

# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

*Protecting the Gorge Since 1980*

*Summer 2014 Newsletter*



## *Inside:*

Creating a Legacy  
*Pages 3 and 10*



Oil on Rails  
*Page 4*



Land Donations  
*Page 8*

# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

FOUNDER NANCY RUSSELL, 1932-2008

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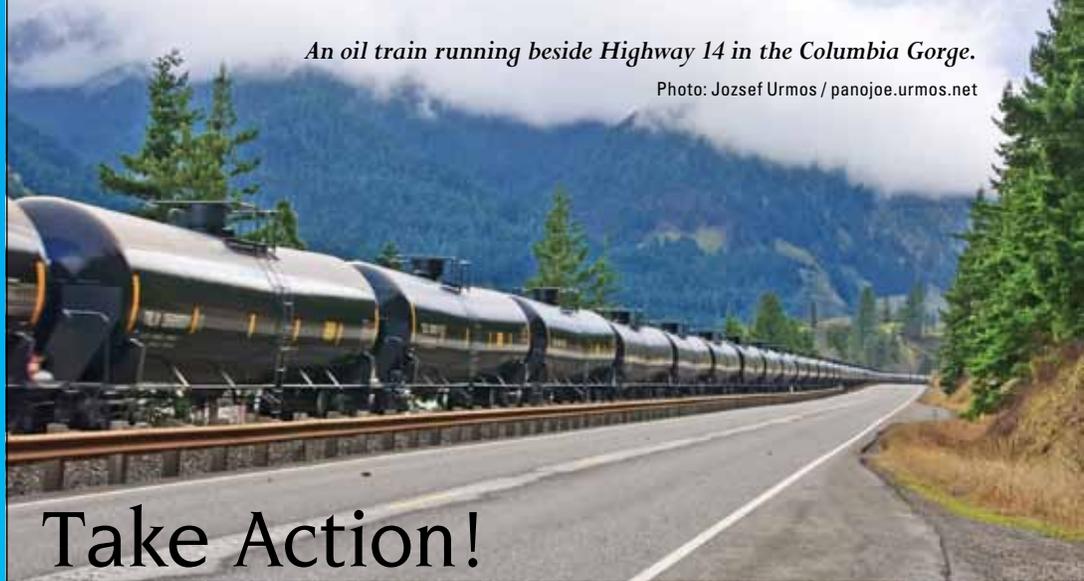
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Link to us on Twitter and Facebook  
from our website: [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org)

An oil train running beside Highway 14 in the Columbia Gorge.

Photo: Jozsef Urmos / panojoe.ursos.net



# Take Action!

## No Pipelines-on-Rails in the Gorge

Energy conglomerate Tesoro Savage wants to build the Pacific Northwest's largest oil pipeline-on-rails project along the Columbia River in Vancouver. Their proposed oil terminal would be just one of more than a half-dozen new proposals to dramatically increase oil transport through the Columbia Gorge.

More oil trains, terminals, and tankers on the Columbia River would be a terrible investment for the Pacific Northwest. They would greatly contribute to the escalating rate of climate change and pose a direct risk of pollution, contamination, and potential disaster to the Columbia River Gorge and its communities. See page 4 for more details.

Please sign our petition to Governor Inslee and Governor Kitzhaber. We strongly urge the governors to use their executive

authority to protect the Columbia River Gorge and local communities from oil trains, by issuing executive orders to halt all new state permits for oil terminals.

Sign our online petition today at:  
[www.GorgeFriends.org/oilpetition](http://www.GorgeFriends.org/oilpetition)

You can also contact the governors directly by phone or mail:

Governor Jay Inslee  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002  
Phone: (360) 902-4111

Governor John Kitzhaber  
160 State Capitol  
900 Court Street  
Salem, Oregon 97301-4047  
Phone: (503) 378-4582

## Citizen Action Makes the Difference!

Contact Senators and Representatives in Washington D.C.,  
or check [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) for local offices.

### Oregon

Sen. Ron Wyden, (202) 224-5244  
[www.wyden.senate.gov/contact](http://www.wyden.senate.gov/contact)

Sen. Jeff Merkley, (202) 224-3753  
[www.merkley.senate.gov/contact](http://www.merkley.senate.gov/contact)

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  
[www.murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm](http://www.murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm)

Sen. Maria Cantwell, (202) 224-3441  
[www.cantwell.senate.gov/public](http://www.cantwell.senate.gov/public)

Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, (202) 225-3536

Rep. Derek Kilmer, (202) 225-5916

Rep. Doc Hastings, (202) 225-5816

Rep. Suzan DelBene, (202) 225-6311

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

Cover photo: Wildflowers in May at Rowena Plateau. Photo: Greg Lief / liefphotos.com

# Director's Letter

Early this spring, I became acquainted with a woman named Vivian, although I didn't meet her in the conventional sense. Vivian died recently, and I've been reading her last will and testament. Along with a few other charities and friends and family, she included Friends of the Columbia Gorge in her will.

