

FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1995 NEWSLETTER

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Telephone: (503) 241-3762

Victory for Gorge Scenic Area

State Panel Orders Clark County to Eliminate Plans for Urban Sprawl in the Gorge

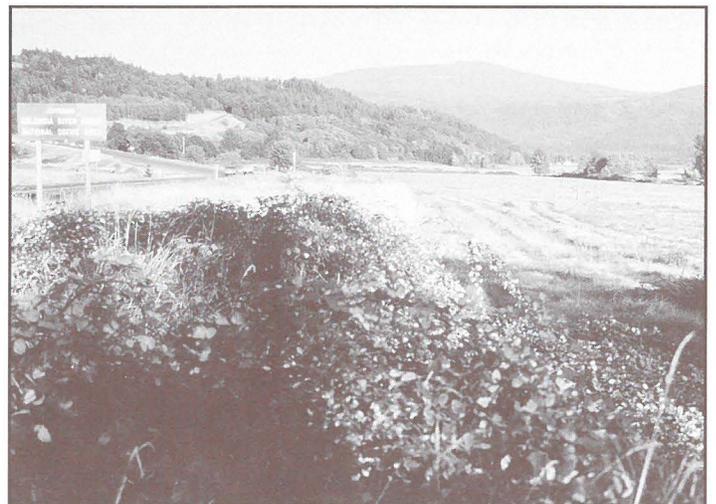
In December 1994, the Clark County Board of Commissioners adopted a county Growth Management Plan. Despite opposition from Clark County residents, the Friends, the Columbia River Gorge Commission and the U.S. Forest Service, Commissioners John Magnano, Dave Sturdevant and Busse Nutley all voted to target about 250 acres of the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area for dense urban and industrial development.

Clark County's action was a clear change from the County's earlier support for the Gorge Scenic Area. In 1986, the Clark County Board of Commissioners supported the Scenic Area and its boundaries. Then-Chairman Vern Veysey testified: "We believe that [Gorge] protection

would actually increase and have a very positive impact on local government. . . . *The value of the adjacent properties as a result of this action will increase because people will want to live next to areas that are preserved for our future generations.*" (Emphasis added)

Early this year, the Friends joined the Clark County Natural Resources Council, CERES, Vancouver Audubon, and several Clark County residents in appealing Clark County's Growth Management Plan to the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board. In July, Friends attorney Gary Kahn appeared before the Hearings Board to explain why urban and industrial development in the Scenic Area violates the state Growth Management Act.

Continued on page 4



Clark County's Growth Management Plan targets heavy urban and industrial development for the Columbia Gorge Scenic Area, including the Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge. In September, the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board ordered Clark County to eliminate plans for urban and industrial sprawl in the Scenic Area. Photo by Lauri Aunan

The Gorge Scenic Area east of Washougal still retains its rural character, farms and forests; a significant difference from the dense urban and industrial development in western Clark County. The Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge is to the right of the Scenic Area sign (left) in this photo.

Photo by Brad Yazzolino

Executive Director's Letter

As I write this in late September, a warm, strong east wind has kicked up for a good two days, hinting of the winter winds ahead. The Gorge east wind never ceases to thrill me; it's an elemental force of nature that cannot be denied.

Conversion of forests, farmlands and rural towns into cookie-cutter suburbia seems to be an elemental force of **human** nature that cannot be denied. Consider the newest proposals for development in Gorge cities: a McDonald's in Bingen; a gas station on the Hood River Waterfront. Bingen city council member Brad Bookmyer noted how McDonald's is one of the "symbols of suburbanization. . . an infringement of sorts on the small-town character and atmosphere." (*Hood River News*, 9/23/95)

The loss of small town character in the Gorge would be made worse by two recent proposals: Clark County's Growth Management Plan, and Referendum 48 (formerly known as Initiative 164).

The Friends successfully appealed Clark County's misguided plans to urbanize the Gorge (see story on page 1). The fate of Referendum 48 rests with Washington state voters.

