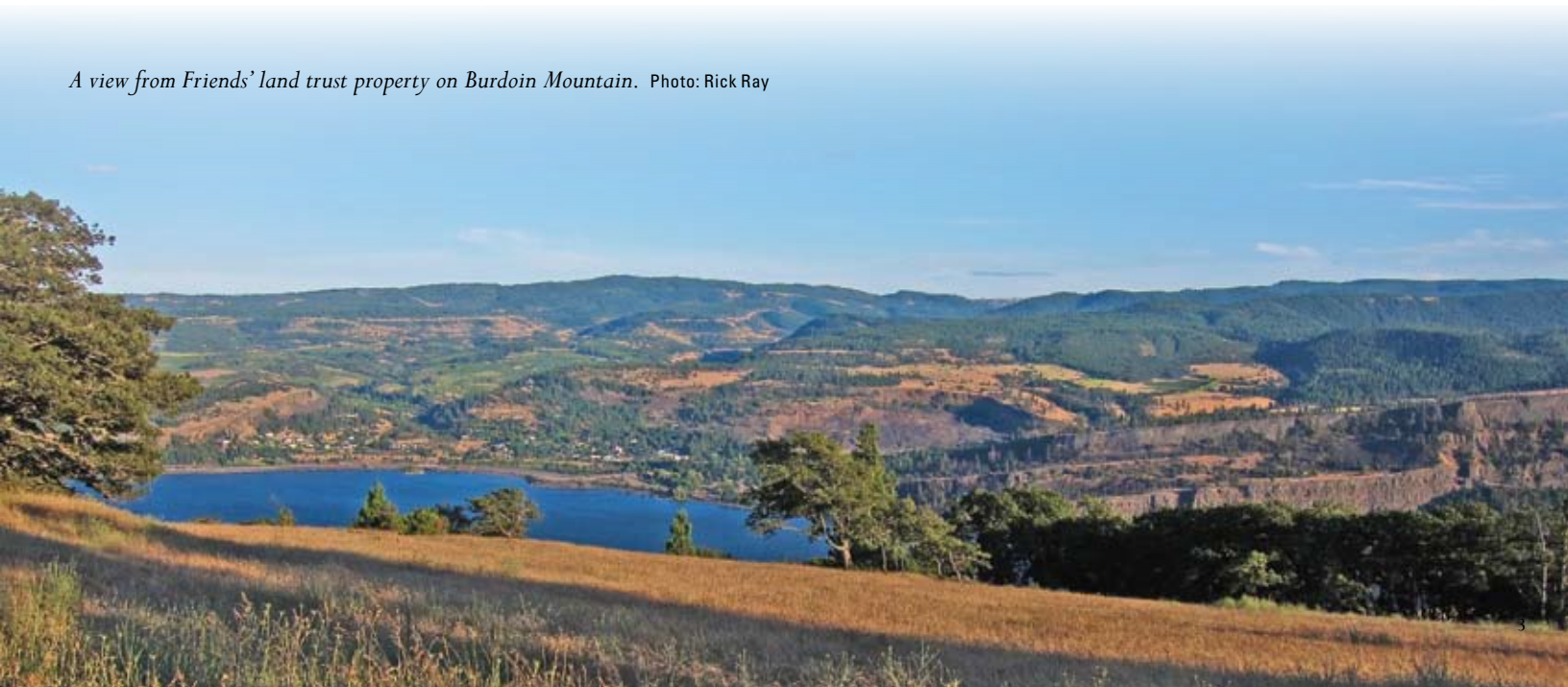
and incorporate new ways to reach Clark County residents.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge is not the same organization it was when I started fourteen years ago, in August 1998. It is now two organizations – the parent organization and the land trust, with three offices, thirteen staff, five interns, and net assets sixteen fold above 1998 levels. We've achieved extraordinary growth because of you, our members, and we know these changes will further strengthen Friends as an organization worthy of your involvement and investment.