Reading a person's will provides insights into the individual that nothing else can. A will is a final opportunity to say, "This is who I am and this is what I stand for." What strikes me most about Vivian is that she was not a member of our organization. In fact, she never contributed anything at all to Friends during her lifetime. Yet in one final, sweeping, philanthropic gesture, she left us nearly \$40,000. For that reason, she fascinates me. What was it about our organization or the Columbia Gorge that motivated her?

Over the last decade, Vivian and many others have stood for Friends of the Columbia Gorge, and in doing so,

they have fundamentally transformed our organization. An unrestricted, unanticipated bequest ten years ago enabled us to launch our land trust and purchase one of the most beautiful properties in the Gorge, which now hosts the scenic overlook at the top of Cape Horn. Another bequest added significant acreage to our land trust holdings.

Unrestricted bequests have bolstered our endowment, allowing us to hire and retain a phenomenal staff. Unrestricted bequests enabled us to engage the services of a former U.S. senator to secure federal land acquisition funding and to engage a former White House official to help block plans for a mega-casino in the Gorge. Our most significant accomplishments over the past decade could not have been achieved without these bequests from visionary individuals.

A colleague once told me that when someone includes your organization in their will, they are elevating you to the status of family. That's powerful stuff.



Photo: Megan Gabrio

So to Vivian and to others I never had the opportunity to meet, like Ruth, Norman, Marguerite, and Otna, thank you. And to those I did meet, like Nancy, Russ, Ed, Tom, Sha, Nick and Kay, and Len and Donita, and many others, thank you. We are honored to be considered family. We, as well as the Columbia Gorge, are indebted beyond words.

And finally, to those who are still with us and have included Friends in estate plans, I look forward to meeting you, to thank you and to learn about your connection to the Gorge and your vision for its future.

Please see page 10 for information about the new Norman Yeon Legacy Circle.

Kevin Gorman, Executive Director  
kevin@gorgefriends.org

*A view from land trust property at Carson Cove.*

Photo: Aubrey Russell

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

*A Union Pacific oil train passing through Mosier, Oregon. Prior to this photograph, taken on April 18, the rail company denied running oil trains through the Gorge in Oregon.*

# Columbia River Gorge: A Fossil Fuel Highway?

Photo: Jozsef Urmos / panojoe.urmos.net

## Opposition Builds Against Coal and Oil Shipments

Michael Lang, Conservation Director, [michael@gorgefriends.org](mailto:michael@gorgefriends.org)

**T**he Columbia River Gorge is world-renowned for its natural scenic beauty. As the only sea-level passage through the Cascade Mountains, the Gorge boasts remarkable biodiversity, encompassing five major ecosystems and more than 800 species of flowering plants. The sea-level passage also provides the most economical route for the mile-long trains that transport coal and oil to Pacific Northwest terminals for export overseas.

The number of pending proposals for coal, oil and gas terminals in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia has increased dramatically in recent years. Fracked oil from the Bakken formation in North Dakota has exponentially expanded the volume of oil being transported by rail

throughout the United States. Since 2006, crude oil rail car shipments in the U.S. have increased by 8,358%, from 6,000 cars in 2006 to 400,000 in 2013.

If all of the proposed terminals were approved, fossil fuel shipments through Washington state to terminals and refineries in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia would increase by 189 million tons per year.

### Through the Gorge

Since 2012, Bakken crude oil has been transported by rail in aging tanker cars, traveling through the Columbia Gorge to terminals and refineries in the Northwest. In addition, eleven oil terminals and refineries are being built or are going through the permitting

process, and three coal terminals are awaiting permitting decisions.

These proposals would include coal and oil shipments to be transported by rail and barge through the Columbia River Gorge and its communities to terminals on the lower Columbia River, where they would be transloaded to ocean-going vessels for delivery to overseas destinations.

If these oil terminal proposals are approved, an additional 800,000 barrels per day would be transported by rail to the Northwest. This is equivalent in volume to the controversial Keystone XL pipeline through America's heartland. Most if not all of this oil would be transported on tracks running through the Columbia River Gorge.

*In the past year, five significant accidents have occurred in the U.S. and Canada involving Bakken oil rail shipments.*

### **Significant dangers**

Bakken crude is much more volatile than normal crude oil. Higher concentrations of highly combustible organic compounds in Bakken crude oil make it much more prone to ignite and explode if an accident occurs.