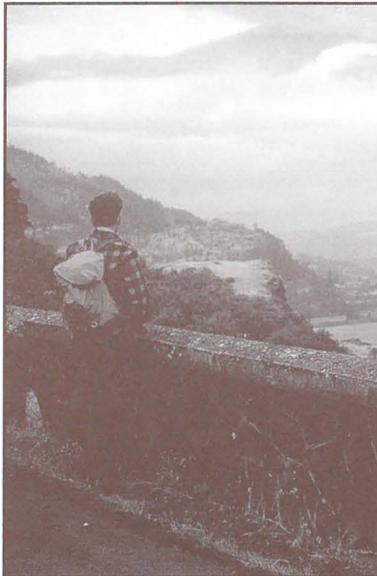
On November 7, Washington citizens will vote on Referendum 48. Although the law is not yet in effect, one landowner has already used it to challenge Gorge protection laws (see story on page 6).

The Gorge is special because it has kept much of its rural and natural character despite being so close to Portland. The biggest challenge in the years ahead will be to maintain the rural and natural character of the Gorge. Clark County's actions and Referendum 48 are signs of the hard work it will take to succeed, but I believe that all of the people who love the Gorge—Gorge residents and visitors alike—have the power to succeed.

An important part of the Friends' work in the upcoming year will be reaching out to build bridges with Gorge residents, businesses, recreation groups, community groups—everyone who has a stake in a sustainable future for the Columbia Gorge. We're looking forward to meeting the challenge.

Lauri Aunan

Lauri G. Aunan
Executive Director



A hiker looks toward the City of Hood River from the Historic Highway west of Mosier. All citizens of Oregon and Washington—Gorge residents and visitors alike—have a stake in vibrant, sustainable communities in the Columbia Gorge. The Friends is looking for common ground and a way to build bridges to a sustainable future.

Mission Statement

Friends of the Columbia Gorge shall vigorously protect the scenic, natural and cultural 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 February 3, 1994

FOCG is proud to be a member of the **Environmental Federation of Oregon**. Protect the environment through payroll deduction.

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Deadline for the January newsletter is November 20

Gorge Watch

Citizen Involvement Update



Referendum 48 (I-164) Thank You

Thanks to everyone who gathered signatures for the No on Referendum 48 Campaign. You helped the campaign gather 231,122 signatures, well above the number needed to qualify for the ballot.

Special thanks to Dorothy Burdick, Mike Fahey and Roger and Helene Farnen for the hours they spent in front of the Vancouver Target store, always with a smile and a petition handy! ▲

Getting Together for the Gorge

The views of Friends members, Gorge residents, and Gorge supporters are important to us.

Outreach Coordinator Kristin Reese is setting up local meetings to hear from you. What is important to you? How can we help? Watch your mailbox for an invitation to get together for food, fun and Gorge talk. ▲

Keep those Cards and Letters Coming

Thanks to all of you who wrote letters to Congress opposing the City of Washougal's efforts to push urban sprawl into the Columbia Gorge. **Your letters and calls are very important.**

If you haven't contacted your senator and congressperson and would like to do so, contact Kristin at (503) 241-3762 for a sample letter and a list of congressional addresses and phone/fax numbers. ▲

You Make the Difference!

Friends member Ron Froebe helped set up the database for our Land Use Audit Project. Member John Willey is helping the Friends set up more databases for

our work with volunteers and the media, as well as the Land Use Audit database.

Laura Tilley is helping with filing, clipping news articles, and other very needed office organizing, and staffing the Friends' table at events.

Ken Larish, a second year law student at Lewis and Clark College, is helping with legal research. Thank you to all of our volunteers. We couldn't do it without you! ▲

Special Thanks to...

Donald and Elizabeth Lawrence, for their very generous donation of a new computer to manage our Land Use, Media and Volunteer databases.

Bob Parry, for donating a hand-held tape recorder after seeing our

WASHINGTON MEMBERS ALERT:

Referendum 48 is a lose-lose proposition for the people of Washington and for the Columbia Gorge.

**Remember on November 7:
Vote NO on Referendum 48—
"We Can't Afford It"**

wish list published in *The Oregonian*.

Grams Corp., for the donation of simply delicious cookies to the Friends Summer Picnic.

The Beaverton Bakery, for wonderful fare at the Columbia River Gorge Conservators gathering. ▲



Thanks to Adopt-A-Highway Crew

On July 1, the Friends worked to clean up the Historic Columbia River Highway near Multnomah Falls. Thanks to Brian & Elizabeth Shepherd, Ken & Caroline Bailey, Jeanne Norton, Ken & Felice Denis, Larry Gabriel, Ray Hayden, Pat Sims, Connie & Mike Dana, Jodi Miller, Freida Simpson, S. Donna Hortsch, Renee Scott, Kristin Reese, Burt Burton and Mitch Neuharth.

