

# FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

Fall 2000 Newsletter



## Is the Gorge Safe From Sprawl?

### *Lax enforcement and weak rules jeopardize Scenic Areas*

by Michael Lang

Since the passage of the National Scenic Area Act the Portland/Vancouver metro region has experienced unprecedented population growth. However, driving east from Portland or Vancouver toward the Columbia River Gorge, through miles of subdivisions and strip development, one

crosses the National Scenic Area Boundary and becomes awestruck by the instantaneous transition from an urban to a rural setting. If not for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act (Act), the scenic beauty and natural heritage that is so important to the quality of life for the region's residents would have been destroyed. But how long will the Gorge be safe from sprawl?

Despite slowing sprawl at the gates of the Gorge, rural development has continued in the

Scenic Area at a steady pace. Since the passage of the Act in 1986 more than 600 new dwellings have been built outside of the urban areas of the National Scenic Area — and the Act's current Management Plan allows for building many more houses.

The Act requires that the scenic beauty and natural and cultural heritage of the Gorge be protected from adverse effects of development. Since the Act requires that farm and forest land be protected from conversion to residential or commercial use, development is limited or prohibited on farm land, forest land and open space areas. The questions are: are the rules being implemented and enforced and are the rules strong enough?

### **Gorge Studies Reveal Problems**

The Gorge Commission and the Forest Service are attempting to provide answers to these questions by preparing a series of monitoring reports. According to the Gorge Commission's Growth Report of 1998, one-third of the 557 dwellings built since the National Scenic Area was established are on land zoned for agriculture or forest uses. In a recently released *Draft Agriculture* (continued on page 3)

*Above: Despite the National Scenic Area Act, view houses continue to be built in apparent violation of scenic laws.*

*photo: Kevin Gorman*

protecting the Gorge

INSIDE

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**Special holiday  
gift idea insert**

# Executive Director's Letter

Twenty years ago, John Yeon, whose father built the Historic Columbia River Highway, recognized the impending need for protecting the Columbia River Gorge from the looming sprawl of Portland and Vancouver. What was needed was a citizens' group to call for permanent protection. What was needed was a leader to help raise money, awareness and political pressure. John then found his leader: a mother of four who was passionate about the Gorge but had no fundraising or political experience. That leader was Nancy Russell, and the wisdom of his choice has now been recognized nationally.

This past September, Nancy was honored by the Oregon High Desert Museum with its Donald M. Kerr Conservationist Award. It is the most cherished award issued by the Museum and with it came a \$5,000 award that Nancy donated to our organization. In October, the National Land Trust Alliance named her its national Conservationist of the Year, and with that came a \$50,000 award. It is the nation's largest conservation award given for volunteer grassroots efforts.

Nancy would be quick to say that these awards are not hers alone, which is a sign of her great leadership. She has worked hard to bring dedicated individuals to the board and staff and has made our organization much stronger than any one person. That is perhaps her greatest contribution to Gorge protection.

Nancy is unlike anyone I know or likely will ever know. She is unwavering in her diligent pursuit of Gorge protection and recreational opportunities. One example was a four-acre parcel she bought on the Klickitat River. A swimming and fishing hole for years, Nancy kept it open to the public after purchasing it. She would go the site every few weeks, pull garbage bags out of her trunk and clean up everyone's litter. While most landowners would gate off the land or put up "No Trespassing" signs, that never occurred to Nancy. She believed the land should be a public park and these were the minor inconveniences on the way toward ensuring that end. Nancy later sold the land to the Forest Service for the same price she bought it, incurring the property taxes

Above: Nancy Russell receives the Donald M. Kerr Conservationist Award from Forrest Rodgers, acting director of the Oregon High Desert Museum. photo: Ken Denis

and transaction fees as losses that were again simply minor inconveniences.

