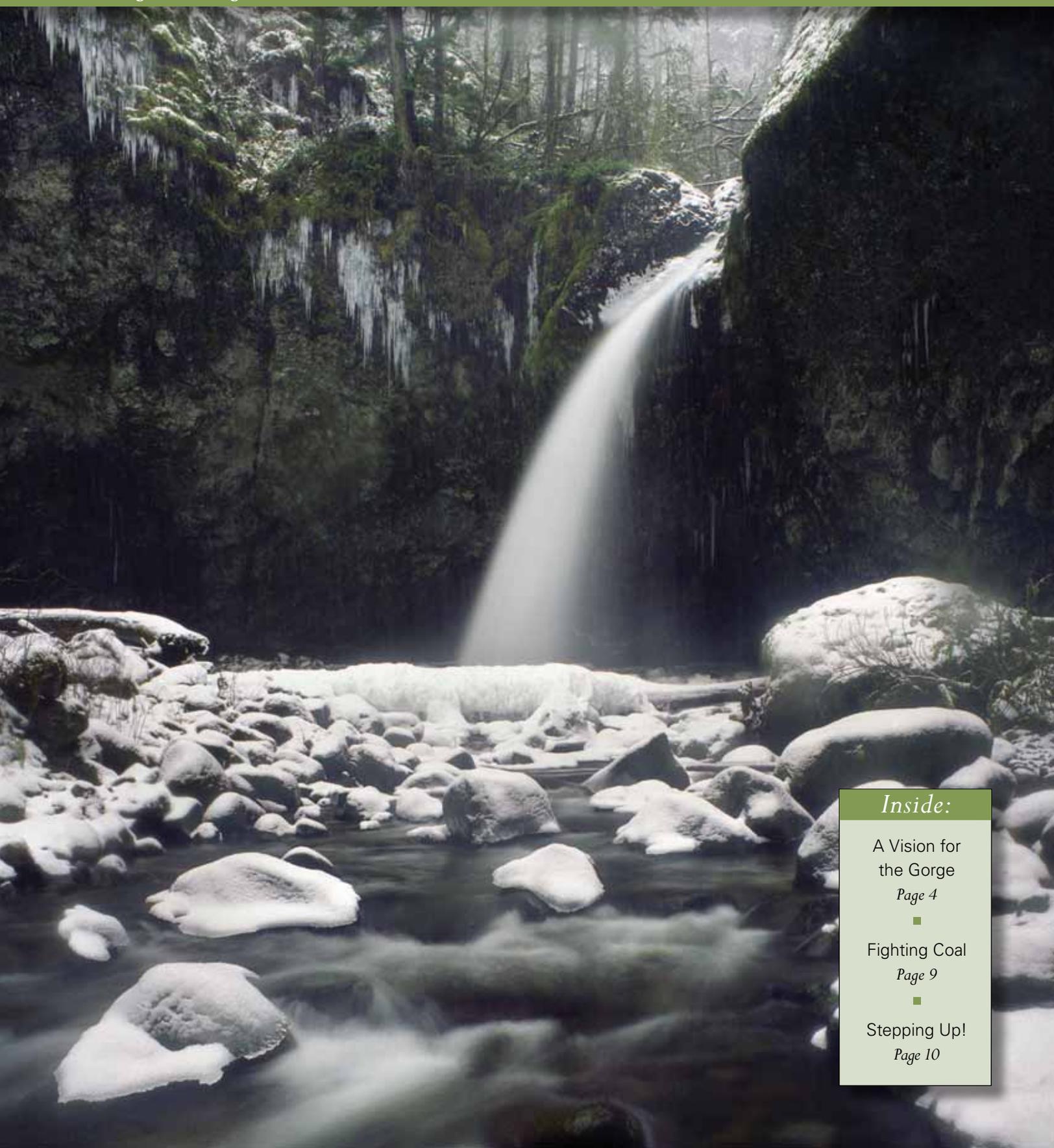


Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Protecting the Gorge Since 1980

Fall/Winter 2012 Newsletter



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Friends of the Columbia Gorge

FOUNDER NANCY RUSSELL, 1932-2008

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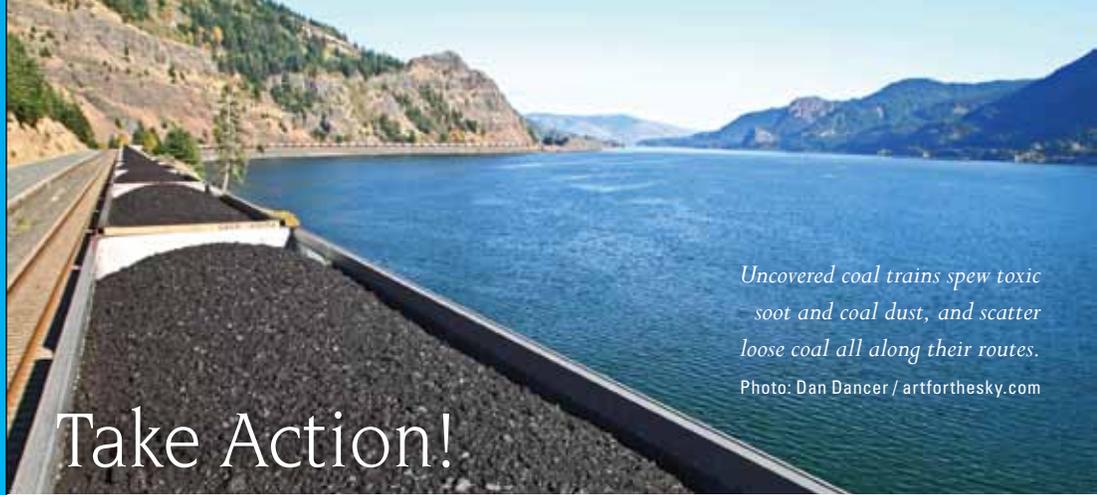
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Link to us on Twitter and Facebook
from our website: www.gorgefriends.org