Photo by Ken Denis

Gorge Wildflower Meadows at Risk

Proposed Forest Service Trade May Signal Future Lockup of More Public Lands

by Russ Jolley

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area was created to protect the spectacular Columbia Gorge through land use planning laws and public acquisition of sensitive lands. Since the Scenic Area was created in 1986, the Forest Service has been working with landowners, on a "willing seller" basis, to acquire land in the Gorge.

Private owners in the Gorge have sold or donated into public ownership some of the most natural, scenic and undeveloped areas in the Gorge, with features such as hills, meadows, great basalt cliffs, pine and fir forests, oak savannas, streams, and wetlands.

Some of the most special lands are the meadows and hills of the Rowena Special Management Area east of Mosier.

Some of the most special lands are the meadows and hills of the Rowena Special Management Area east of Mosier. Hikers on the Memaloose Trail, familiar to many Friends members, can enjoy a view across broad meadows to Castilleja Butte. In spring, a good part of the meadows are blued by *Collinsia grandiflora* (blue-eyed Mary). The meadows also include a splendid vernal pond, a fine stand of native bunchgrass known as squirreltail, and a sprinkling of balsamroot.

The Forest Service recently proposed to trade away a 20-acre meadow in this area to an adjacent landowner, for conversion of the meadow to an orchard which would be enclosed by a high deer fence. In exchange, the Forest Service would acquire a pond on 10 acres south of State Road and a steep 5-acre hillside facing State Road.

This proposal may signal the beginning of locking up public lands in the Gorge. ▲

What you can do:

If you would like the Forest Service to keep the beautiful wildflower meadow for the public, instead of trading it away to be locked up forever in private ownership, please write to the Forest Service today:

Arthur J. Carroll, Manager
National Scenic Area/U.S.F.S.
902 Wasco Avenue
Hood River, OR 97031
Phone: (503) 386-2333
Fax: (503) 386-1916

Victory for Gorge

Continued from page 1

In September, the Hearings Board found that "the Growth Management Act has been violated. . . there is no basis for the Board of County Commissioners to place part of an urban growth area within. . . the National Scenic Area." The Hearings Board ordered Clark County to eliminate the Urban Growth Area in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The City of Washougal has filed a motion for reconsideration of this order.

While the Friends recognizes the need for urban and industrial development, the Friends' position is that such development should be appropriately located. The Gorge Scenic Area has been recognized as a national treasure that deserves protection from inappropriate development and destructive urban sprawl. The Friends hopes to work with Clark County to ensure that its future plans for development in the Gorge Scenic Area are appropriate and consistent with protection of the rural character and scenic beauty of the Gorge. ▲



This meadow near Rowena, Oregon, was acquired by the US Forest Service for public ownership in the National Scenic Area. The Forest Service now proposes to trade it into private ownership where it will be forever locked up from public access and enjoyment.

Photo by Russ Jolley

Clearcut, Subdivision Threaten Local Water Supply

Gorge Scenic Area Ordinance Protects Underwood Springs, But Skamania County May Not Enforce its Ordinance

A timber company proposes to log 75 acres of steep, forested bluffs above the Columbia River adjacent to Shaddox Springs, the sole water supply for residents of Underwood, Washington. The timber harvest is part of a proposal to grade four home sites near the springs and put the newly created sites up for sale. Clearcutting and residential development so near to Shaddox Springs could have serious adverse impacts on water quality and quantity for Underwood residents.