We will probably never see a park in the Gorge named for Nancy Russell. Those honors usually don't go to the advocates, but rather the final deal brokers and politicians. That's fine with Nancy. As she has told me many times, it is amazing what you can get done when you're not concerned about who gets the credit. She's right, but it's nice to see some credit coming her way.

Sincerely,



Kevin Gorman  
Executive Director

## 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

# Is the Gorge Safe from Sprawl?

(continued from page 1)

and Forest Land Report, the Commission staff found that, in most cases, counties are approving development on farm and forest land without properly applying rules meant to protect these lands from sprawling development.

For example, in only one out of seven cases studied were rules properly applied regarding non-farm dwellings in agricultural zones. Further, not one of the 29 decisions approving dwellings in small-scale agricultural zones properly applied the approval criteria. In only half of the decisions did the reviewing agency properly determine whether the lots were legal to begin with.

In the *Draft Scenic Resource Monitoring Report* issued this summer, an interagency team found that nearly 50% of new development failed to comply with scenic protection measures and one of four developments were prominent features in a landscape. These reports reveal that poor implementation and enforcement, along with a weak Management Plan, may be undercutting the intent of the National Scenic Area Act, eroding the scenic beauty of the Gorge and allowing farm and forest land to be converted to residential uses.

If the implementing agencies, in particular the counties, fail to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the Gorge Act, the future of the Gorge is in jeopardy. There are no better examples of this than Skamania County's approval of the Bea House and the 5,600 square foot house currently under construction in a very visible location in east Clark County.

Only with careful implementation and enforcement can the intent of the National Scenic Area Act be fulfilled with the current Management Plan. Even if the plan is strengthened during the upcoming review and revision process, it is of little value if its provisions are not enforced.



*The wall against sprawl: The Sandy River buffers the National Scenic Area from Troutdale.*

photo by Bergman Photographic Services

## The Gorge Commission needs to hear from you!

Write to the Gorge Commission today! Tell them that you support:

- Working closely with the counties to ensure that the Gorge is protected;
- Revising the Management Plan to better provide long-term protection;
- Increasing funding so that the public is better served and this natural and scenic treasure is preserved for

our children and future generations.

Columbia River  
Gorge Commission  
P.O. Box 730  
White Salmon, WA 98672  
crgc@gorge.net

Send copies to your legislators. They are responsible for approving funding for the Commission. ■



## Conservation and Legal Program Highlights

# In the courts and in the field...

by Beth Englander, Staff Attorney

### Ross Island Sand & Gravel

**F**riends of the Columbia Gorge, Gorge Audubon Society and Audubon Society of Portland are challenging Klickitat County's decision allowing Ross Island Sand and Gravel to avoid full environmental review for its proposed 500-acre rock quarry in Dallesport, Washington. The challenge will take place December 13th before the Klickitat County Planning Commission; the three organizations will testify that RIS&G should prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in order to consider the cumulative impacts of the quarry in conjunction with other existing and proposed mines in the Dallesport area. Friends is

concerned about potential impacts to important natural, scenic and cultural resources in the area, such as habitat for the Long-billed Curlew, a sensitive bird species, Spearfish Lake, and the Columbia River. ■

### Another view house

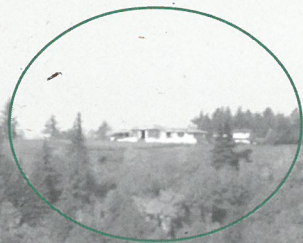
**A** new, very visible house in Clark County is yet another example of local planning departments permitting illegal development in the Scenic Area. Friends had appealed Clark County's original decision permitting this house across from Crown Point; the original decision allowed a 10,500 square foot house with no additional screening vegetation

and did not require removing another house that already exists on the property. Due to our appeal, Clark County issued another decision reducing the permitted size of the house by almost 50%, requiring adding 20 new screening trees, and requiring the removal of the existing house on the parcel (also very visible from Crown Point and other Key Viewing Areas.)