In the past year, five significant accidents have occurred in the U.S. and Canada involving Bakken oil rail shipments. The catastrophic oil train explosion in Lac Megantic, Quebec, last summer flattened square blocks of that quiet town and resulted in 47 fatalities.

Currently, most Bakken crude is transported in unit trains comprised of 100 or more single-shelled rail cars called DOT 111s. These tank cars have proven to be unsafe for transporting Bakken oil. Communities along rail lines used for transporting Bakken crude have reason to be very concerned for their safety. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo recently

called for an investigation of the safety of Bakken oil shipments through his state.

In April, Albany County, New York, approved a moratorium on the expansion of crude oil terminals pending a full investigation of the safety of transporting Bakken oil and tar sands oil (bitumen).

### **The Vancouver proposal**

The largest proposed oil terminal in the Northwest is Tesoro Savage's proposal for the Columbia River waterfront in Vancouver. If approved, the terminal would transport 380,000 barrels of highly volatile Bakken crude oil per day. This translates to five additional oil trains, each a mile and a half long and each carrying upwards of a million gallons of crude, thundering through the Columbia Gorge every day.

The Washington Energy Facility Siting and Evaluation Council, or EFSEC, is responsible for reviewing applications

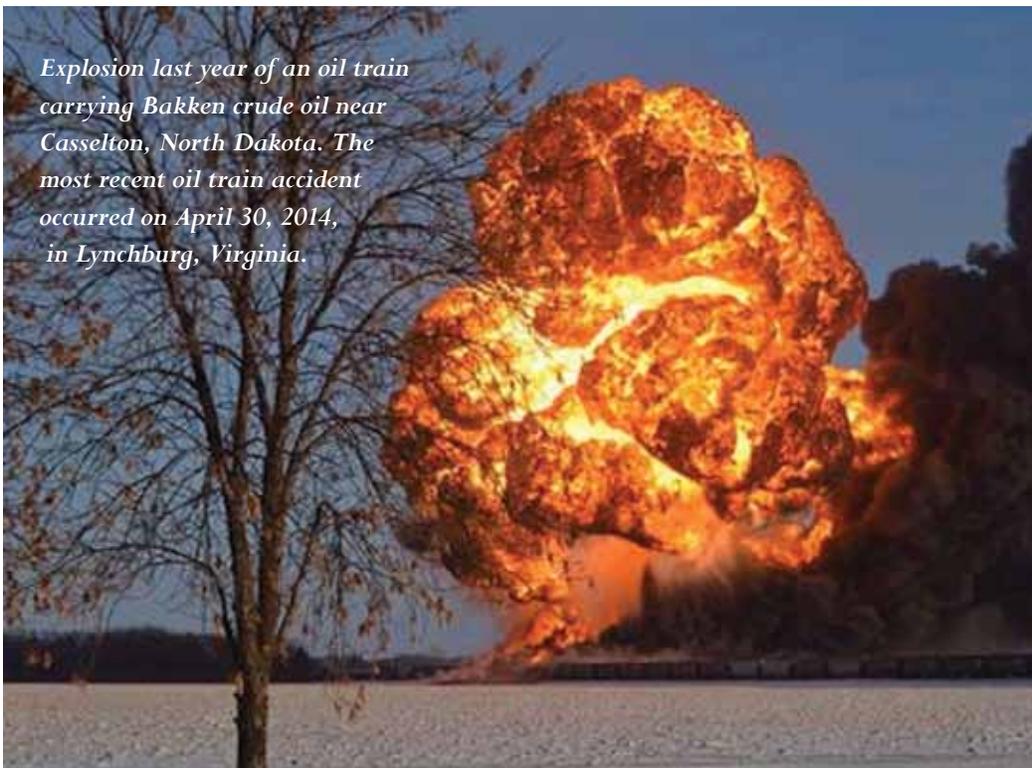
for oil terminals involving storage of 50,000 barrels of oil or more. After reviewing an application, the Council then recommends that Washington's Governor either approve or deny the project. The Governor has final decision-making authority. Appeals of the decision can be fast-tracked to review by the Washington state Supreme Court.

The EFSEC is requiring preparation of an environmental impact statement for Tesoro Savage's proposed terminal. In March, after receiving a record number of comments, EFSEC determined the scope of its environmental review would include robust analyses of alternatives, transportation impacts of shipping coal throughout the state, out-of-state transportation impacts, community safety, air and water quality, cumulative effects of the proposal along with other likely projects in Oregon and Washington, and greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of refined fossil fuels.