Kevin Gorman, Executive Director  
[kevin@gorgefriends.org](mailto:kevin@gorgefriends.org)

*A view from Friends' land trust property on Burdoin Mountain. Photo: Rick Ray*





*A steelhead passing BZ Falls this past July, 9.1 river miles above the breached Condit Dam.*

Photo: Jeanette Burkhardt, Yakama Nation Fisheries

# Friends Continues to Protect White Salmon River

Nathan Baker, Staff Attorney, [nathan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:nathan@gorgefriends.org)  
and Rick Till, Conservation Legal Advocate, [rick@gorgefriends.org](mailto:rick@gorgefriends.org)

**F**or the first time in nearly a century, the salmon have returned to their namesake waterway, the White Salmon River.

In mid-July, biologists for the Yakama Nation and the U.S. Geological Survey observed steelhead jumping in the White Salmon at both Husum Falls and BZ Falls. These steelhead had fought their way upstream more than nine river miles past the remnants of Condit Dam in order to spawn. Fall chinook are expected to make the same journey in September.

Until recently, it would have been impossible to see salmon and steelhead spawning that far up the White Salmon. Condit Dam blocked the river ever since its construction was completed in

1913. But that changed in October 2011, when the dam was breached pursuant to a monumental settlement agreement between dam owner PacifiCorp, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, and other parties.

Work continues around the clock to remove the remnants of the concrete dam, and is expected to be complete by the end of August. Once dam removal is completed, PacifiCorp will assist the natural recovery of the river's ecology through a number of measures, including revegetating and restoring the riverbanks and surrounding wetlands.

## **New threats**

Unfortunately, these same waters now reopened to salmon are also under

a serious threat of overdevelopment. Klickitat County recently decided to rezone the lands surrounding the lower White Salmon River for intensive residential development. The county's new zoning opens up more than 1,000 acres of resource lands to new residential lots as small as one and two acres.

Under the new zoning, each new small lot would be allowed to drill its own new well. These wells would take water from aquifers connected to the White Salmon River and its tributaries like Rattlesnake Creek, which is already listed under the Clean Water Act as impaired because of high water temperatures. If the rezone is allowed to

*Removal of the dam  
is expected to be  
complete by the end  
of August.*

Photo: Courtesy of PacifiCorp.



*Condit Dam was breached in October 2011, reopening the river upstream to native salmon.*

proceed, removal of even a relatively small volume of water from Rattlesnake Creek could drive stream temperatures into a lethal range for salmon and steelhead. In effect, the rezone would undermine the whole purpose of removing Condit Dam: restoring salmon and steelhead to their historic range.

The rezone poses other threats as well. Each new small lot would be allowed to construct its own on-site septic system. However, expert testimony has shown that the rezoned area does not have the capacity to dilute nitrate runoff from such a high number of septic tanks to levels that comply with safe drinking water standards. As a result, the rezone places human health at risk.

### **Defending the river**

With the historic removal of Condit Dam nearing completion, now is the wrong time to throw the doors open to sprawling residential development along the White Salmon River. Friends of the Columbia Gorge and Friends of the White Salmon River, represented by the Crag Law Center, have appealed the County's rezoning decision in Superior Court. Our lawsuit seeks to overturn the County's decision because it violates state land use planning laws and because the county failed to prepare an environmental impact statement.



Photo: Darryl Lloyd / longshadowphotos.com, rezone map approximation: Nathan Baker, Jozsef Urmos