Because the new decision claimed that the house would be screened and would be visually subordinate to the landscape Friends did not appeal the second decision. However, the new house (now under construction) appears to be inconsistent with the criteria in the second decision. The Executive Director of the Gorge Commission has requested that the County make arrangements to ensure that the house will be screened and visually subordinate, as promised — and as required by law. ■

### Bea Update

**T**he Washington Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments in the Bea case on November 30th. The Court recently rejected the Beas' attempt to submit current photos of their newly painted house into evidence. The Beas tried to get the photos into evidence in an attempt to claim that the paint job masks the 4,000+ square foot home perched on a highly visible bluff, when in fact the size, style and location of the house violate the National Scenic Area Act — paint job or no paint job. ■



*This partially built house across from Vista House is raising concerns. Friends is pushing Clark County to ensure the house is screened. photo: Kevin Gorman*

# Columbia River Gorge Vision 2000 Campaign Update

*\$500,000 goes to Moser to protect and enhance the waterfront*

by Tiffany Newton, Field Organizer

**O**n October 11th Vision coalition members and the dedicated volunteers of Mosier received a wonderful surprise when President Clinton signed an Interior Appropriations bill that included \$500,000 for the Mosier Waterfront project. In earlier reports regarding this appropriations cycle, the Vision coalition campaign had been advised that there would not be any funding for Gorge recreation projects.

In addition to Mosier Waterfront Park, there were three other proposed recreation projects presented for consideration for congressional funding via the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act. Viento and West Mayer State Parks and the Spring Creek Hatchery remain priorities for congressional funding, and the Vision 2000 coalition will again partner with the Columbia Gorge Recreation Coalition to seek congressional funding in the next appropriations cycle for these three proposed recreation projects.

after deciding to focus some of its efforts in Mosier. For many years the Mosier community has been working together on projects to enhance the community as a whole, and the Mosier Waterfront Park is just one of these projects.

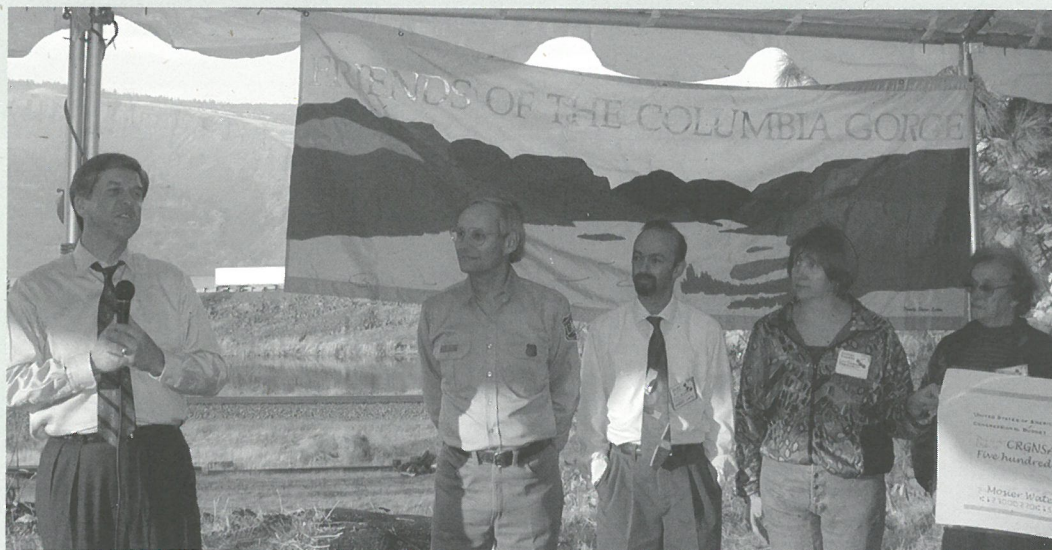
The proposal for the four recreation sites targeted by the coalition was unanimously approved by the Columbia River Gorge Commission for funding under the Scenic Act, which authorizes \$10 million "... for the purpose of construction of recreation facilities..."