The Friends is working with local residents and the Central Cascades Alliance to ensure that the community water supply and the scenic beauty of the Underwood Bluffs are protected. Underwood's water system has already been declared inadequate by the Washington state Department of Health because of over-connection. As a result, future building permits and on-site sewage disposal permits may be denied for properties already connected, or to be connected to the system. (From Dept. of Health letter to Skamania County PUD, June 1995)

About one half of the land proposed for timber harvest is zoned General Management Area open space under the Gorge land use ordinance adopted by Skamania County. The ordinance prohibits timber harvest on open space lands. Unfortunately, Ska-



Even though a significant portion of this Shaddox Springs parcel is zoned to prohibit forestry, this "For Sale" sign along SR 14 advertises the property as fully zoned for forestry, creating a "buyer beware" situation. This large sign is visible from Mitchell Point across the Columbia River in Hood River County. Photo by Michael Lang

Clearcutting and residential development so near to Shaddox Springs could have serious adverse impacts on water quality and quantity for Underwood residents.

mania County recently stated that it does not intend to prohibit timber harvest near Shaddox Springs, as required by its own ordinance. This is puzzling, since even before adoption of the Gorge land use ordinance, Skamania County had zoned the Shaddox Springs area as a "shoreline conservancy area" which precluded timber harvest. The Friends will appeal any decision by Skamania County or the Department of Natural Resources that would endanger Underwood's water supply or result in timber harvest in open space. ▲

You Can Help Protect Underwood's Water Supply

Write to Harpreet Sandhu, Director, Skamania County Department of Planning and Community Development, P.O. Box 790, Stevenson WA 98648. Demand that the county protect Underwood's water supply by enforcing its ordinance that prohibits clearcutting and subdivisions on land zoned open space.

Write to Lloyd Handlos, Department of Natural Resources, SW Region, P.O. Box 280, Castle Rock, WA 98611. Tell the DNR it should not approve timber harvest in open space areas. Ask the DNR to follow the state law that requires compliance with the National Scenic Area Act.

Please send a copy of your letter to Michael Lang, FOCG, 319 SW Washington St. #301, Portland, OR 97204. ▲

Update: Forest Service Seeks Acquisition of SMA Forest Land

142-Acre Clearcut Appears Averted, But Forest Protection Rules Still Are Not Enforced

In our July-September 1995 newsletter, we reported that the Seeder Tree Company was seeking to log 142 acres of Special Management Area forest land near Augspurgen Mountain. Faced with increasing public outcry and the certainty of litigation, the timber company is now working with the Forest Service for public acquisition of the land.

The Friends is cautiously optimistic that the landowner and the Forest Service will reach an agreement for public acquisition of the forest land. However, the lack of enforcement of Special Management Area forest protection rules remains unresolved. Although Oregon and Washington state forest practice agencies and the Gorge Commission are responsible for enforcing the rules, the agencies have been arguing for years about which agency should carry out the day-to-day regulatory role that ensures protection of forest resources in the Special Management Areas.

A recent attempt to mediate a solution among the responsible agencies was unsuccessful. The Friends is reviewing legal options to require the appropriate agencies to implement this very important part of the National Scenic Area Act. ▲

Referendum 48 Used to Challenge Gorge Protection

The Friends is defending Gorge protection laws against a lawsuit filed by Don Kelly against the Columbia River Gorge Commission and Skamania County. Mr. Kelly opposes requirements to undertake a wetlands inventory for a proposed access road to his property. To our knowledge this is the first challenge to the Gorge land use laws under Referendum 48—but if Referendum 48 (formerly I-164) passes, it will certainly not be the last. ▲

Friends Defend Gorge Farmland Protection

Protection of farmland in the Gorge is an important part of the National Scenic Area Act. Gorge land use laws protect agricultural land from being inappropriately divided and converted from farms to suburban subdivisions.

In 1993, James and Billie Willcox applied to the Gorge Commission for permission to divide a 268-

acre parcel into three smaller parcels. The property is adjacent to Sevenmile Hill Road in Wasco County. The Gorge Commission staff determined that the land division was inconsistent with Gorge land use laws because the parcel is used for grazing and growing crops, and the land division would harm the ability to continue farm uses on the property. The Willcoxes appealed to the entire commission, and the Friends intervened to help defend the Gorge Commission staff's decision.

In August, Friends' attorney Gary Kahn participated in the appeal on the side of the Gorge Commission. The full Commission upheld the staff's decision and denied the appeal. The Willcoxes have until October 23 to file a Petition for Review in the Oregon Court of Appeals. The Friends will continue to be involved in this appeal as necessary. ▲

Friends Defend Scenic Area Requirements for Highway Improvements

In 1993, the Washington Department of Transportation (WDOT) applied to the Forest Service for approval of highway improvements on SR 14 near Wind Mountain. After the Forest Service determined that parts of the project were inconsistent with the National Scenic Area Act, WDOT appealed.

