

# FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

Winter 2004 Newsletter

preserving Gorge forests



## New rules proposed for Gorge Forests *Forest Service response to public concern is mixed*

By Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org

Following an outcry from the public and concerns raised by members of Congress, the U.S. Forest Service has stepped back and revised some of its proposed guidelines protecting forests within Special Management Areas (SMAs) in the Columbia Gorge. If adopted, the newly revised guidelines will provide greater protection for remnant old-growth forests in the Gorge and reduce the amount of clearcutting allowed,

but will fall short of ensuring greater protection for roadless areas and salmon-bearing streams.

The Forest Service originally called for a scant 17-day comment period on proposed changes that would allow clear-cuts—called “created forest openings”—in excess of 15 acres, allow clear-cutting forestland for conversion to agricultural uses, and weaken protection of remaining old-growth forest

*Scenic beauty and wildlife habitat in Gorge forests are jeopardized by Forest Service proposals that would allow increased logging.*

Photo: ©James O. Holloway

stands. The Forest Service proposes to allow “forest health” logging on public forests and to allow the commercial sale of the resulting logged trees.

Friends rallied Gorge protection allies and activists to convince the Forest Service to extend the comment period to allow the public adequate time to review the proposed changes. A broad outreach campaign generated a flood of citizen response. In two months this winter, the Forest Service received more than 1,000 comment letters strenuously objecting to these threats to Gorge forests and offering specific recommendations for strengthening protection for forested landscapes and habitat for forest-dependent species.

### Stronger Protections Urged

The Forest Service proposals captured the attention of congressional representatives including Representatives Brian Baird, Earl Blumenauer and David Wu.

In joint letters sent by Reps. Baird, Blumenauer, and Wu, the Congressmen said in part, “We are writing to express our serious concern for issues regarding the proposed changes to forest practice guidelines in the Special

*(continued on page 7)*

**INSIDE INSERTS**  
*Spring Hiking Brochure  
and Annual Report*

# Executive Director's Letter

## Lewis and Clark are coming, again.

For those who don't get goosebumps when the subject turns to history (I realize I am in the minority), it's important to at least appreciate the relevance of Lewis and Clark in today's world.

I recently went bird watching with a friend on a blustery day in the Gorge. We saw tundra swans, lots of waterfowl, and three bald eagles, including one with a fish in its talons swooping toward us. We also spotted Captain Lewis's namesake, the Lewis' woodpecker, hanging out near Catherine Creek.

Heading down to the riverbed at Major Creek—on a parcel recently purchased by the Forest Service that is a likely Lewis and Clark campsite—we were amazed to find the narrow river canyon, not known for fish, filled with steelhead and spawning coho. Watching the battered, determined salmon struggle upstream to spawn and die was both sad and uplifting.

The Lewis and Clark journals are filled with images like these. Noisy birds and salmon-choked streams fill the journals, as do Native American trading centers, waterfalls, rapids, and landmarks like Beacon Rock. The expedition was by no means the first human imprint on the Gorge, but it was a turning point. All that the Gorge is today—wild, tame, special and despoiled—links to that party of 31 men, one woman, and one child. For better and worse, they led the way for Oregon Trail pioneers and westward expansion. Lewis's documentation of flora and fauna also inspired a generation of 19th-century naturalists who worked to ensure that our country's manifest destiny would not wipe out the wonder of the West.

Next month, Lewis and Clark expert Roger Wendlick will speak at our annual meeting. For those who attended our meeting two years ago, you were fortunate enough to see Roger in buckskin and buffalo robe sharing his improbable life story as an ex-logger and heavy equipment operator who developed the world's largest collection of Lewis and Clark memorabilia. This year, Roger will present the role of Interpreter George Drouillard of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Drouillard, who was part French and part Shawnee, possessed nerve and cool judgment that made him invaluable to the journey.

Whether it is birds, fish, or people like Roger, we are surrounded with living testaments that the natural wonder of the Gorge and the legacy of Lewis and Clark will be forever intertwined.

Sincerely,



Kevin Gorman  
Executive Director



Kevin Gorman with a group of hikers along the Major Creek riverbed in April 2003, one day shy of the anniversary date of Lewis and Clark's encampment there.