For the past few months coalition members have been meeting with congressional staffers, seeking support for the authorization of funds for the projects. In a continued effort to gather support, a tour of the four proposed recreation sites is planned with congressional and Forest Service staff.

For information regarding writing letters supporting the proposed Gorge recreation sites please contact Field Organizer

Tiffany Newton at (541) 386-5268 or [tiffany@gorgefriends.org](mailto:tiffany@gorgefriends.org).

*Columbia River Gorge Vision 2000 is a coalition of concerned individuals, organizations and businesses, from both within and outside of the Gorge, who came together to take action on behalf of one of our greatest natural treasures – the Columbia River Gorge.*

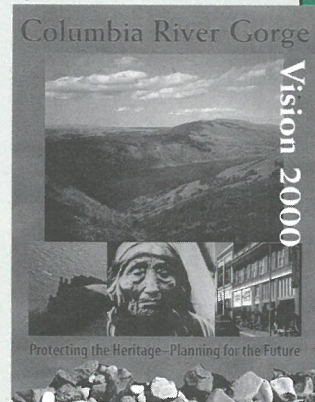


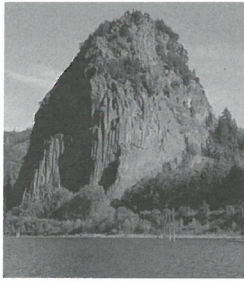
*Senator Gordon Smith (l) presents Mosier with \$500,000 and praises the community, Friends and others for working together to support Mosier and the National Scenic Area Act. To the right of Senator Smith is Jurgen Hess, acting manager for the National Scenic Area, Brian Litt of the Gorge Commission and Mosier City Council members Andrea Rogers and Iva Harmon. photo: Kevin Gorman*

"This is our fourth year in the process of seeking federal funding for our proposed set of recreation improvements," said Gay Jervey, the City of Mosier representative. "Funding for the Mosier Waterfront project is a step toward completing one of four targeted recreation sites — sites that will provide much improved access to the Columbia River."

The Columbia Gorge Recreation Coalition was formed to further the mandate of the Scenic Act to protect and enhance recreational access to the Columbia River. The coalition encompasses several entities, including Oregon State Parks, Washington State Parks, Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Mosier.

The Vision 2000 Campaign became involved with the Recreation Coalition





## Funding Gorge Protection

# Development Director's Report

by Jane Haley

### Nancy Russell Honored at Conservator Event

The Barde mansion, home of Brad and Nancy Miller, was the site for this year's major donor event. More than 70 of Friends' major donors gathered to celebrate accomplishments, discuss upcoming challenges and receive our sincerest thanks for their ongoing support. Major donors are members who make an annual gift of \$1,000 and up. More than 20% of our annual operating budget of \$530,000 will come from these major donors this year.

Friends' founder Nancy Russell was honored during the party with the Donald M. Kerr Conservationist Award (see page 2) by the High Desert Museum in Bend. Acting Museum Director Forrest Rodgers presented the award.

Russell received the award for her efforts to save the Gorge from

urban sprawl, clear-cutting and gravel mining.

"This is really quite an honor," Russell remarked. "I have

always loved landscapes and the Gorge is a treasure of national caliber that must be protected." To aid in that work, Russell donated the cash award to the organization she founded 20 years ago. ■



Hosts Brad and Nancy Miller welcome Margetta Denison to their home.

photo: Ken Denis

## The Spirit of Giving



The end of the year is a very important time in the fundraising department as many of our donors do their annual giving at this time. We would like to remind all our members that over half our annual budget comes from individuals — and our need has never been greater.

Committed to building support for Gorge protection, Friends has expanded the staff and opened an office in Hood River. These efforts, coupled with the Bea case, have increased our operating budget, making it necessary for us to draw upon our reserves. So, at the end of the year we would like to ask all our members to consider making an extra gift to Friends. Gifts of appreciated assets such as stocks are a good way to save money on your taxes while aiding our work to preserve the Gorge for generations to come.