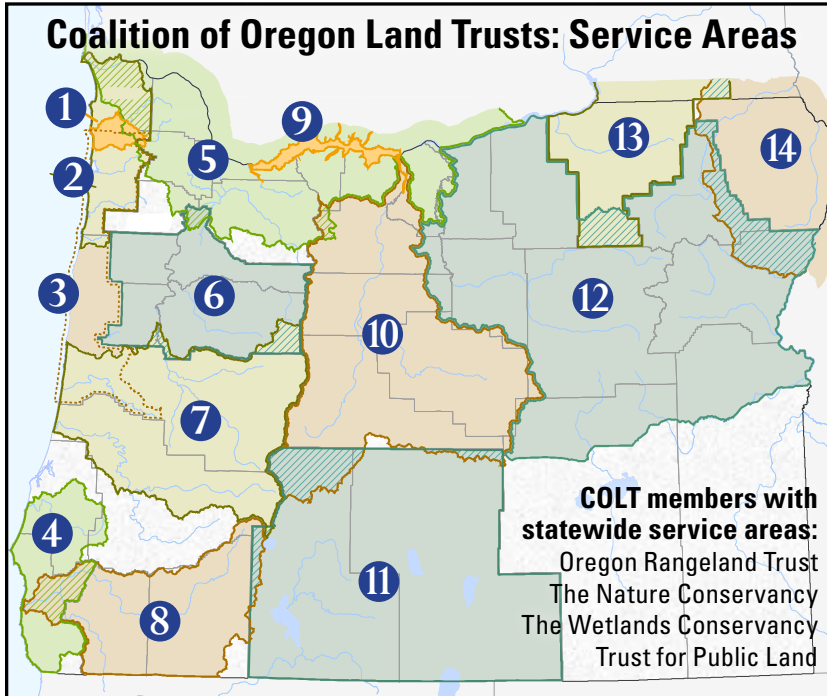
*Yellow lines mark portions of the recently rezoned lands along the White Salmon River, above the breached Condit Dam.*

A key issue in the appeal is potential harm to the federally designated "outstandingly remarkable values" (ORVs) of the Lower White Salmon Wild and Scenic River. ORVs threatened by the rezone include whitewater boating; native fish; and the river's unique hydrology, which produces numerous seeps and springs that ensure cool-water temperatures favored by fish.

Friends is committed to protecting the White Salmon River, promoting the enormous gains achieved by the removal of Condit Dam, and advocating for land use plans that work for local communities. Friends will continue collaborating with local partners to seek solutions that protect these resources, while also ensuring that responsible development is allowed to move forward. ■

# The Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

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



COLT member organizations: 1. Lower Nehalem Community Trust 2. North Coast Land Conservancy 3. Central Coast Land Conservancy 4. Elk River Land Trust 5. Columbia Land Trust 6. Greenbelt Land Trust 7. McKenzie River Trust 8. Southern Oregon Land Conservancy 9. Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust 10. Deschutes Land Trust 11. Klamath Land Trust 12. Blue Mountains Conservancy 13. Blue Mountain Land Trust 14. Wallowa Land Trust. Map Courtesy of COLT

Protecting public lands calls for strength in numbers. With that in mind, Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust, has become one of the eighteen land trusts comprising the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts, or COLT.

COLT had its first official business meeting in May. The organization’s four principal goals are defined as:

- Strengthen and expand Oregon’s land trust infrastructure and resources;
- Support and strengthen public policies and programs to further the work and priorities of Oregon land trusts;
- Share the story of Oregon landscapes and the role of land trusts in their conservation and protection;
- Develop a strong, lasting organizational foundation to help meet professional needs of Oregon land trusts.

All COLT members focus on preserving wetlands, forestlands, and sustainable agriculture lands. Like Friends’ Land Trust, most serve a defined geography.

COLT is mapping all protected lands in the state and identifying key properties for protection from future development. Friends’ Land Trust will be collaborating with the other member groups on conservation strategies to protect the Columbia River Gorge. ■

Land at Catherine Creek was purchased with LWCF funding, to be protected and open to the public. Photo: Greg Lief / liefphotos.com

## Land Protection Funds in Jeopardy

Congress created the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in 1965 to safeguard natural areas, water resources, and cultural heritage, and increase recreation opportunities.

LWCF dollars enable the U.S. Forest Service to purchase land for protection from willing sellers, including many important landscapes in the Columbia Gorge. The Forest Service used LWCF funds to purchase land at Cape Horn from our Land Trust, which enabled the Forest

Service and volunteers to complete a trail that provides public access to spectacular views.

LWCF funds come from offshore oil and gas revenues, not tax dollars, yet Congress regularly diverts much of this conservation funding to unrelated uses. As a result, the Forest Service in the Gorge faces a backlog of seven properties available for purchase, but no funds to buy them. Friends’ Land Trust holds three of those properties, which we acquired in order to move them into public ownership. Proceeds from such sales enable us to then purchase additional Gorge lands for conservation.

