

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Protecting the Gorge Since 1980

Winter 2007 Newsletter



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Brochure

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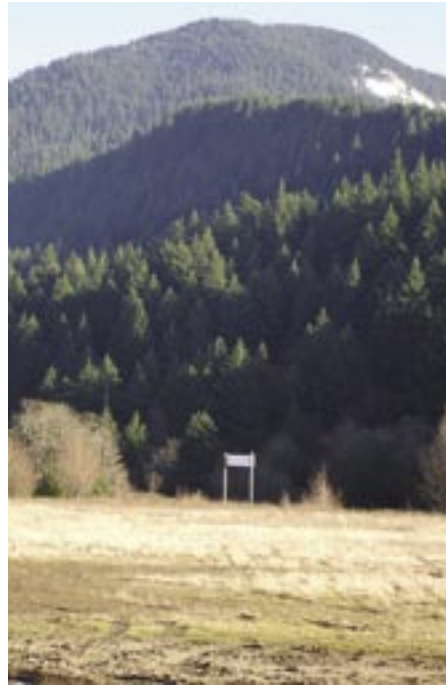
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Take Action Today!

The environmental review currently underway for the proposed Gorge casino at Cascade Locks is inadequate and fails to comply with federal legal requirements. Read details in our Conservation article on pages 8-9 of this newsletter.



Proposed casino site sits below forests currently being considered for wilderness protection.

Photo: Kevin Gorman

Please contact Associate Deputy Secretary of Interior James Cason and ask him to withdraw the current scoping report for the Gorge casino proposal. Basing the review on this flawed report will result in an illegal Environmental Impact Statement.

Urge the Bureau of Indian Affairs to carry out a transparent environmental analysis that rigorously examines a full range of reasonable alternatives to siting the Warm Springs' proposed mega-casino in the Columbia Gorge. Those alternatives should include locations outside the Columbia Gorge as well as sites on the Warm Springs reservation.

Tell the Interior Department that, at minimum, an irreplaceable national treasure like the Columbia Gorge deserves a rigorous, thorough, and fair environmental analysis.

Send comments today to:

**James Cason, Associate Deputy Secretary
of the Interior**

1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240

Fax: (202) 208-1837

james_cason@ios.doi.gov

Active citizen support for Gorge protection is crucial to our success. Contact your Senators and Representatives using the information below, or check www.senate.gov or www.house.gov for other offices.

Oregon

Sen. Gordon Smith, (202) 224-3753

<http://gsmith.senate.gov/public/>

Sen. Ron Wyden, (202) 224-5244

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

Rep. David Wu, (202) 225-0855

Rep. Earl Blumenauer, (202) 225-4811

Rep. Darlene Hooley, (202) 225-5711

Rep. Greg Walden, (202) 225-6730

Rep. Peter DeFazio, (202) 225-6416

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

You can email your **Congressional Representative** by logging on to www.house.gov/writerep/

On the cover: Wildflowers carpeting the Rowena Plateau welcome visitors in spring. Photo: Greg Lief, LiefPhotos.com

Correction: The cover photo on our November 2006 newsletter was printed in reverse. That beautiful sunset photo by James Holloway was shot in Oregon, above I-84 looking west.

Director's Letter

Five years ago, the Klickitat Trail was the Gorge's controversial issue *du jour*. Many local citizens were pressing to open the trail, some adjacent land owners and local politicians wanted it closed completely, and Washington State Parks and the U.S. Forest Service tried to avoid saying or doing anything that would escalate the situation.

It was at this moment that the fuse on a potential powder keg was lit. Nancy Russell called me one morning to tell me that she had bought a small property at the terminus of the Klickitat Trail in Lyle. It would be the ideal trail gateway. But it was in the Urban Area of Lyle, where the County had forbidden the creation of parks. It had three dilapidated structures and the County did not look kindly on removing development for recreation. Given all the controversy, there seemed little hope that the agencies would manage the trail, let alone buy the property.

Fortunately, Nancy has never allowed "half-empty" details to bother her. She removed the structures and cleaned up the property to make it an informal trailhead, and the newly-formed Klickitat Trail Conservancy contributed a port-a-potties for public use.