### **Fighting back**

With allies including conservation groups, Vancouver waterfront development proponents, and other community leaders opposed to the Tesoro Savage proposal, Friends is gearing up to participate in EFSEC's review of the application for the terminal. These civic and environmental organizations are urging Governor Inslee and Governor Kitzhaber to use their executive authority to institute moratoria on issuing permits for new oil terminals and refineries. Further, we are requesting a full investigation on rail safety and a commitment to assuring the health and safety of our communities and the protection of special places like the Columbia River Gorge.

See page 2 for action information and a link to our online petition to keep unsafe oil trains out of the Columbia Gorge. ■



*Explosion last year of an oil train carrying Bakken crude oil near Casselton, North Dakota. The most recent oil train accident occurred on April 30, 2014, in Lynchburg, Virginia.*

Photo: U.S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration



# Coal Train Litigation Buoyed by Federal Court Rulings

Nathan Baker, Staff Attorney, [nathan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:nathan@gorgefriends.org)

Two recent federal court rulings have boosted the efforts of Friends of the Columbia Gorge and our allies to compel Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, or BNSF, to clean up its dirty practices of polluting the Columbia River Gorge with coal shipped via uncovered railcars.

Every day, BNSF sends several mile-and-a-half-long trains loaded with uncovered coal from the Powder River Basin rumbling through the Columbia River Gorge. The coal is bound for the Transalta coal power plant in Centralia, Washington, and to British Columbia, for overseas export.

On average, every one of these trains deposits an estimated 10,000 pounds of coal dust and debris in the Columbia Gorge alone. Much of this coal pollution is discharged into navigable waterways, in direct violation of the Clean Water Act. Coal from the Powder River Basin contains

toxins including arsenic, mercury, lead, and uranium that can harm aquatic ecosystems and human health.

Last year, Friends joined the Sierra Club and other conservation groups in suing BNSF over these illegal discharges of coal into the Columbia River and other waterways. We

filed suit in both the Western and Eastern District Courts of Washington because BNSF is violating the Clean Water Act and causing environmental damage in both districts.

BNSF, represented by a high-powered East Coast law firm, moved to dismiss several of our claims in both cases. In one of its more



*Coal chunks and debris line the tracks and scatter in waterways throughout the Gorge.*

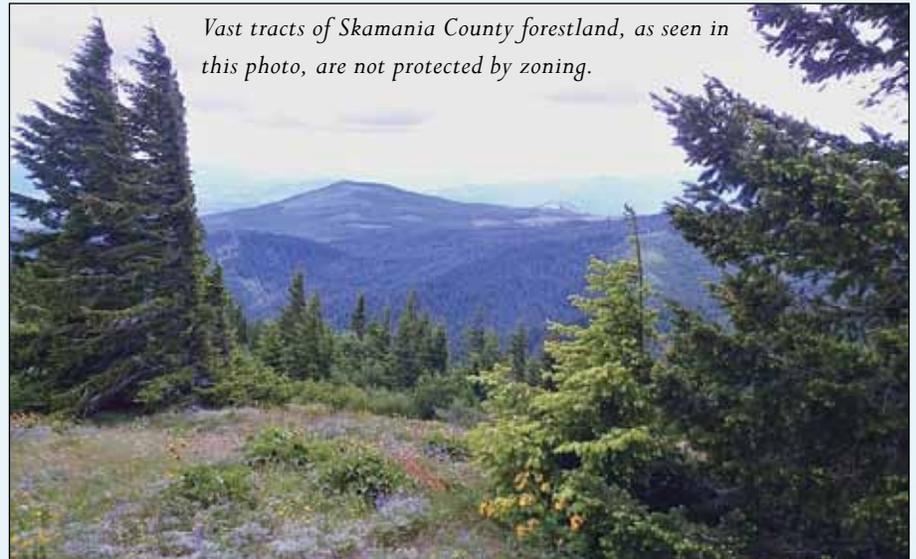
Photo: Peter Cornelison

# Appellate Court Allows Skamania Zoning Case to Proceed

Nathan Baker, Staff Attorney, [nathan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:nathan@gorgefriends.org)

Friends of the Columbia Gorge and our ally Save Our Scenic Area (SOSA) recently scored an important victory in our litigation against Skamania County for its failure to zone thousands of acres of unzoned, forested lands and protect these lands for forestry uses.

The case involves nearly ten thousand acres of heavily forested lands located just outside the Scenic Area. None of these lands have ever been zoned, which means uses like large-scale residential, industrial, and commercial development would be allowed without any review under the County's zoning ordinance.