Photo: Diana Karabut

## Mission Statement

*Friends of the Columbia Gorge shall vigorously protect the scenic, natural, cultural and recreational resources within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.*

*We fulfill this mission by ensuring strict implementation of the National Scenic Area Act; promoting responsible stewardship of Gorge lands and waters; encouraging public ownership of sensitive areas; educating the public about the unique natural values of the Columbia River Gorge and the importance of preserving those values; and working with groups and individuals to accomplish mutual preservation goals.*

—Adopted November 20, 1997



## Citizen Involvement Update

# Friends' Outreach & Volunteer Happenings

By Betsy Toll, Volunteer Coordinator, [betsy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:betsy@gorgefriends.org)

### Volunteer on Spring Hikes

Every spring, our Gorge hikes need volunteer "shepherds" for every event. Helping with the hikes is easy and fun. Shepherds assist the designated hike leaders in making sure everyone has a great experience out in the Gorge, and the shepherds get to enjoy a wonderful hike in the process.

No experience is necessary, and we need more shepherds for the upcoming season. If this sounds like a good volunteer opportunity for you, come to our Shepherd Training on March 3.

#### Hike Shepherd Training

Wed., March 3, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

522 SW 5th Ave., Room 919

(Yeon Building Conference Room)

We'll provide food, beverages, and all the information you need to help with a wonderful hiking season in the Gorge this spring.

For more information contact Cathy at [cathy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:cathy@gorgefriends.org), or call Betsy at 503-241-3762 x103. ■

### Using Technology for the Gorge

This year, Friends will expand our use of electronic technology to keep members and supporters up to date on our activities and urgent Gorge protection issues.

More than 3000 members receive our quarterly newsletters, but less than 10% currently subscribe to our Activities & Updates e-mail listserve. With change happening so rapidly, email is the best way to communicate up-to-the-minute information and engage supporters in Gorge protection between newsletters.

The use of email enables citizens to make an impact as issues arise. The success of our quick, focused opposition to the Forest Service's forest practice proposals (see cover article) demonstrates just how effective, and

how important, this tool can be in helping to protect the Gorge.

Issues in the Gorge change all the time, and ramping up our use of electronic technology will enable supporters to respond to urgent and emerging conditions. As our use of these tools expands, the momentum for protections for the Gorge will be that much stronger.

### Sign On Today

Subscribers to our e-mail list receive a few posts per month. Each message contains a clear subject line indicating whether it is an action alert, hike announcement, or other activity reminder.

We do not automatically subscribe Friends' members to this list, and hundreds of members with email addresses are not currently receiving our posts. To stay connected between newsletters, subscribe by e-mailing Betsy at [betsy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:betsy@gorgefriends.org). ■



Hikers take a break and enjoy the view from Angels Rest.

Photo: Ken Denis

### Volunteers Make the Difference

Volunteer energy is essential to protecting the Gorge. Friends' key volunteer needs are:

- Good computer skills (data entry, database, website)
- Activist phone-banking
- Volunteer activists to attend meetings, write letters
- Help with mailings
- Legal research and assistance
- Gorge photography (hikes, recreation, picnics, views).

To get involved, contact Betsy at [betsy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:betsy@gorgefriends.org), 503-241-3762 x103. ■



## Conservation and Legal Program Highlights

# In the Courts and in the Field...

By Nathan Baker, Staff Attorney, [nathan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:nathan@gorgefriends.org)  
and Michael Lang, Conservation Director, [michael@gorgefriends.org](mailto:michael@gorgefriends.org)

### Gorge Commission Slides on Protecting Resources

To deny or not deny? All too often, when confronted with an unlawful development application, the Gorge Commission fails to ask itself this important question. It has been more than three years since the Commission has denied even a single application.

In the 17 years since the passage of the National Scenic Area Act, more than 4,000 development applications have been filed. Occasionally, an application does not comply with resource protection rules and must be modified somewhat. Sometimes an applicant refuses to modify the proposal, and in these rare cases, the application must be denied.

Recently, however, the Gorge Commission has taken a different approach. Rather than denying unlawful applications, the Commission routinely approves them, while imposing conditions of approval requiring the projects to be completely redesigned.

Some applicants ignore those directions and proceed with the

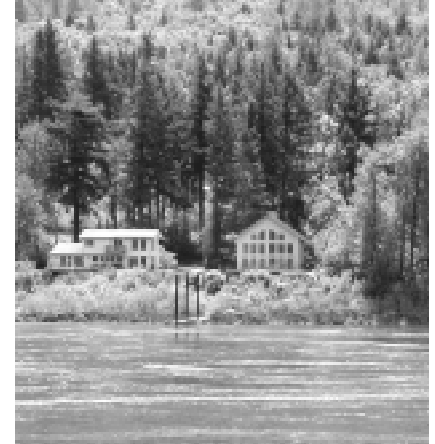
projects as proposed, creating enforcement problems for the Gorge Commission. Others may redesign the projects, but the Commission will approve them behind closed doors without any public participation.