That once-potential powder keg will now serve as the crowning entrance to the beautiful Klickitat Trail.

Fast forward to 2006. With tensions abated and State Parks and Forest Service managing the trail, more than \$240,000 was available to create an official Lyle trailhead. But no one had approached Nancy about her parcel. Due to budget restrictions, the public agencies intended to put all parking and amenities in a small right of way, even though Nancy's property had ample grassy areas for picnicking and viewing the Klickitat River.

I contacted State Parks and asked if they would consider buying Nancy's parcel if they could get it below market value. They said they would, so I called Nancy and apprised her of the situation. Without hesitation, she offered the property to State Parks for approximately half the \$137,000 price she had paid four years earlier. With appreciation, demolition costs, and property taxes,

Nancy's offer meant she would lose more than \$100,000 on the deal.

Last December, Washington State Parks secured ownership of the property and today the Forest Service is including Nancy's parcel in its planning for the trailhead. That once-potential powder keg will now serve as the crowning entrance to the beautiful Klickitat Trail.



Kevin Gorman
Executive Director

Photo: Kevin Gorman



*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.*

Hike leaders Bev Linde (left) and Barbara Robinson (center) admire the Klickitat River view with Nancy Russell on her Lyle trailhead property.

Political Winds Blow in Gorge's Direction

Changing political climate may help Gorge protection

Kevin Gorman, Executive Director, kevin@gorgefriends.org

Protecting the Columbia Gorge has always been a bi-partisan effort. In 1986, four Republican Senators, numerous Democratic Congressmen, and a Republican President ensured passage of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act. For the past three years, one of those former Republican Senators, Washington's Slade Gorton, has worked as Friends' lobbyist in Washington D.C. and has been crucial to encouraging the Bush Administration and the former Republican-controlled Senate to support Gorge land acquisition.

The November 2006 elections provided a seismic shift in political power in Congress and the Columbia Gorge stands to benefit from that shift. The Democratic takeover of the Senate and House have given Oregon and Washington more power in key committees that fund land acquisition and transportation projects, and determine matters such as wilderness areas. Here are some of the ways in which Gorge protection issues will be affected by the Congressional shift:

Reconnecting the Historic Columbia River Highway

The 20-year transformation effort of the Historic Columbia River Highway from Troutdale to The Dalles would not have occurred without significant federal funding. Roadway improvements in the waterfall stretch between Corbett and Hood River, the Hood River to Mosier State Trail, and the reopening of the Mosier Twin Tunnels all were supported by Congress.

Restoration of the Historic Columbia River Highway will include a rebuilt tunnel at Mitchell Point.

Photo: Courtesy Oregon Department of Transportation



Scenic Oneonta Falls lies within the proposed Gorge Ridgeline addition to the Mark Hatfield Wilderness Area.

Photo: Greg Lief, LiefPhotos.com



The Historic Columbia River Highway restoration work that remains is both challenging and exciting, including creating a new Mitchell Tunnel. The eventual goal is full reconnection of the Historic Highway, limiting all restored sections to non-motorized uses.

The recent elevation of Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio (D) to chair the Highways, Transit, and Pipelines Subcommittee gives hope that these final restoration projects on the Historic Columbia River Highway will move forward. Washington Rep. Brian Baird (D) also sits on the Transportation Committee, giving further support to these goals.

Federal Land Acquisition in the Columbia Gorge

Two members of the Washington delegation now sit in the majority on the powerful Senate and House Appropriations Committees, which determine funding for government agencies and their projects. Senator Patty Murray (D) who is now #4 in Senate leadership, should have considerable sway on the Senate Interior Appropriations subcommittee, which determines Forest Service funding, and is chaired by Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA). Congressman Norm Dicks (D) of Tacoma is now chair of the House Interior Appropriations subcommittee. This is great news as both Murray and Dicks have been strong allies for Gorge land acquisition.

Gorge Wilderness Protection

Expect to see more progress securing Wilderness protection for Mount Hood and the Columbia Gorge, and more acreage considered for protection.