In 1995, the Forest Service determined that, with appropriate revisions, the project was consistent with the Scenic Act—with one exception, wire mesh to be placed on a rock wall along SR 14, approximately 40 feet high and 1,000 feet long. The Forest Service determined that the adverse scenic impacts from the wire mesh were inconsistent with the Scenic Act, but indicated it would look the other way and allow this inconsistent portion of the project to continue.

The Friends appealed this failure to enforce the Scenic Act. On September 13, the appeal was heard before the Deputy Regional Forester. The Gorge Commission, which is also very concerned about the position taken by the Forest Service, provided well-researched and vital evidence at the hearing. A decision is expected this fall. ▲

FOCG News

Conservators Gather for Gorgeous Evening

Erskine and Tory Wood were a very gracious host and hostess for the third annual gathering of the Conservators of the Columbia River Gorge. The evening's highlight was Erskine's reminiscences about life on the Columbia, including the tale of how his grandfather, Henry Biddle, acquired Beacon Rock and convinced Washington state to create Beacon Rock State Park. Jeanne Norton once again provided fabulous hors d'oeuvres that added to an evening of great company and great stories. ▲

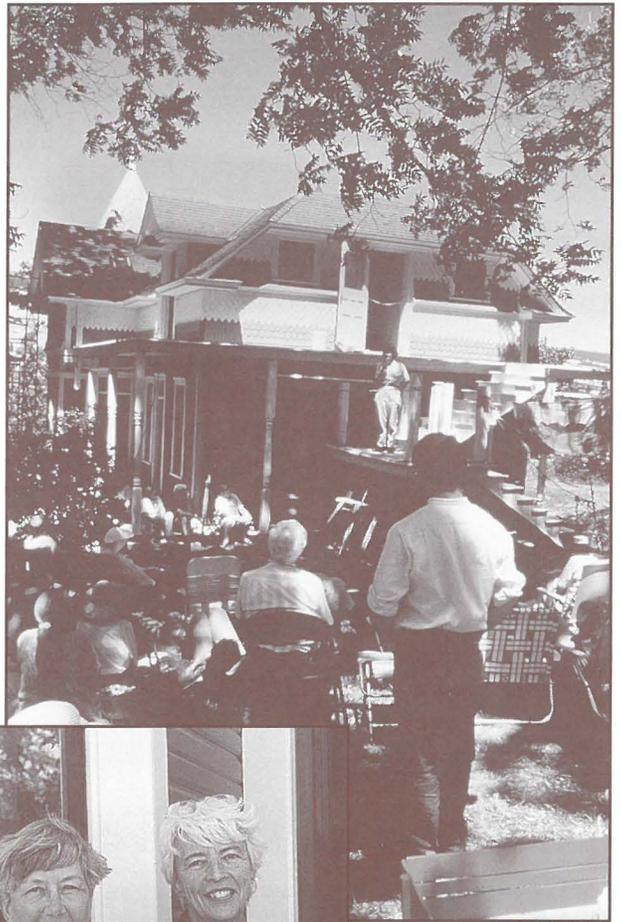
Mosier Highlights Friends' Summer Picnic

More than 100 Friends of the Columbia Gorge gathered on a sunny day in Mosier for the 15th annual Summer Picnic. Lewis McArthur, chairman of the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee, began the day with a tour of the east entrance to the Mosier Twin Tunnels.

At the 1896 J.N. Mosier House, under restoration by Matthew and Amali Koerner as a bed and breakfast, retired Mosier postmaster Willis Gholston regaled the crowd with the history of Mosier. ▲

Hiking Season A Giant Success!

Many thanks to Julia Ferreira, Ray Hayden, and Marilyn Holsinger for another successful Friends of the Gorge hiking season. Coordinating a series of hikes from early spring to summer is a lot of work, but is worth it to introduce people to the wonders of the Gorge. ▲



Nan Koerner (l), Evelyn Cooper (m) and Barbara Walker enjoy the porch of the J.N. Mosier House at the Friends' 1995 Summer Picnic.
Photo by Ken Denis

From the back porch of the Mosier House, Willis Gholston entertains Friends members with a wealth of information about Mosier's history.