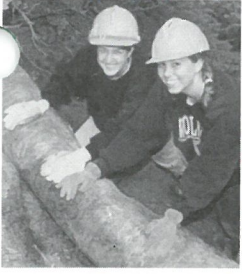
We also want to remind our members that a year-end gift to the endowment is a gift that will remain forever, continually giving back to the Gorge. Members can make contributions by using the enclosed envelope or through donating online at [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org). For information on making a stock gift or a planned gift please call our Development Director, Jane Haley, at 503-241-3762 x102. ■

**Thank you for your support.  
Please use the attached envelope for your gift.**

Board member Chris Beck (l) chats with Dave and Lynn Templeton.

photo: Tiffany Newton





## Citizen Involvement Update

# Friends Outreach & Volunteer Happenings

by Becky Douglas, Volunteer Coordinator

### Friends' Speakers Bureau Reaches Out

What do the Salmon Festival, Washington County Public Affairs Forum, and the Arnada Neighborhood Association have in common? They all learned about Friends of the Columbia Gorge through presentations by members of Friends' Speakers Bureau. Our Speakers Bureau provides groups with a special opportunity to learn about Gorge issues, events, and history. The presentation consists of a dynamic 20-minute slide show supplemented with information about Friends of the Columbia Gorge, the challenges facing the Gorge today, the Columbia River Gorge Vision 2000 campaign, and how people can help to preserve this natural wonder.

We are geared up for another successful year and can use your help as a speaker or host. This is a great opportunity to truly help us get the word out about the Gorge, what a treasure it is, and how the need for Gorge protection is

constant. For more information about how to join Friends' Speakers Bureau or arranging a presentation for your group, please call or email [info@gorgefriends.org](mailto:info@gorgefriends.org). ■

### Volunteer Coordinator Transition

After a year of dedicated efforts managing Friends' Speakers Bureau, coordinating volunteer activities such as litter pick ups and trail work, and maintaining a committed volunteer base, Volunteer Coordinator Becky Douglas has moved on from Friends in pursuit of new opportunities and challenges.

Friends has hired Betsy Toll as our new volunteer coordinator. Betsy has served as volunteer coordinator for the Environmental Federation of Oregon, a workplace giving organization supporting Friends and others.

Friends, staff and board are grateful to Becky for her hard work, and look forward to working with Betsy. ■



Hikers take in the view in the waning days of sunshine.

photo: Ken Denis

## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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



Environmental Federation of Oregon

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

Gorge Field Office  
416 Oak Street  
Hood River, OR 97031  
(541) 386-5268

### Board of Directors

John Reynolds, *Chair*  
Kim Gilmer, *Vice Chair*  
Nancy N. Russell, *Chair Emerita*  
Rick Ray\*, *Treasurer*  
Ken Denis, *Secretary*  
Lester Baskin  
Chris Beck  
William Bell\*  
Broughton H. Bishop  
Bowen Blair, Jr.  
North Cheatham\*  
Spencer Dick (on leave)  
Karen Johnson  
Elmer Lierman\* (on leave)  
Guy Moser\*  
Jeanne Norton  
Missy Ryan\*  
Dick Springer  
Len Swenson\*  
Ann Wheelock

### Staff

Beth Englander, *Staff Attorney*  
Michele Fuchs, *Development Assistant*  
Kevin Gorman, *Executive Director*  
Jane Haley, *Development Director*  
Michael Lang, *Conservation Director*  
Aaron Matusick, *Intern*  
Laurie Meyer, *Legal Volunteer*  
Tiffany Newton\*, *Field Organizer*  
Kymberlee Snow, *Systems Administrator*  
Betsy Toll, *Volunteer Coordinator*  
\* Gorge residents

### Additional Support

*Legal Counsel:* Gary Kahn  
*Newsletter Editor:* Kathryn Armstrong  
*Newsletter Design:* Kathleen Krushas