Former chair of the House Resources Committee Rep. Richard Pombo (R-CA)

Wilderness advocates anticipate a much more favorable environment for protecting America's last remaining wildlands in the 110th Congress.

is gone. Pombo, who controlled the Wilderness agenda and thwarted most Wilderness proposals, has been replaced by Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV), whose first move was to put "natural" back in the House Natural Resources Committee name. Congressman Rahall is considered an environmentalist and voted pro-environment 92% of the time on key environmental legislation according to the League of Conservation Voters.

On the Senate side, the subcommittee that considers Wilderness bills is chaired by none other than Oregon Senator Ron Wyden (D). We expect to see Mount Hood and Columbia Gorge Wilderness legislation introduced by the time this newsletter is published.

Overall, Wilderness advocates anticipate a much more favorable environment for protecting America's last remaining wildlands in the 110th Congress.

An Off-Reservation Casino in the Columbia Gorge

We don't expect to see big changes here. The final decision maker is Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne, who has shown little support for off-reservation casino development.

Oregon Senator Gordon Smith (R) can be influential in encouraging the Administration to seek an on-reservation alternative. Washington Senator Maria Cantwell (D), who has expressed concerns about the Gorge casino proposal, now sits in the majority on the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, where she will have more influence with the Interior Department regarding off-reservation casino issues.

Congressional politics ebb and flow and Friends of the Columbia Gorge will continue to ensure that protecting the Columbia Gorge never becomes a one-party issue. But with the Congressional shift this year, we expect to see more progress on the issues we are working for in the Columbia Gorge.

Land Trust Securing First Trail Easement

Kate McBride, Land Trust Manager
kate@gorgefriends.org



The Matthisen trail easement will help hikers reach this area where Rowena Dell opens into the Gorge. Photo: Ken Denis

Since the late 1980s, trail advocates have pushed for a trail that would run from the Memaloose Rest Area to Rowena. Nearly two decades of U.S. Forest Service purchases have moved this vision closer to reality. The only remaining obstacle has been a parcel of private property, whose owners are not interested in selling their land.

So what strategy can Friends' land trust pursue to make a connecting trail possible? Answer: Secure a property easement.

Since the late 1980s, trail advocates have pushed for a trail that would run from the Memaloose Rest Area to Rowena.

A property easement allows landowners to maintain ownership, but also to donate or sell certain rights to some or all of their property. In

this case, Friends' land trust staff worked with Mosier-area property owners James and Lisa Matthisen during the past year to determine the best location and appropriate restrictions for their property that would allow creation of the connecting trail.

The result will be a wonderful recreation opportunity east of Memaloose State Park. Our hope is that eventually this will become part of an extensive trail system connecting Oregon State Parks and Forest Service land in the Memaloose area.