This year, LWCF funding was attached to the House Transportation Bill, with \$700 million for conservation purchases in 2012-2013. But just before the bill passed in June, the LWCF rider was removed. That same day, the House Appropriations Committee slashed LWCF allocations in the 2013 Interior Appropriations Bill to just \$68 million.

You can help! We need the Senate to stand firm for adequate funding for LWCF. Contact your elected representatives (see contact info on page 2) and urge them to push for full LWCF conservation funding this year. ■



Photo: Gary Leonard



Photo: Michael Horodyski / mjhpdx.com

Gorge lovers of all ages enjoyed our annual Summer Picnic.

Above photos: Michael Horodyski / mjhpdx.com

## “Picnic in Paradise”

Stan Hall, Content Specialist, stan@gorgefriends.org

**M**isty Gorge weather yielded to lovely sunbreaks on July 22, as nearly 200 people gathered for Friends’ annual “Picnic in Paradise,” held on our Land Trust’s pastoral Mount Pleasant farmland property. Members and supporters shared a great potluck, learned about Gorge issues, took in fantastic views, and enjoyed live music from Lambert Street String Band and Counterfeit Cash. Thanks to everyone who helped make this year’s picnic a success. ■

Photo: Kevin Gorman



Renee Tkach with NPS Lewis and Clark Trail staff members Ryan Cooper, left, and Neal Bedlan.

## Fall Hikes in the Gorge

**Fall hikes are starting early this year! Check our brochure insert and join us for autumn outings.**

Photo: Greg Lief / liefphotos.com

## An Invaluable Partnership

Renee Tkach, *Gorge Towns to Trails* Project Manager  
renee@gorgefriends.org

**I**n 2011, Friends received a two-year Technical Support Grant from the Lewis and Clark Trail Department, part of the National Park Service, to provide assistance for the *Gorge Towns to Trails*, or GT2T, initiative.

Over the last year, representatives from the Trail project’s office in Omaha, Nebraska, worked with Friends to create the groundwork for our GT2T vision to move forward. Their staff provided mapping resources and knowledge,

helped to build working alliances with governmental entities, and assisted with information about state and national funding opportunities.

The Lewis and Clark-National Park Service sent two staff members out to the Gorge, twice, for a week each time, to build a stronger connection to the project. Friends is thrilled to have this invaluable relationship with NPS, and we look forward to continuing this work together. ■

# Illegal Logging in the Gorge

## Commission staff “investigates” its role in logging

Michael Lang, Conservation Director, Michael@gorgefriends.org

Five months after being notified that illegal logging was occurring on lands zoned as Open Space – the most protective zoning in the National Scenic Area – the Gorge Commission executive director has issued a written public report. The report “investigates” the illegal logging and acknowledges that logging is prohibited on lands designated as Open Space – that is, “unless [the Commission] changes its Management Plan.” Further, the report states that the commission director has asked for a reexamination of the Open Space designations and the prohibition of logging on these lands.

The Commission staff appears to be second-guessing the Commission’s decision to protect the most sensitive lands in the Scenic Area as Open Space – a decision made twenty years ago, and reaffirmed in 2004. At the same time, Commission staff inexplicably denies having told staff members of the Hood River County Planning Commission, the Oregon Department of Forestry, and Friends of the Columbia Gorge that logging in Open Space was allowable. That denial is contradicted by February 2012 documents from Hood River County and the Oregon Department of Forestry, which show that the Gorge Commission staff did in fact, give that advice to county planners.

The Commission’s authority to designate land in the General Management Area, or GMA, as Open Space and to prohibit logging was settled more than two decades ago. The record shows that the Commission carefully considered the requirements of the National Scenic Area Act and consulted with the Washington and Oregon attorneys general before adopting the Scenic Area Management

Plan in 1991. The 1991 Management Plan designated around 5,500 acres as GMA Open Space and prohibited logging in those areas. In 2004, the Commission re-adopted the same language.