This process flies in the face of two recent Gorge Commission appellate orders where the Gorge Commission overturned Skamania County decisions because the applications did not demonstrate full compliance with the approval criteria at the time of the decisions.

The Gorge Commission needs to hold itself to the same standards that it set for the counties. All applications for development in the National Scenic Area must fully comply with approval criteria at the time of the decision. If the applications do not, they must be denied. ■

### Agencies Prepare Revised Management Plan

The Gorge Commission and Forest Service are inviting public comments until March 10 on the draft revised Management Plan for the National Scenic



*Multnomah County approved these houses in 1994 based on an incomplete and inadequate development application. Since the time of this photo, the County has worked to bring the houses in compliance with the National Scenic Act and has improved its development review processes.*

*Photo: Michael Lang*

Area. The Management Plan contains all regulations protecting scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources in the Columbia Gorge and sets guidelines for new land uses and developments.

Important revisions proposed by Friends to strengthen the Plan were left out of the revised draft. The following items were among those omitted:

- Strengthen protection for streams by increasing buffer widths.
- Develop a cumulative effects assessment system to protect scenic landscapes.
- Require new development in visually sensitive areas to be fully screened, or require added scenic mitigation measures to offset adverse effects.
- Designate new key viewing areas, such as Angels Rest, Hwy. 197, Courtney Rd., and Dalles Mountain Rd.

*(continued on page 5)*



*This lake in Klickitat County will soon contain an urban-style fishing dock and parking area approved by the Gorge Commission. The Commission bypassed the required public process by allowing the applicant to submit many project details behind closed doors.*

*Photo: Nathan Baker*



# Lewis & Clark Landscapes Project Enters the Homestretch

By Tiffany Kenslow, Project Manager, [tiffany@gorgefriends.org](mailto:tiffany@gorgefriends.org)

Photo: Tyrus Monson

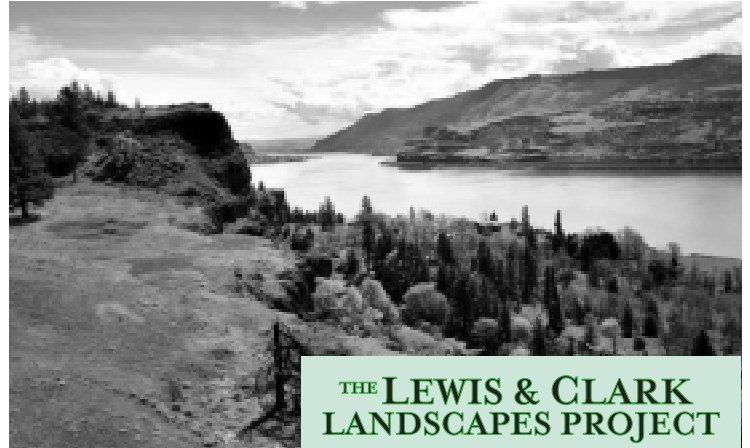
In late 2003, the three-year time clock began expiring for properties offered to the U.S. Forest Service by willing sellers for public acquisition in the Gorge. The final expirations will occur this March, but that won't end the acquisition opportunities in 2004. Several landowners have signed one-year extensions and the Forest Service will need more than \$10 million to purchase the lands.

With the need so high and timing so tight, Friends took the bold step of hiring former Senator Slade Gorton (R-WA) to lobby on behalf of Gorge land acquisition. His efforts are already paying off. Last fall, we were in danger of losing even the \$1 million in the President's budget due to a mercurial House Interior Appropriations Committee. The former Senator went to work and appears to have secured the \$1 million for land acquisition near St. Peters Dome and atop Seven Mile Hill.

For the coming year, key land purchases include a 400-acre wooded parcel across from Horsetail Falls, where failure to purchase would greatly increase logging opportuni-

ties, and an 88-acre parcel adjacent to the Historic Columbia River Highway and Shepperd's Dell, the area Lewis and Clark camped April 6-9, 1806. A 67-acre Cape Horn property is also on the Forest Service short list and is critical for our proposed Cape Horn Park & Trail and Washougal to Stevenson Trail.