Protecting Cape Horn

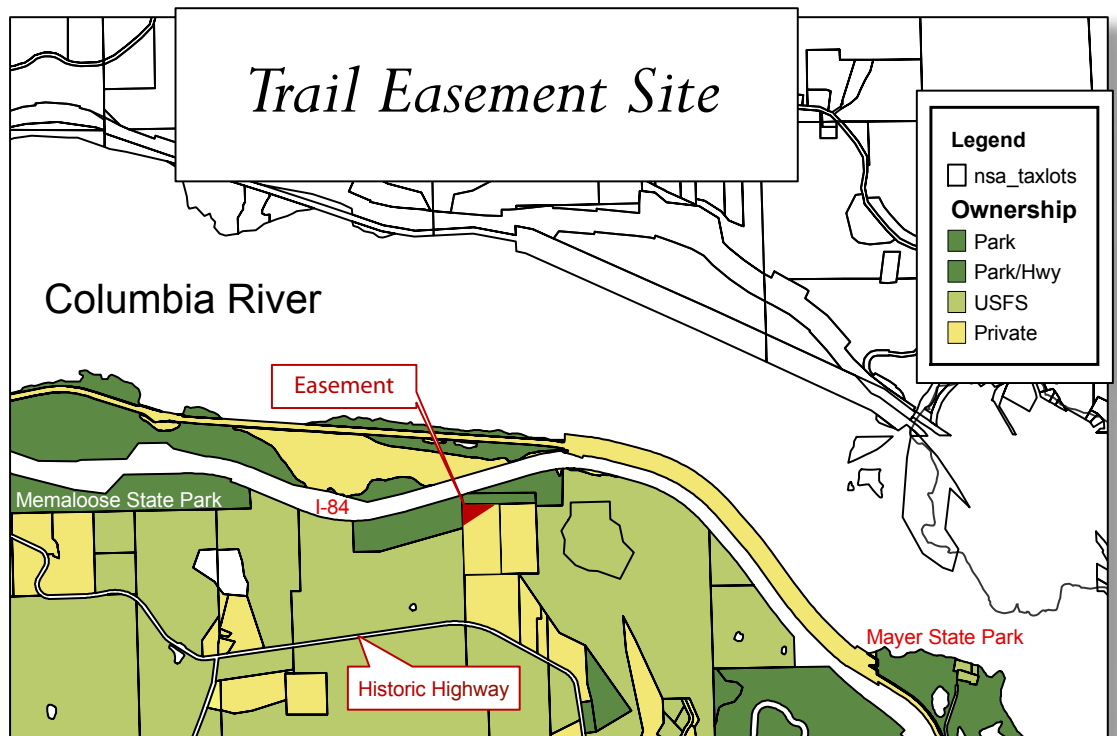
Last summer, Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust submitted a formal acquisition request to the U. S. Forest Service for the Cleveland property and the property has now been placed on the Forest Service's 2008 Congressional funding request list. With a new Congress in session, we are

working with Congressional staffers (see cover story) to secure that funding.

Last fall, to prepare the Cleveland property for sale, the Land Trust held a community-wide work party to remove non-native landscape plants from the property. With the help of Friends staff and an AmeriCorps member, more than 20 volunteers took home many of the non-native plants that would likely be damaged or destroyed when the house is removed. We will continue working to remove non-native landscaping at the Cleveland property this year.

Land Sales/Donations and Conservation Easement Inquiries

If you would like information about conservation easements or possible land donations or sales to Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust, inside or outside the Gorge, contact Kate McBride at (541) 386-5268 or kate@gorgefriends.org.





Many local businesses in Gorge communities appreciate the value of National Scenic Area protections. Photo: Joanie Thompson

Gorge Businesses Celebrate the National Scenic Area and its 20th Anniversary

Peter Cornelison, Field Representative, peter@gorgefriends.org

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area celebrated its 20th anniversary in November, and more and more local businesses recognize the importance of this federal protection to support the economies and way of life of Gorge communities.

Since the National Scenic Area Act passed in 1986, more than \$90-million in federal funding has come to the Gorge, some of it specifically earmarked to support the Gorge economy. The Gorge businesses listed on this page have come forward publicly to support the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area during this anniversary celebration. We encourage you to support these businesses.

Hood River

Alder Creek Kayak & Canoe
All Star Rafting
At Home on Oak St.
Bart's Best Bet Wind & Recreation Radio Report
Big Winds
Cathedral Ridge Winery
Dog River Coffee, LLC
Gorge Surf Shop
Gorge View Bed & Breakfast
Healing-Peace Therapy
Hood River Hotel & Cornerstone Cuisine
Hood River Massage
Ikote
Jane Parker Realtor
Jeff Hunter P.C. Real Estate Broker, Glen Taylor Real Estate
Kris Gann Realtor
Longshadow Photography
McCurdy Farms
Middle Mt. Tax Services Ltd.
Polly's Cakes
Ruddy Duck

Scott Franke Attorney
Storm Warning
Sunburst Orchard
Susan Garrett Crowley Photography
That's Swank
The Kayak Shed
The UPS Store
Windwing

The Dalles

A's Sewing Shoppe
Bliss
Bob Stone Freeway Autocenter
Boulder Path Designs
Cascade Acupuncture Center
Columbia Gorge Discovery Center
Foster, Peachey & Young LLP
Geekster Computers
Gorge Bedquarters
Health Harvest Market
Klindts Booksellers
Pioneer Electric