Photo by Brad Yazzolino

Holiday Gifts of the Gorge

1996 Columbia Gorge Calendar by Craig Tuttle \$10.00

Quantity _____

Holiday Specials: Columbia Gorge Sweatshirts and T-shirts

Limited selection of sizes, colors. Please order size and 1st choice of color.

Wildflower sweatshirts \$15 ea. or 2 for \$25 (white, aquamarine; S, M, L, XL)

Wildflower T-shirts \$6 ea. or 3 for \$15 (white, aquamarine; S, M only)

Leaping Salmon T-shirts \$8 ea. or 2 for \$15 (blue, mint green; L, XL only)

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We accept checks, MC or VISA. To order, please send in this form with your payment, or call Marna at (503) 241-3762.

Memorial Contributions

Friends of the Columbia Gorge wishes to thank the following people who have made memorial contributions since our last newsletter:

*In memory of
Donald McGraw
Tom and Lynn White*

*In memory of
Howard "Zeke" Robbins
Maxine Shanahan*

*In memory of
Helen Sisk
Elizabeth Martin*

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Address correction requested

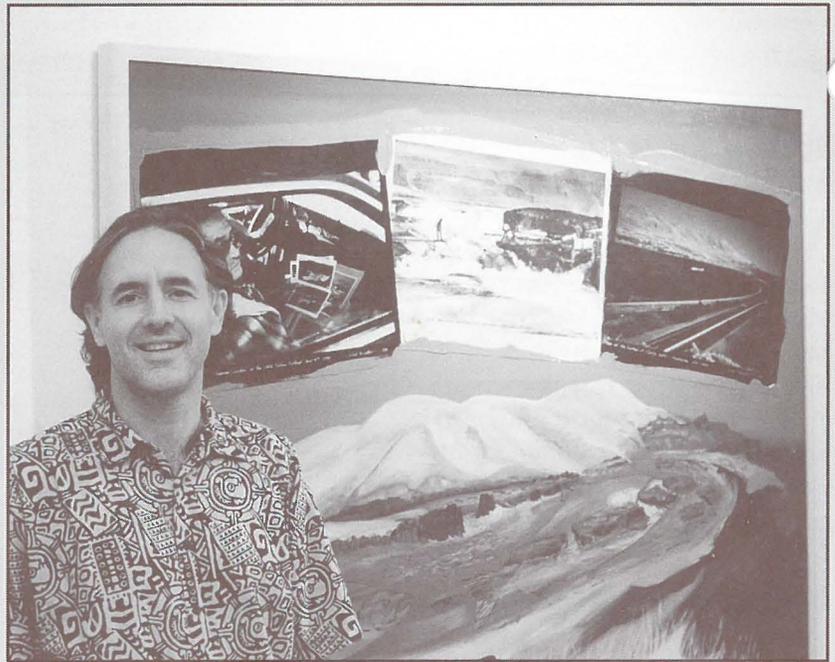
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Member Profile: Brad Yazzolino

Friends member Brad Yazzolino is dedicated to protection of the Columbia Gorge, and contributes to that protection by documenting the many moods and many faces of the Gorge.

Brad recently exhibited his works on the Columbia Gorge at the Littman Gallery at Portland State University. Titled "The Shroud of Celilo, The Columbia River from Hanford to Portland", his exhibition included oil paintings, large photographs and an interactive computer installation. According to *Willamette Week* reviewer Thomas Cobb, the works "deepen our understanding—not only of his art but of the environmental issues at hand."

"The Columbia Gorge is such a remarkable place," says Brad. "I am fascinated with how it was in the distant past, with how it is today, and how it is likely to be in the distant future. To me the Gorge is an enormous magic theater of pure nature with excitement in the spotlights every minute, around every bend. Unfortunately, it is really not yet sufficiently protected against the relentless appetite of modern American society.



Brad Yazzolino's work, "The Shroud of Celilo, The Columbia River from Hanford to Portland" was shown at the Littman Gallery at PSU. A computer installation of his work will be on display at the OMSI Multimedia Fair 95, October 26-29.

Photo by Lauri Aunan

"I'm increasingly worried that we are in danger of bulldozing too much of this theater down, and of killing off all the star players. So, in my artwork, I try to convey the paradox of

how quickly some selfish, short-sighted actions can seem to overpower the fully functional serenity of the Columbia Gorge in ways that cannot be easily reversed." ▲