Commission documents from 1990 show that the proposal to designate the land from Hood River to Mosier Bluff as Open Space received more comments of support than any other area. The Commission

*The proposal to designate the land from Hood River to Mosier Bluff as Open Space received more comments of support than any other area.*



*Top of clearcut is on GMA Open Space land, lower portion on exempt Indian Trust Land.*

Photo: Darryl Lloyd / longshadowphotos.com



found that the entire bluff is highly scenic from prominent key viewing areas and identified the chief threats to scenic resources as logging and mining. To protect scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources, the Commission designated the Hood River-to-Mosier lands as Open Space and off limits to logging.

Previous Commission staff enforced the provisions of the Management Plan, and until the illegal clearcut this year, no Open Space lands had been logged since 1991. Now, twenty-one years later, the Commission staff failed to enforce the Management Plan and has asked the states' attorneys general to reexamine the Open Space designations. In doing so, the work of the former staff and Gorge Commission members, as well as the will of the public, has been effectively pushed aside.

At this point, Friends of the Columbia Gorge does not believe that the Gorge Commission staff has objectively "investigated" its own actions, which allowed illegal logging to proceed on one of the most treasured landscapes in the Columbia River Gorge. Looking forward, Friends has concerns that the Commission staff's agenda may open up more GMA Open Space lands for logging in the future. ■



*Coal train derailment on July 2 in Mesa, Washington, 140 miles east of the Gorge. Photo: Tony Eveland*

## Opposition to Coal Exports Mounts

Responding to concerns from communities throughout the Columbia Gorge and across the Northwest, in June Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) sent a letter to the Army Corp of Engineers asking for a thorough review of the cumulative environmental effects of coal export facilities proposed in the Northwest.

In early July, the heat wave across the nation spurred a series of six separate coal train derailments around the country, including one just outside the Gorge. Following these incidents, Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) responded to rising concerns voiced by Oregon communities and sent a letter to the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and the Bureau of Land Management, requesting a programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS) to evaluate the local, regional, and global impacts of doubling U.S. coal exports through the Pacific Northwest.

In his letter, Senator Merkley wrote, "A programmatic EIS would be one step toward ensuring more comprehensive analysis and informed decision-making.

We should not make public policy decisions that could constitute significant moves toward a more coal-dependent future without gathering and publicly disclosing the best possible information and engaging in the appropriate analysis."

Friends of the Columbia Gorge thanks these senators, Governor Kitzhaber, and the more than 100 other elected officials who have stood up for protecting the Gorge and our communities by demanding a thorough environmental review of coal export proposals. These elected officials recognize that concerns over doubling U.S. coal exports through the Columbia Gorge are uniting conservatives and liberals, environmentalists and economic development interests, and rural and urban communities.

Turn to page 2 for contact information for elected representatives, to thank them and to contact officials who have not yet spoken out. We need them to get off the fence and take a strong stand. ■

Sandy Wright, Development Director  
sandy@gorgefriends.org

# Portland Garden Club Anniversary

This year, the Portland Garden Club is celebrating its 75th anniversary in tandem with the centennial anniversary of the Garden Clubs of America. The Garden Club was instrumental in establishing Friends of the Columbia Gorge, and in pushing for passage of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act.

In November 1980, a press conference at the Portland Garden Club office announced the launch of Friends of the Columbia Gorge. Our founder, Nancy Russell, served as the Garden Club's conservation chair and worked with



Nancy Russell, right, with Don Clark and the Portland Garden Club president, announcing the founding of Friends of the Columbia Gorge in 1980. Photo: Friends of the Columbia Gorge archives

members there to advocate for Gorge protection locally and in Washington, D.C. More recently, Friends Board Member Pat Wall served as conservation chair for both the Portland Garden Club and Garden Clubs of America, and convinced both organizations to send representatives to Washington, D.C. to oppose the Gorge casino.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge congratulates the Portland Garden Club on its 75th anniversary, and extends thanks to the Garden Club for their decades of commitment to protecting the Columbia River Gorge. ■

Photo: Martin Hecht



Guardians of the Gorge with Kevin Gorman at "Tour de Land."