*Vast tracts of Skamania County forestland, as seen in this photo, are not protected by zoning.*

Photo: Jim Chase

*Every day, BNSF sends several mile-and-a-half-long trains loaded with uncovered coal from the Powder River Basin rumbling through the Columbia River Gorge.*

outlandish arguments, BNSF complained that it cannot remedy its illegal discharges because Friends has not been specific enough about exactly *how* or *why* the coal from BNSF's trains ends up in navigable waterways. For example, is the coal being blown out of the uncovered railcars by the wind, or is it being shaken loose by bumps and vibrations along the tracks?

Fortunately, both courts saw through this smokescreen. In January and March 2014, respectively, the Eastern and Western District Courts denied BNSF's motions, thus allowing our cases to proceed. In addition, the Eastern District case has recently been transferred to, and will soon be consolidated with, the case in the Western District, which will allow all of our claims to be heard in a single court. Thanks to these rulings, we will eventually have our proverbial "day in court" in our campaign to stop coal pollution in the Columbia River Gorge. ■

In 2007, Skamania County took several important steps for protecting these lands. First, it gave the lands a "Conservancy" designation in its updated Comprehensive Plan and began a multi-year process for zoning the lands in its zoning ordinance. Second, the County adopted a moratorium prohibiting development on these lands until zoning could be established. And third, beginning in 2007 and continuing for the next five years, the County repeatedly announced that it was working to decide which of these unzoned lands should be designated and protected for commercial forest uses, as required by Washington's Growth Management Act.

In 2012, however, the Skamania County Commissioners abruptly reversed course, abandoning the County's plans to adopt zoning and protect commercial forest land, and formally repealing the County's five-year development moratorium. Friends and SOSA promptly filed a lawsuit against Skamania County, alleging that the County is failing to take mandatory zoning actions required by state law.

Incredibly, the County argued that Friends should not have trusted the County when it repeatedly announced it was working to zone and protect these lands. Further, the County argued, it was too late to sue the County once it reneged on its promises and abandoned its zoning efforts.

In March 2014, the Washington Court of Appeals allowed Friends' case to proceed, reversing a lower court ruling that Friends was "time-barred" from suing Skamania County for its failure to zone and protect commercial forestlands. The Court of Appeals remanded the case to the Clark County Superior Court, where Friends and SOSA will continue our efforts to protect commercial forest lands for forest uses. ■

# Donating Land for Future Acquisitions

*Our land trust property at Carson Cove, Washington.* Photo: Tom Nelson

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

In the fall of 2013, a member of Friends named Susan Wohld contacted us about donating an undeveloped piece of land that had been in her family for several generations. Fir, pine, and cedar trees cover the 27-acre property and a small creek runs through it. The land had originally been part of the larger farm where Susan grew up, and much of the surrounding land has been developed.

It's a lovely piece of land, but what distinguished this particular property for us was its location. The parcel being offered was located far from the Columbia Gorge

area, close to Spokane, and its primary value was in timber. Susan was offering the gift in honor of her parents, Paul and Beatrice Wohld, who had loved the land. Knowing that Friends' mission is to protect land and natural beauty in the Columbia Gorge, she hoped that we could sell the property and use the proceeds for that purpose. Early this year, Friends accepted the Wohld land donation.

In March, Land Trust Manager Kate McBride connected with a gentleman who expressed interest in buying our new parcel.

He owns an adjacent property and wanted to expand his holding, for greater privacy. He has no intention of cutting timber except for careful thinning to create a tucked-in home site on the property. So this spring, the land trust sold the Spokane property to this neighbor, placing the proceeds – nearly \$72,000 – into our land acquisition fund.

Right at the same time, another couple, who wish to remain anonymous, donated two 10-acre properties to the land trust – building sites west of Dufur, Oregon, also outside the Scenic Area. The Dufur properties are now for sale and proceeds will go directly into the same land acquisition fund.

To these generous, far-sighted members, thank you so much! These generous gifts of land are another way our members are helping our organization protect scenic, natural, and cultural resources throughout the Columbia Gorge. Opportunities for a tax deduction are often available with such donations. For more information about land donations, please contact Sandy Wright at 971-634-2027 or Kate McBride at 541-386-5268. ■

*Members hike at the land trust's Dancing Rock property.*

Photo: Debbie Asakawa



# Friends' Annual Picnic in Paradise

Sunday, July 27, 12 Noon – 3:30 p.m.

Join us this summer at a beautiful oak grove just north of Steigerwald Lake Wildlife Refuge near Washougal, Washington.

Our annual Summer Picnic is coming up on July 27, with live music by Lambert Street String Band and Counterfeit Cash. Details at [www.gorgefriends.org/summerpicnic](http://www.gorgefriends.org/summerpicnic). ■



Maegan Jossy, Outreach Manager  
[maegan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:maegan@gorgefriends.org)

## Take the WET Bus to Washington Trails and Resorts!

On any day through October 15, you can reduce your carbon footprint and avoid cramped parking lots by taking the Gorge West End Transit (WET) bus to many of your

favorite Gorge trails and resorts on the Washington side of the river.