With the support of the Lewis & Clark Landscapes Project, the Forest Service has purchased more than 1,700 acres of critical lands in the last two years. An appropriation of \$10 million would be a rousing conclusion to a conservation effort that enriches the legacy of Lewis and Clark's journey through the Gorge and preserves lands for generations to come. ■



## THE LEWIS & CLARK LANDSCAPES PROJECT

### What you can do:

Contact the congressional delegation and urge them to support \$10 million funding for Gorge land acquisition in FY05. It is critical that Northwest Senators and Representatives hear from their constituents!

### Log on to

[www.lewisandclarklandscapes.org](http://www.lewisandclarklandscapes.org) for sample letters, contact information and more information about the Lewis & Clark Landscapes Project. Or contact Tiffany Kenslow, Project Manager, in our Hood River office at 541-386-5268 or [tiffany@gorgefriends.org](mailto:tiffany@gorgefriends.org) ■

## Conservation and Legal Program Highlights Gorge Commission Slides...

(continued from page 4)

- Restrict logging and strengthen protection for old growth and other priority habitats, roadless areas, and scenic landscapes.

- Protect water quality and streamside habitat in the General Management Area from livestock grazing.

The guidelines proposed in the draft revised Plan would actually weaken protection. These proposals would allow more development near

fish-bearing streams; allow new development to be more visible from key viewing areas; allow commercial fish processing facilities; weaken protection for forests, old growth, and other priority habitat; and allow forest practices in roadless areas.

Contact the Gorge Commission and Forest Service to urge them to oppose weakened guidelines and support Friends' recommendations.

Gorge Commission  
P.O. Box 730  
White Salmon, WA 98672  
Fax: 509-493-2229  
[crgc@gorge.net](mailto:crgc@gorge.net)

Forest Service  
902 Wasco Ave., Suite 200  
Hood River, OR 97031  
Fax: 541-386-1916  
[dharkenrider@fs.fed.us](mailto:dharkenrider@fs.fed.us) ■



## Funding Gorge Protection

# Development Director's Report

By Jane Haley-Harris, Development Director, jane@gorgefriends.org

### Lewis and Clark Historian to Address Annual Meeting

Nationally renowned Lewis and Clark scholar Roger Wendlick, one of the nation's pre-eminent collectors of Lewis and Clark documents, will be the

keynote speaker at our Annual Membership meeting this year. The meeting will be held on Sunday, March 14 from 12:00 to 3:30 p.m. at Skamania Lodge.

A dedicated advocate for the natural and historical legacy of the Columbia Gorge, Roger serves on the national Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and recently joined Friends' Board of Directors.

Roger will offer a one-man show presenting colorful episodes from Lewis & Clark's expedition. The tales will reflect the perspective of George

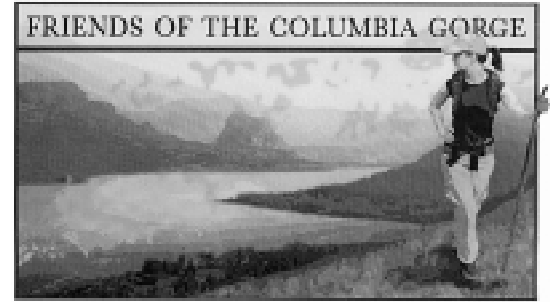
Drouillard, a French hunter and sign language interpreter who accompanied Lewis & Clark on the Voyage of Discovery. The show focuses on the Gorge, where the expedition first spotted the magnificent California Condor, encountered tribes of the region's indigenous peoples congregating for trade, and witnessed tidal action in the mighty Columbia river.

Be sure to mark your calendars for Sunday, March 14, and watch for the invitation in the mail. ■

### Gorge Decal for Members

Thanks to a generous donation from Friends' board member Spencer Dick, we are sending a beautiful new window decal to all our members.

The full-color 3" x 6" decal, which features a hiker high above a panoramic Gorge sunset at Crown Point, can be easily taken on and off your car window for cleaning. It is our way of thanking you, and a great way for you to show



support for the Gorge. With more than 3,000 Friends members, we look forward to seeing decals on cars throughout the region. ■



Roger Wendlick will address the Annual Meeting on March 14.

photo: Ken Denis

### Words of Appreciation

The board and staff at Friends of the Columbia Gorge extend our thanks to all our members from around the nation who have generously supported Gorge protection in the past year.

With your support we exceeded our budget goals by 11% in 2003. Included in this number is a record 571 new members and more than \$146,000 in gifts of \$1,000 or greater from our major donors.