# Thank You for your special contributions

IN MEMORY OF RUTH BABSON  
DICK AND DELIGHT LEONARD

IN MEMORY OF HELEN EHELEBE  
RICHARD EHELEBE

## Endowment Gifts

JAMES W. GAMWELL  
\$100

CHARLES AND DARLENE HAMAR  
\$40

ROBERT H. AND LIBBY NOYES  
\$1,000

PHYLLIS AND VICTOR CLAUSEN  
\$4,000

DON AND EMILEE FRISBEE  
\$10,000

## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

P.O. Box 40820  
Portland, Oregon 97240-0820

*Return service requested*

Non Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Portland, OR  
Permit No. 2623

## Know Your Gorge The Saint Cloud Trail is Historic and User-friendly

The Saint Cloud Nature Trail is a wheelchair accessible trail that borders the Columbia River on the Washington side of the National Scenic Area. You can visit this history-rich trail year round for a short stroll; it's also a great place for a picnic.

In the 20th century the land was settled by Paul and Florence Vial, who named the home on the site The Saint Cloud Ranch after the suburb of Paris where they honeymooned.

The half-mile loop-trail takes you on a tour of riverfront property. The Saint Cloud Trail begins at the west end of the parking lot and travels counterclockwise past some apple trees. The trail then rambles along undeveloped beach and marsh areas, curving back toward the starting point.

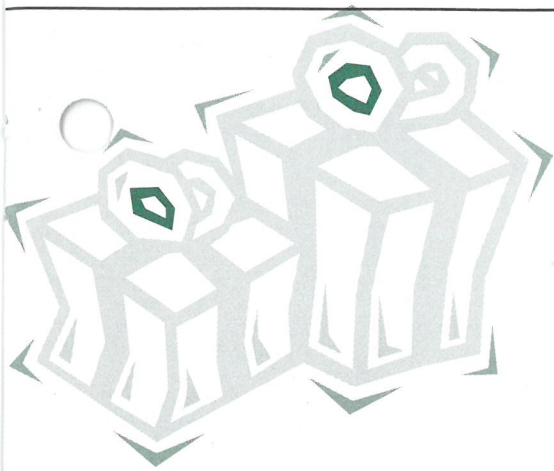
To get there: take SR 14 in Washington west-bound to mile post 30.1 and go south across the rail tracks to the Saint Cloud Recreation Area. ■

*St. Cloud Recreation Area offers one of the few public riverfront beaches in the western Washington Gorge.*

*photo: Kevin Gorman*







# Give the Gift of the Gorge this Holiday Season.

Merchandise inspired by the beautiful Columbia River Gorge makes great gifts — for friends, family and yourself! — while supporting the Gorge protection work of Friends of the Columbia Gorge.

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Show your support for Friends and look great in this design based on an ancient petroglyph created by some of the first Gorge inhabitants. Our “Water Spirit” design is available in a long sleeve sweatshirt or short sleeve semi-collared neck T-Shirt. Both are sage green and come in sizes M-XL. The back of both are blank.



**Petroglyph Sweatshirt: \$30**  
**Petroglyph T-Shirt: \$18**



Our unbleached cotton polo shirt also takes its design from some of the first Gorge dwellers. The shirt is blank on the back and is available in sizes M-XL. It is also available as an unbleached cotton T-Shirt without the polo-style collar.

**Sheep Polo Shirt: \$30**  
**Sheep T-Shirt: \$12**

Great for protecting you from the elements as you play in the Gorge, our Kakhi ball cap also carries the stylized goats based on ancient petroglyphs you'll find on our polo and regular T-Shirts. The cap is fully adjustable for the perfect fit.

**Ball Cap: \$16**

# Give the Gift of the Gorge

Known for its spectacular wildflower displays, the Gorge is home to hundreds of species. We've picked two of our staff's favorites to display front and center on our wildflower T-Shirts.