## Guardians of the Gorge "Tour de Land"

This spring, members of our *Guardians of the Gorge* Giving Circle attended a special tour of the Gorge with Executive Director Kevin Gorman and Development Director Sandy Wright. Guardians viewed the results of the organization's conservation work and considered a range of new opportunities for Gorge protection. *Guardians of the Gorge* make annual contributions to Friends of \$5000 or more. In addition to our annual Conservator Party, Guardians are invited to the annual guided "Tour de Land." ■

## A Legacy for the Gorge

Friends of the Columbia Gorge lost a dear friend this past spring with the passing of Betty Bonham. A long time member and active volunteer, Betty was a familiar face at Friends' annual picnic. Her love for the Gorge began when she was a girl and her father worked on building Bonneville Dam. Years later, as a member of Friends, Betty was so inspired by Nancy Russell's story that in Nancy's final years, she introduced herself. Betty and Nancy became good friends and enjoyed a weekly get-together to watch movies and talk about the Gorge.



Betty Bonham at Friends' 2011 Picnic.

Betty notified Friends several years ago that she would be leaving a gift to the organization in her will. Betty's legacy gift will help ensure that Friends is able to continue protecting the Columbia Gorge. ■

# Featured Hike: Falls Creek Falls, WA

Easy: 3.4 miles, 650-ft elevation gain

Maegan Jossy, Outdoor Programs Coordinator  
maegan@gorgefriends.org

Gorge enthusiasts are definitely familiar with many of the countless waterfalls that define Gorge landscapes, but Falls Creek Falls may top them all. This breathtaking waterfall is the dramatic climax of an out-and-back hike through old growth forest along bubbling Falls Creek. Combine this hike with a side-trip to nearby Panther Creek Falls, up a ¼ mile trail to a viewing platform. Both falls are on our *Waterfall Wanderlust* hiking challenge. See the September 22 entry in our Fall Hiking brochure and join us. *Waterfall Wanderlust* information is at [www.gorgefriends.org/waterfalls](http://www.gorgefriends.org/waterfalls).

**Directions to Falls Creek Falls:** From WA Hwy 14, turn north on Wind River Hwy/Hwy 30 to Carson. Continue on Hwy 30 for approximately 15 miles. Just past the Carson Fish Hatchery, turn right on Hwy. 30 and continue 3/4 mi., then right again on Forest Road 3062. After driving approx. 2 miles, turn right on Road 057. Continue 1/2 mile to the trailhead. ■

*Falls Creek Falls.*

Photo: Greg Lief / liefphotos.com



## Special Gifts APRIL 21, 2012 - JULY 24, 2012

IN HONOR OF OLIVIA BRUMFIELD  
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IN HONOR OF OUR VOLUNTEERS,  
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IN MEMORY OF BETTY BONHAM  
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GRETCHEN HONAN

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## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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# Know Your Gorge: *Columbia Gorge Cutthroat Trout*

By Zach Forsyth

**H**igh above Multnomah Falls and other Gorge waterfalls lives a fish unique to the Columbia Gorge. The Columbia Gorge cutthroat trout, only seven or eight inches fully grown, inhabits larger spring-fed streams, such as Oneonta, Multnomah, and Eagle Creeks. It has been isolated from other cutthroat populations for an undetermined amount of time.

“I think it’s fair to assume that these fish likely arrived during times of much higher water levels, then became isolated as the water receded,” says Rod French, Mid-Columbia Fish Biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Nobody knows exactly when that occurred, but French states, “We are currently cooperating on a study with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to further look at the genetics and origin of these unique fish.”

Many populations are found above waterfalls upstream of the

high-water mark of the Missoula Floods that sculpted the lower reaches of the Gorge 13,000 to 15,000 years ago, suggesting an isolating event even prior to the floods. Whatever the case, the Columbia Gorge cutthroat trout – living nowhere else on earth – is another unique reason to celebrate the Columbia River Gorge. ■



*Columbia Gorge cutthroat trout.*

Photo: Zach Forsyth