Your support is helping keep the Gorge beautiful for coming generations. ■



photo: Diana Karabut

# Increased Logging...

(continued from page 1)

Management Areas (SMA)...Given the number of clear-cuts already existing in the General Management Areas, the comments that we have received are calling for enhanced protection from timber harvest in the SMAs, not the elimination of protective measures."

These elected leaders and their constituents recognize what's at stake. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act (Act) was designed to protect the natural scenic beauty of the Columbia River Gorge and to restore landscapes wounded over a century of aggressive resource exploitation, by enhancing fish, wildlife and plant habitat and restoring scenic landscapes to a natural appearance.

In the Act, Congress designated four SMAs within the Scenic Area. These areas possess outstanding scenery, biodiversity, habitat for sensitive plant and animal species, and recreational opportunities. The Act prohibits actions that would adversely affect these resources in the SMAs.

## GMA Forests Lack Protection

Unfortunately, forest practices in the Scenic Area General Management Area (GMA) are exempted from regulation under the Act, except for a few thousand acres that are zoned as "Open Space." Thousands of acres of forest have been clear-cut in the GMA since the passage of the Act in 1986, with no protection afforded to scenic, natural, cultural or recreation resources. This makes protection of SMA forests all the more important.

Logging on non-federal forests in the SMAs should be restricted to very narrow confines of resource protection and enhancement. On federal forest land, forest practices should be prohibited unless proven that protecting and enhancing resources can only be achieved through carefully designed, selec-

tive timber harvest. Roadless areas should remain off-limits to logging and the 70,000 acres of land zoned as SMA Open Space should be left unlogged, to remain as wilderness areas.

Friends has recommended the following to the Forest Service:

- Prohibit clear-cutting, or "created forest openings" in the SMAs.
- Prohibit all commercial forest practices on SMA federal land.
- Prohibit clearing forests for conversion to agricultural uses.
- Prohibit all forest practices on Open Space lands and other roadless areas.
- Apply stricter scenic standards for forest practices on non-federal land.
- Expand buffers to 300 feet for perennial streams and to 150 feet for intermittent streams, as required in the Northwest Forest Plan.

Check our website at [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org) for updated information. Information and action updates are posted to our e-mail action list. Contact [betsy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:betsy@gorgefriends.org) or call 503-241-3762 x103 to subscribe. ■

## Just Say NO to Logging Gorge Forests!

Urge the Forest Service to strengthen protections for SMA forests, update protection for salmon-bearing streams, and prohibit the clear-cutting of forests and conversion to agricultural uses. Do not allow increased logging at the expense of the Gorge's other values.

[dharkenrider@fs.fed.us](mailto:dharkenrider@fs.fed.us)  
USDA Forest Service  
Columbia River Gorge  
National Scenic Area  
Attn: Daniel Harkenrider  
902 Wasco Avenue, Suite 200  
Hood River, OR 97031 ■

# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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

*Portland Office*  
522 SW Fifth Avenue, #820  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
503-241-3762

*Gorge Office*  
416 Oak Street  
Hood River, OR 97031  
541-386-5268

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\* Gorge residents

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*Legal Counsel:* Gary Kahn  
*Newsletter Design:* Kathleen Krushas



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## Know Your Gorge Head East to Discovery

In early spring, when wet weather is still keeping most hikers from their favorite trails, an excursion to the eastern Gorge is likely to yield a wonderfully sunny day, and a chance to discover history and culture as well.

The Columbia Gorge Discovery Center & Wasco County Historical Museum in The Dalles is the official interpretive center for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The current exhibit, *Cargo: Equipment and Supplies of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, explores the Expedition's gift giving and trade with Native Americans that was crucial to survival for the Corps of Discovery.

Nearby, stroll the Lewis & Clark Riverfront Trail, a 9.6-mile multi-use trail that will eventually connect the Discovery Center with downtown The Dalles and the Lewis & Clark Rock Fort Campsite.

On both sides of the river, landscapes in the eastern Gorge are stunningly beautiful, from the flower-strewn bluffs of Rowena and Memaloose to the oak-studded slopes of Klickitat County. It's a wonderful place for a hike any time, but especially during the spring. Check our Hikes & Recreation brochure for great outdoor recreation possibilities in the eastern Gorge. ■

*Top: The Columbia Gorge Discovery in The Dalles.*

*Photo: Ken Denis*

*Bottom: Coyote Wall in Klickitat County is a favorite spot for wildflower and mountain bike enthusiasts.*

*Photo: Deirdre Murray*