As part of our *Gorge Towns to Trails* program, Friends of the Columbia Gorge is partnering in this newly expanded

Skamania County bus service. The WET line begins at Fisher's Landing in Vancouver, and extends to the Trapper Creek Wilderness trailhead. Enjoy a Skamania County day trip or make a weekend of it by camping or staying overnight in a locally owned Gorge hotel or bed-and-breakfast.

For more details, go to our website at [www.gorgefriends.org/WETbus](http://www.gorgefriends.org/WETbus) and select the "Public Transit" Quick Link for detailed information. ■

## Annual Meeting Highlights

Friends' 34th Annual Meeting, held on April 6 at Skamania Lodge, attracted more than 280 enthusiastic members and guests. This year's theme emphasized the importance of leaving a legacy for the Columbia Gorge.

Board Chair Keith Brown opened the meeting with a report on Friends' position for future growth and effectiveness. Executive Director Kevin Gorman followed Keith with a State of the Gorge address. He reminded the crowd that no major victory for the Gorge has ever come easily, and urged attendees to keep their resolve strong in the years ahead, as new Gorge threats and opportunities emerge.

Conservation Director Michael Lang gave a detailed report on the dangers facing the Gorge from coal export and oil-by-rail transport proposals, and showed Friends' great anti-coal music video, "Coal Train Blues," starring Johnny Cash tribute band Counterfeit Cash. Renee Tkach followed with an inspiring presentation on our *Gorge Towns to Trails* program, a long-term effort to create a comprehensive trail system linking Gorge communities and wildlands.

The legacy message was emphasized again as the meeting closed with a short video about Friends' new planned giving program. View the video online at [www.gorgefriends.org/whygive](http://www.gorgefriends.org/whygive). ■



Event photos: Ann Campbell / [annscreativephotography.com](http://annscreativephotography.com)

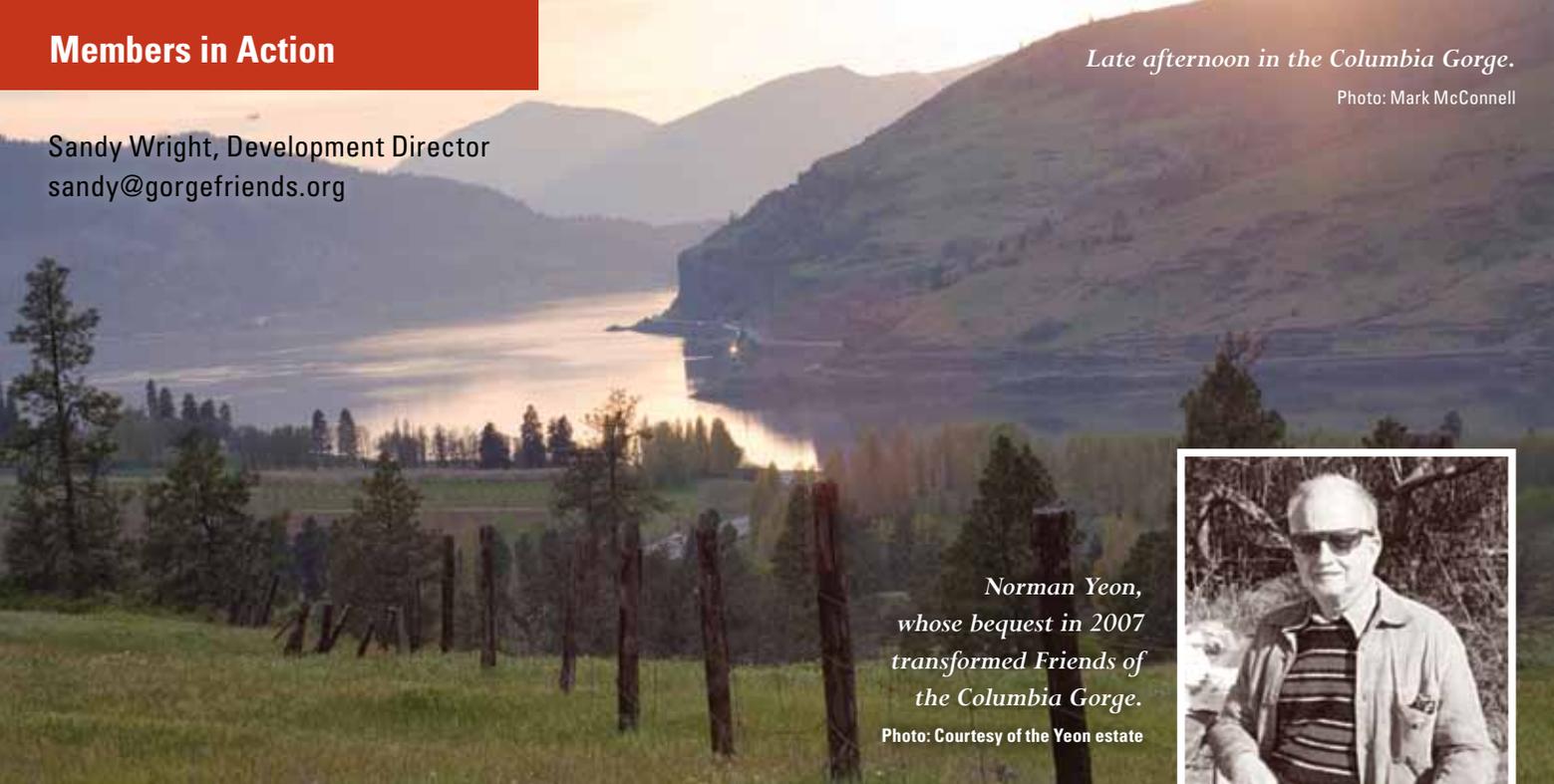
Friends' 34th Annual Meeting.