Mosier

Good River Restaurant

Stevenson/Carson/ No. Bonneville

Big River Grill
Bloomsbury of Kanaka Creek Farm
Bonneville Hot Springs Resort and Spa
Duck Soup Clothing and Gifts
El Rio Mexican Café
River House Art Gallery and Studio
Riverside Lodge
Sandhill Cottages
Stompin-Groundz
The Gorge Gallery
Bingen/White Salmon Autowerx
Bingen Superette
Chips Bar & Grill
Diana's Beauty Salon
Ray Klebba's White Salmon Boat Works
Shakey Ground Tile
Sticks and Stones
Viento

Staff Transitions

By Kevin Gorman, Executive Director

This winter, Friends of the Columbia Gorge bid farewell to three staff members.

After six years with Friends, Outreach Coordinator Betsy Toll is moving into other work, but will continue editing our newsletters and brochures. And Outdoor Programs Coordinator Karen Hardigg is moving to Anchorage, Alaska, where her husband was recently named director of the Alaska Conservation Foundation.

Development Assistant Teckla Anderson is also moving on to explore new opportunities after nearly four years with Friends.

We thank Betsy, Karen, and Teckla for their outstanding work for Friends and wish them well in their new endeavors.

Spring will bring new faces onto our team, so be sure to check our upcoming newsletter.

Casino Study to be Released in Late February

Preliminary report contained fatal legal flaws

Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org

The Department of Interior has announced plans to release its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on the Gorge casino proposal in late February. Federal law then requires a 45-day period for public comment and a public hearing.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge and other casino opponents continue to challenge the inadequacy of the environmental review and the failure of the proposal to comply with federal legal requirements. In response to issues raised by Friends, the Department of Interior expanded the scope of the environmental review and required detailed analysis of at least one on-reservation alternative. While this was a step in the right direction,

there are still fatal legal flaws in the environmental review.

Casino proponents were incensed over the decision by Interior to expand the scope of the environmental review; they have continued to lobby the agency to weaken environmental review of proposal. They appear to claim that the agency can only analyze environmental issues and alternatives that the Warm Springs Tribes approve and that will support their desired outcome: a huge casino resort complex in the Columbia River Gorge. The Warm Springs Tribes hired the law firm of Holland and Hart, whose clients include mining, gas and oil companies, to advance their arguments in Washington D.C.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge and other casino opponents continue to challenge the inadequacy of the environmental review and the failure of the proposal to comply with federal legal requirements.



“Casino fever” is already spurring speculative housing development in Cascade Locks. Photo: Peter Cornelison

The Gorge casino proposal is bad public policy. Beyond the massive casino itself, this project would jeopardize the future of the Columbia River Gorge by paving the way for greatly increased growth, traffic, and sprawl. Expanded development pressure would threaten wildlife habitat and the natural and scenic resources of the Gorge.

If casino supporters are successful in their effort, the integrity of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) would be seriously compromised, the Columbia Gorge could be devastated by casino development, and a terrible precedent would be set that endangers public land and resources across the country.

You can help!

Write a letter to Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne today and send a copy to your member of Congress opposing a Gorge casino.

See our Action Alert on page 2.

Casino proponents are pushing to build a sprawling 603,000-square-foot casino complex along the Columbia River in Cascade Locks.



Photo: Kelley Beamer

A new Gorge and Mount Hood wilderness bill expected early this year

With Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) now chairing the Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, Friends expects introduction and swift passage of a Columbia River Gorge and Mount Hood wilderness bill early in the 110th Congress. With support from Senator Gordon Smith, the bill should have very few obstacles in passing the Senate.

In the House of Representatives, Congressman Earl Blumenauer is expected to redouble efforts to pass a Gorge and Mount Hood wilderness bill with continued bipartisan support from Congressman Greg Walden and other members of the Oregon delegation. Due to the November defeat of Congressman Richard Pombo (R-CA), former chair of the House Resources Committee, Oregon's delegation will no longer be forced to negotiate an Oregon wilderness bill with an anti-environmental congressman hostile to wilderness protection and public resource protection. The result should be a more expansive bill that includes more land suitable for protection under the Wilderness Act.