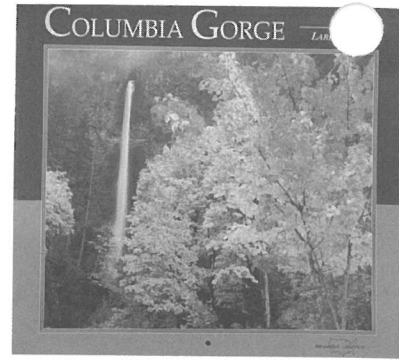
The shirts are blank on the back and are available in butter yellow and white, sizes M-XL. Please specify color when ordering.  
Wildflower T-Shirt: \$20



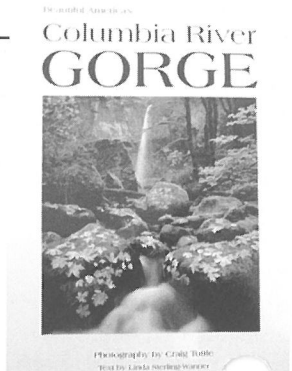
A classic Gorge view is captured on these T-Shirts. The design is centered on the front of the shirt with a blank back. Sizes M-XL area available on a blue background.  
Gorge View T-Shirt: \$20



Enjoy the spectacular beauty of Gorge every day with this 2001 calendar of photographs taken in the Gorge by photographer Larry Geddis and published by Beautiful America.  
2001 Calendar: \$12



Also published by Beautiful America, enjoy this Gorgeous little softbound coffee table book with photos by Craig Tuttle and text by Linda Sterling-Wanner. The book is 76 pages long and filled with stunning photographs and text offering a "tour" of the Gorge. Contains lots of information to feed the hungry mind as well as please the eye.  
Columbia River Gorge Book: \$13



For a gift that always fits, consider a gift membership to Friends of the Columbia Gorge! Use the order form and submit in the envelope provided. Happy Holidays!

# ORDER FORM

ITEMS	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Petroglyph Sweatshirt: \$30 sage green, sizes M-L-XL		\$
Petroglyph T-Shirt: \$18 sage green, sizes M-L-XL		\$
Sheep Petroglyph Polo Shirt: \$30 unbleached cotton M-L-XL		\$
Sheep Petroglyph T-Shirt: \$12 unbleached cotton M-L-XL		\$
Petroglyph Ball Cap: \$16		\$
Wildflower T-Shirt: \$20 <input type="checkbox"/> butter yellow or <input type="checkbox"/> white, sizes M-L-XL		\$
Gorge View T-Shirt: \$20 blue background, sizes M-L-XL		\$
2001 Calendar: \$12		\$
Gorge Book: \$13		\$
Friends of Gorge Gift Membership* <i>please fill out address form on opposite side</i> <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100		\$
Please add \$2 per item for shipping & handling		\$

TOTAL

NAME

MAILING ADDRESS

DAYTIME PHONE

*Please make checks payable to the Friends of the Columbia Gorge and submit your order form, with payment in the envelope provided. Don't forget to specify sizes. Thanks!*

# Give the Gift o

Known for its spectacular wildflower displays, the Gorge is home to hundreds of species. We've picked two of our staff's favorites to display front and center on our wildflower T-Shirts.

The shirts are blank on the back and are available in butter yellow and white, sizes M-XL. Please specify color when ordering.  
Wildflower T-Shirt: \$20



A classic Gorge view is captured on these T-Shirts. The design is centered on the front of the shirt with a blank back.

Sizes M-XL area available on a blue background.  
Gorge View T-Shirt: \$20



Please mail in the enclosed envelope to:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge  
522 SW Fifth Avenue, #820  
Portland, Oregon 97204

Questions? Call us at (503) 241-3762  
For color photos log onto our website at  
[www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org)  
click on "Gorge Friends"  
and then "Gorge Store"

Friends of Gorge Gift Membership

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