Sandy Wright, Development Director  
sandy@gorgefriends.org

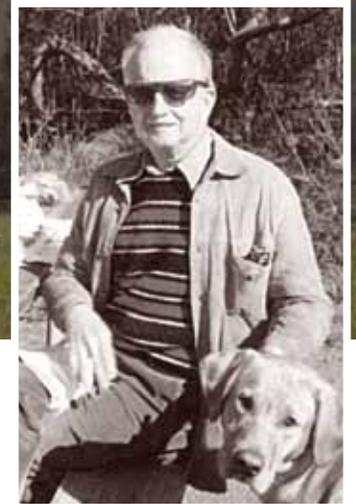
Late afternoon in the Columbia Gorge.

Photo: Mark McConnell



*Norman Yeon,  
whose bequest in 2007  
transformed Friends of  
the Columbia Gorge.*

Photo: Courtesy of the Yeon estate



# The Norman Yeon Legacy Circle

## Members Plan for Long-term Protection

**M**ore than eighty visionary individuals belong to our new Norman Yeon Legacy Circle. These members are creating a lasting legacy through their bequests for the Gorge.

The new legacy circle is named in honor of Norman Yeon, whose love of the Columbia Gorge was deeply embedded in his DNA. His father was an Oregon business magnate named John Baptiste Yeon, who served as road master for the construction of the Columbia River

Highway. Norman's brother, the younger John Yeon, fought for more than three decades to protect the Gorge and recruited Nancy Russell in 1980 to found Friends of the Columbia Gorge.

In 2007, Norman Yeon left Friends an unrestricted bequest of \$4.5 million. This transformative gift strengthened our organization in many ways and led to creation of the Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust.

The Norman Yeon Legacy Circle will gather annually at a celebratory event in honor

of Norman Yeon and others who have made the Gorge their legacy. Members will meet board and staff, learn about long-range plans for Gorge protection, and hear how bequest gifts are making a difference.

*If you have included Friends of the Columbia Gorge in your will or estate plan, please let us know*, so we can thank you and include you in the Norman Yeon Legacy Circle. Contact Sandy Wright, Development Director, at 971-634-2027 or by email at [sandy@gorgefriends.org](mailto:sandy@gorgefriends.org). ■



*Flower-strewn meadows in the Columbia Hills.*

Photo: Debbie Asakawa

## A Final Gift

**H**arvey Brittan of Seattle joined Friends in 2008, motivated by his love of the landscape and his desire to protect it. A year later, Harvey notified us that he had included Friends in his estate plans. In April, we received Harvey's final bequest of \$34,000, which will be used to keep the landscape he loved vibrant and beautiful. Thank you, Harvey! ■

# Here to Help You!

**W**e are happy to introduce Pam Davee to our members. Pam joined Friends' staff earlier this year as our new development officer, dedicated to helping members create their legacy in the Gorge. She brings fifteen years of experience connecting donors to their passion and helping them make a difference. Pam specializes in major gifts and planned giving and has held similar positions working with river protection organizations in Georgia and Tennessee. A Portlander since 2009, Pam most recently served as director of development at DoveLewis Emergency Animal Hospital. Pam can be contacted at [pam@gorgefriends.org](mailto:pam@gorgefriends.org) or 971-634-2036. ■