Broughton Landing resort proposal meets concern and opposition

The Gorge Commission staff is developing amendments to the Gorge-wide Management Plan that would allow Broughton Lumber Company to build a huge recreation resort two miles east of White Salmon along the Columbia River at the site of their old lumber mill.

In January, the Commission staff presented an outline of its proposal to the



Broughton Lumber Company is proposing a 260-unit destination resort on this site in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Photo: Aubrey Russell

Gorge Commission and accepted public comments. Many Gorge residents spoke out against the proposed destination resort and encouraged the Gorge Commission to focus on protecting and enhancing the scenic beauty, and natural and cultural heritage of the Gorge. Several speakers were concerned that the resort would overrun the adjacent windsurfing sites.

This Management Plan amendment is driven by Broughton Lumber Company's request for a private, 260-unit residential destination resort with lodges, restaurants, and commercial shopping adjacent to thousands of acres of sensitive habitat and a world-famous windsurfing site. The proposed urban-scale development is inconsistent with the National Scenic Area Act's requirements that large-scale development be sited within existing urban areas.

The Gorge Commission's primary responsibility is to protect and enhance the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources of the National Scenic Area. Unfortunately

the Commission is not performing this duty. For example, though the Commission is required to protect the Gorge from cumulative adverse impacts, it has never established a program to assess the cumulative impacts of development that threaten sensitive Gorge resources.

The Commission should not use its limited funds to expand development in the Gorge, while violating the National Scenic Area Act by failing to protect the Gorge from adverse impacts to scenic, natural, cultural and recreation resources. The Commission must concentrate on its mandatory duties, such as updating salmon habitat protections, improving rules to protect scenic landscapes, and adopting a system to monitor the cumulative effects of development.

Friends and Gorge landowners have sued the Gorge Commission over its failure to protect scenic landscapes and fish and wildlife habitat from the steady onslaught of development. The lawsuit is currently pending before the Oregon Court of Appeals.

Cape Horn Campaign Hits \$2 Million Mark



Jane Harris, Development Director
jane@gorgefriends.org

Gifts large and small have come in for the Campaign for Cape Horn since last summer, bringing our total to date to just over \$2 million. Cape Horn supporter Al Jubitz has designated a \$100,000 gift to the project, and Brot and Mary Bishop recently contributed \$50,000 to support the effort.

The \$4-million Cape Horn project includes purchase of two properties with incomparable views on the top of Cape Horn totaling more than 40 acres. A modest viewpoint honoring Nancy and Bruce Russell is planned, and an eight-mile loop trail will be the final component completing Nancy Russell's vision for a thousand-acre public park.

A brochure on the project is available online at www.gorgefriends.org/land/landtrust/index_html or by calling our office at (503) 241-3762.

The Campaign for Cape Horn will help open new recreation opportunities along the Cape Horn Trail.

Photo: Dan Huntington

New Tax Incentive for IRA Gifts

There is good news from the IRS for Gorge supporters who want to make a charitable gift during their lifetime from their retirement assets.

Under a recent change in tax law, set to expire at the end of 2007, donors aged 70 ½ or older can now make cash gifts up to \$100,000 from their IRA without incurring income tax on the withdrawal.

The provision, H.R. 4 the Pension Protection Act of 2006, allows qualified charitable distributions to be excluded from gross income for Federal Income tax purposes. However, no federal income tax deduction is available. Only outright gifts are eligible. Gifts from retirement accounts other than IRA's such as 401k, 403b, and SEP accounts are not eligible.

For more information on how to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to support the Gorge and save on your taxes please call Jane Harris at (503) 241-3762 x102.

50th Anniversary of the Flooding of Celilo Falls Remembered for Annual Meeting

Writer and farmer George Rohrbacher will be the keynote speaker at Friends of the Columbia Gorge's 27th Annual Meeting, discussing the final days before Celilo Falls was dammed in March 1957. The damming of Celilo is a central theme in his upcoming novel and George writes eloquently about that historic event, which profoundly affected Columbia River tribes, Gorge communities, salmon, and the agricultural economy of the region. The impacts of the flooding of Celilo Falls still reverberate today.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 15th at the Discovery Center in The Dalles from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for a wonderful luncheon with an engaging speaker.

Pre-registration is required; the cost is \$20. Invitations and details will be mailed to our members in mid-March.

Celilo Falls circa 1907.

Photo: ©Oregon Historical Society OrHi67073



Special Gifts

October 20, 2006 - January 19, 2007

IN HONOR OF MIKE STAHLMAN
GILLIAN BUTLER

IN HONOR OF NANCY RUSSELL
WILLIAM AND CORNELIA STEVENS
HENRY AND GEREL BLAUER
SUSAN W. AND JEFF GRAYSON
MARNA AND CLIFF MOORE
NICHOLAS AND KATHRYN DODGE

IN HONOR OF RAFAEL BOBENRIETH
MARVIN AND JOYCE KATZ

IN HONOR OF TATE RIVER HIXSON
MICHELLE GOGUEN

IN MEMORY OF ED ROBERTSON
PHYLLIS AND VICTOR CLAUSEN

IN MEMORY OF LAURENCE SCHRAMM
NANCY SCHRAMM

IN MEMORY OF LOIS ROBERTS
KATHY AND JONG YEE

IN MEMORY OF MARLA JEAN PUTNEY
ED AND MARY VRANIZAN

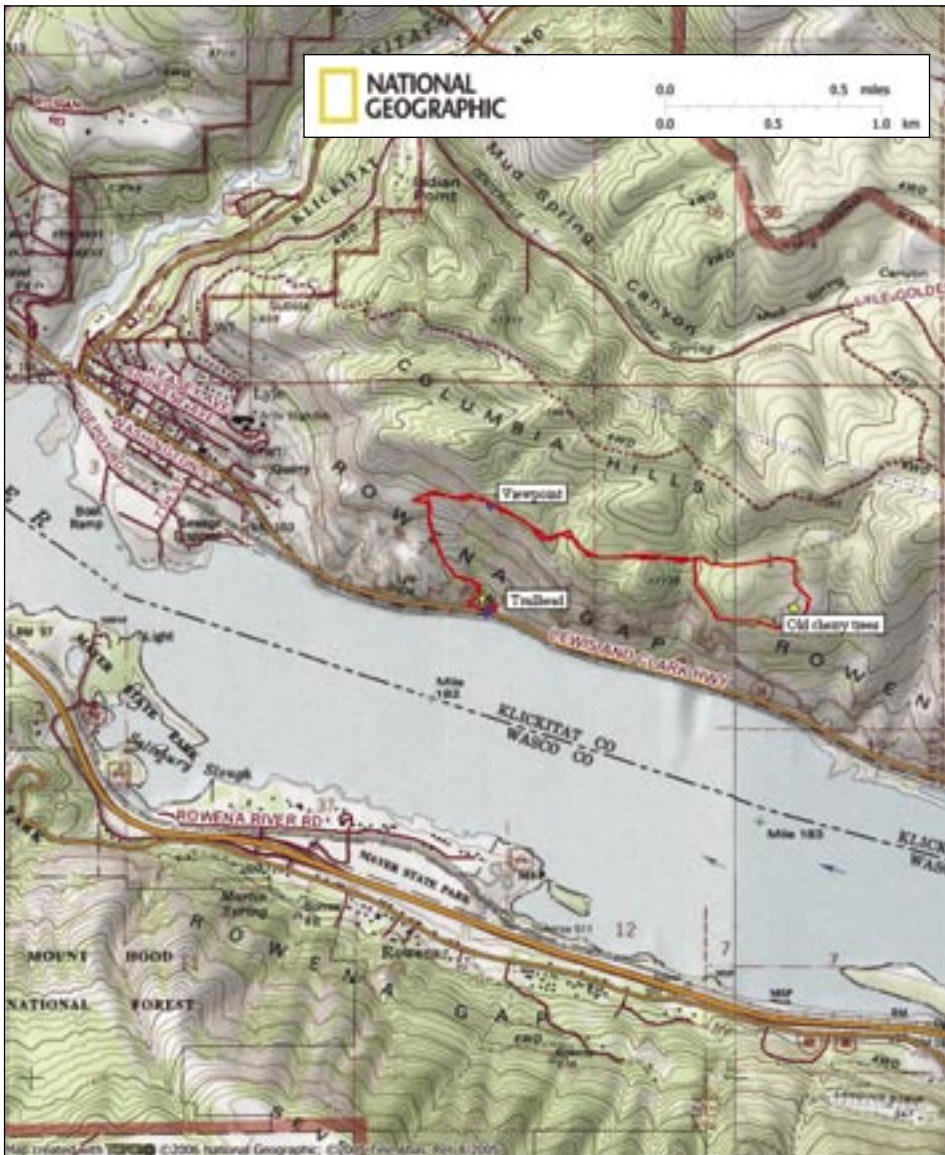
IN MEMORY OF SHEP WILSON
RUSSELL AND ELENORE MCJURY
ANNE PAGENSTECHER
FRANCES W. LLOYD
MS. JANE R. KENDALL
KELLEY AND GREG WENTWORTH
VIRGINIA AND JOHN RYAN
SUSAN AND PHILIPPE BODIN