Photo: Michael Horodyski / mjhpdx.com

## Special Gifts January 25 to April 25, 2014

IN HONOR OF DEBBIE ASAKAWA  
VIRGINIA HERNDON

IN HONOR OF BRIAN BURCH  
DAVID POLLOCK

IN HONOR OF MICHAEL WILSON  
KAREN MARKS

IN MEMORY OF MAXINE CROOKHAM  
SUSAN HANSON  
KRISTEN STALLMAN

IN MEMORY OF JOE DENMAN  
JOHN AND BEV CAMP

IN MEMORY OF DUSTIN FINNEY  
KRISTI FINNEY-DUNN

IN MEMORY OF ELIZABETH FOWLER  
CARLOS SIMPSON

IN MEMORY OF FORRIS FRICK  
EDWARD ATIYEH  
ARDEL FRICK

IN MEMORY OF DONALD GONTHIER  
DONNA WEARE

IN MEMORY OF GRANDPA PAT  
SHANE BOLTON

IN MEMORY OF LINDA GRAY  
JOHN FREWING AND  
GAYLE KAUFFMAN  
RENATE AND JOHN TILSON

IN MEMORY OF RICHARD HARRISON  
MARY HARRISON  
RICK AND LINDA HOLT  
RON AND BONNIE VAUGHN

IN MEMORY OF BARBARA MILLER  
JAMES MILLER

IN MEMORY OF JEANETTE NEILS REMOLE  
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GLORIA LADUM

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CHARLES AND KATHY DEMARTINO

IN MEMORY OF MATTHEW WINTHROP  
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JOAN ERCOLINI  
SHEILA AND MICHAEL GIORDANO  
CARLOS SIMPSON  
RICHARD LIRA AND  
GRETCHEN TAYLOR  
DEBRA AND ANTHONY VASSALLO  
LORING AND MARGARET WINTHROP



Dry Creek Falls.

Photo: Greg Lief / liefphotos.com

## Featured Hike: Dry Creek Falls, OR

Easy: 4.4 miles, 700-ft elevation gain

Maegan Jossy, Outreach Manager, [maegan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:maegan@gorgefriends.org)

**S**ome Gorge waterfalls are hidden off the beaten path – quiet, magical places that don't draw the usual crowds. Dry Creek Falls is a perfect example, lovely to visit and often overlooked. It makes for a wonderful summer hike on a well-maintained trail of gradual elevation gain, leading to a thundering waterfall that cascades down a dramatic basalt wall. Hike on a stretch of the Pacific Crest Trail through lush forest to enjoy the cool spray of the waterfall on a hot summer day. Despite its name, Dry Creek Falls doesn't run dry, even in the warmest months. History buffs will find remnants of old damming apparatus here, evidence of uses long ago to provide water to nearby Cascade Locks.

**Driving Directions:** From Portland/Vancouver, take I-84 to Exit 44-Cascade Locks. Follow the road toward the Bridge of the Gods. The Dry Creek trailhead is on the west side of the road. ■



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## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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 Portland, Oregon 97240-0820

# Know Your Gorge *The Pillars of Hercules*

As travelers head east into the Columbia Gorge on Interstate 84 these days, most are unaware that they are speeding past the remains of the iconic Pillars of Hercules. Once a famed feature of the Gorge, the now-humbled Pillars still stand, just off the road.

During the first two decades of the 20th century, these towering twin Yakima basalt columns straddled a single railroad track and captured the public's imagination. Climbers scaled the taller, 120-foot tower, and the dramatic natural

spires were frequently featured in railroad travel ads. In 1917, a feature article in *The Oregonian* had "the father of American design," Wesley Dow, praising a Portland design student's semi-abstract rendering of the Pillars. Regional tribes had long known the columns as Speelyai's Children, sons of the trickster Coyote.

By the time the Columbia River Highway opened in 1915, the railroad track had been rerouted north of the columns, to accommodate larger trains. Tourists in automobiles flocked to the

*An art student's rendering of the Pillars of Hercules.*

From *The Oregonian*, August 1917, unidentified artist.



new highway up above the river, and eventually, trees and vegetation obscured the towers. Construction on the interstate highway began in the late 1950s, virtually burying the smaller tower, and by then, memories of the majestic Pillars had all but faded.

As part of Friends' *Histories & Mysteries* challenge this year, visitors can go to the overlook at Bridal Veil Falls State Park. Looking west, you'll see the nearly hidden Pillars of Hercules still standing near the rail tracks.

Visit [www.gorgefriends.org/historiesandmysteries](http://www.gorgefriends.org/historiesandmysteries) for more information. ■



*A dual image of the Pillars of Hercules, circa 1913, created for use in a special viewer that produced a 3-D effect. Photo: Oregon Historical Society Image #bb011578, with permission*