IN MEMORY OF ELSIE HAMBIDGE
CRAIG REDFERN AND WENDY HAMBIDGE REDFERN

IN MEMORY OF ANITA EIKREM
ELIZABETH RICHARD

Prairie stars blooming east of Wind Mountain.

Photo: Adam Schneider, AdamSchneider.net/photos/



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Featured Hike: *Lyle Cherry Orchard*

Distance: 6 miles with 1400-ft elevation gain

Our spring hiking season begins in mid-March, but a February hike at Lyle Cherry Orchard is a great option for a late-winter excursion.

Climbing the slopes just east of Lyle, this sunny trail leads through wildflowers to stunning views of the Columbia River, dramatic basalt cliffs, and Cascade peaks. Over a period of years, Friends founder Nancy Russell purchased this 400-acre area and created the trail which is open to the public.

At the eastern edge of the hike lies a long-abandoned orchard. For a shorter hike, climb the first steep mile to a wide plateau and enjoy a picnic lunch and views on the bluff above the cliffs. The full route gradually leads along the area's basalt rim. Be mindful of poison oak and

some exposure. The topographic map above can be downloaded from our website at www.gorgefriends.org/hikes/topomaps/, and maps of many more hikes will be available there soon.

The eastern Gorge is beautiful in spring, and the wildflowers bloom there first. You can head out to the trail with a friend, or check our spring hiking brochure and join us March 17 for the Lyle Cherry Orchard hike.

Directions: From the Portland area, take I-84 East to Exit 64 Hood River and cross the Hood River Bridge. Turn right on WA SR-14 and drive east for 12 miles, past Lyle and then two tunnels. Just past the second tunnel look for the gravel parking pullout on the left.



Know Your Gorge *The rarest of rare*

What do you get when you take dramatic variances of elevation and precipitation, place them in a confined stretch of land, and throw in massive geologic disturbances to mix things up? Answer: The botanical bonanza we find in the Columbia Gorge.

Within its stunning landscapes of majestic cliffs, sweeping hillsides, and diverse ecosystems, the Gorge is home to more than 800 flowering plant species, including 15 *endemic* wildflowers, species found no where else on Earth.

Ardent wildflower enthusiasts are known to travel long distances to view a single endemic, but Gorge enthusiasts needn't look far. Upper Elowah Falls at the top of the McCord Creek trail between Portland and Hood River boasts five rare Columbia Gorge endemics that join the wildflower show to brighten the trail along the upper cliff face.

Early May is prime time to catch the bloom at McCord Creek. To enjoy this moderate two-mile hike, take I-84 east to the Ainsworth Exit. Continue east on the frontage road parallel to I-84 to the John Yeon State Park parking lot, then follow the trail up to cliff face.



These endemic Columbia Gorge wildflowers can be found on the McCord Creek trail to Upper Elowah Falls:

- 1) *Howell's Daisy*
- 2) *Columbia Kittenails*
- 3) *Long-Beard Hawkweed*
- 4) *Smooth Douglasia*
- 5) *Columbia Gorge Daisy.*

Photos: Angie Moore



Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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