*Uncovered coal trains spew toxic
soot and coal dust, and scatter
loose coal all along their routes.*

Photo: Dan Dancer / artforthesky.com

Take Action!

Comment on Coal Today

Coal companies are proposing to transport nearly 150 million tons of coal annually through the Columbia River Gorge on uncovered mile-and-a-half long coal trains and massive barges. Headed for five proposed coastal export terminals to be shipped to Asian markets, these coal shipments would dramatically increase diesel pollution and spew toxic coal dust all along their route through the Gorge.

Now, the Gateway Pacific Terminal just outside Bellingham, WA, has opened its first public comment period for *anyone and everyone* to weigh-in. This huge proposed terminal would require up to eighteen additional trains each day through the Columbia River Gorge. This is the first proposal to begin an

Environmental Impact Statement, which will set crucial precedents for the region.

Please submit your comments today about coal exports traveling through the Gorge. This comment period is vitally important! Unless they receive thousands of comments from *all across the region*, **Gorge impacts may not be considered at all.**

Contact the Army Corps of Engineers, the Whatcom County Council, and the Washington Department of Ecology at the address below. Be sure to include this subject line:

Docket #COE-2012-0016: Gateway Pacific Terminal coal export proposal draft EIS scoping comments.

Mr. Randel Perry
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
comments@eisgatewaypacificwa.gov

Citizen Action Makes the Difference!

Your action to oppose coal shipments is crucial to our success. Visit our website and click "Protect the Gorge" to send your letter today.

www.gorgefriends.org

Oregon

Sen. Ron Wyden, (202) 224-5244
<http://wyden.senate.gov/contact/>

Sen. Jeff Merkley, (202) 224-3753
senator@merkley.senate.gov

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
<http://murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm>

Sen. Maria Cantwell, (202) 224-3441
<http://cantwell.senate.gov/contact/>

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

Rep. Norm Dicks, (202) 225-5916

Rep. Doc Hastings, (202) 225-5816

Rep. Jay Inslee (202) 225-6311

Email your **Congressional Representative** by logging on to www.house.gov/writerep/

Cover photo: Upper Oneonta Falls in winter. Photo: © Danielle D. Hughson

Director's Letter

Two years ago, Friends of the Columbia Gorge launched its first *Step Up for the Gorge* Matching Gift Campaign challenging individuals to join the organization or “step up” their giving with an increased gift. These “step up” gifts were matched by a few generous donors who challenged the organization to step up by taking on this ambitious campaign. The money raised greatly exceeded expectations and we put it to work immediately.

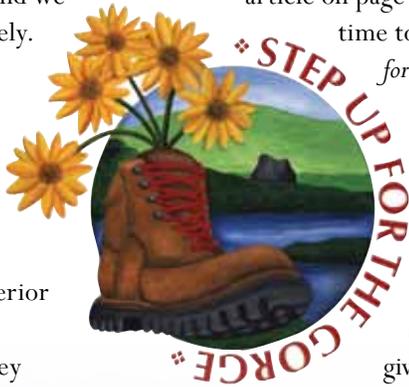
Funds raised from the *Step Up* campaign helped us hire a former advisor to President Clinton who made the final case to Secretary of Interior Salazar to not support a Gorge casino. The money raised helped push us forward in settlement discussions with PGE to close the Boardman coal-fired power plant and provide \$1 million to Gorge protection and restoration. Finally, the funds helped ensure that the Condit Dam was breached and removed, allowing salmon

to return to areas they had not inhabited in over a century.

Despite the success of the campaign, we understood that if we tried to do a *Step Up* campaign every year, the enthusiasm would fade and donor fatigue would set in. However, as we head into the final weeks of 2012, the threat of coal exports through the Gorge and the growing excitement about *Gorge Towns to Trails* (see article on page 4) make this the perfect time to launch our second *Step Up for the Gorge* Campaign.

This time, several committed donors are stepping up to offer this matching donation challenge. So we are dedicating November and December, our biggest giving months, to raising \$50,000 in new and increased gifts. Every new and increased dollar will be matched dollar-for-dollar by some of our most dedicated and generous supporters.

Unlike the election campaigns that just passed, Friends of the Columbia Gorge does not survive and thrive in bursts



Kevin Gorman sporting the *Step Up for the Gorge!* logo on his shirt. Photo: Justin Carroll

fueled by an influx of outside money. Our overwhelming support comes from you. The *Step Up* campaign is a gentle reminder that the only way Friends of the Columbia Gorge can step up to the challenges we face is if our members are taking that same step with us.

Please consider being a part of this campaign with an end-of-year contribution. To paraphrase Neil Armstrong, one small step from you can mean one giant leap for Gorge protection.

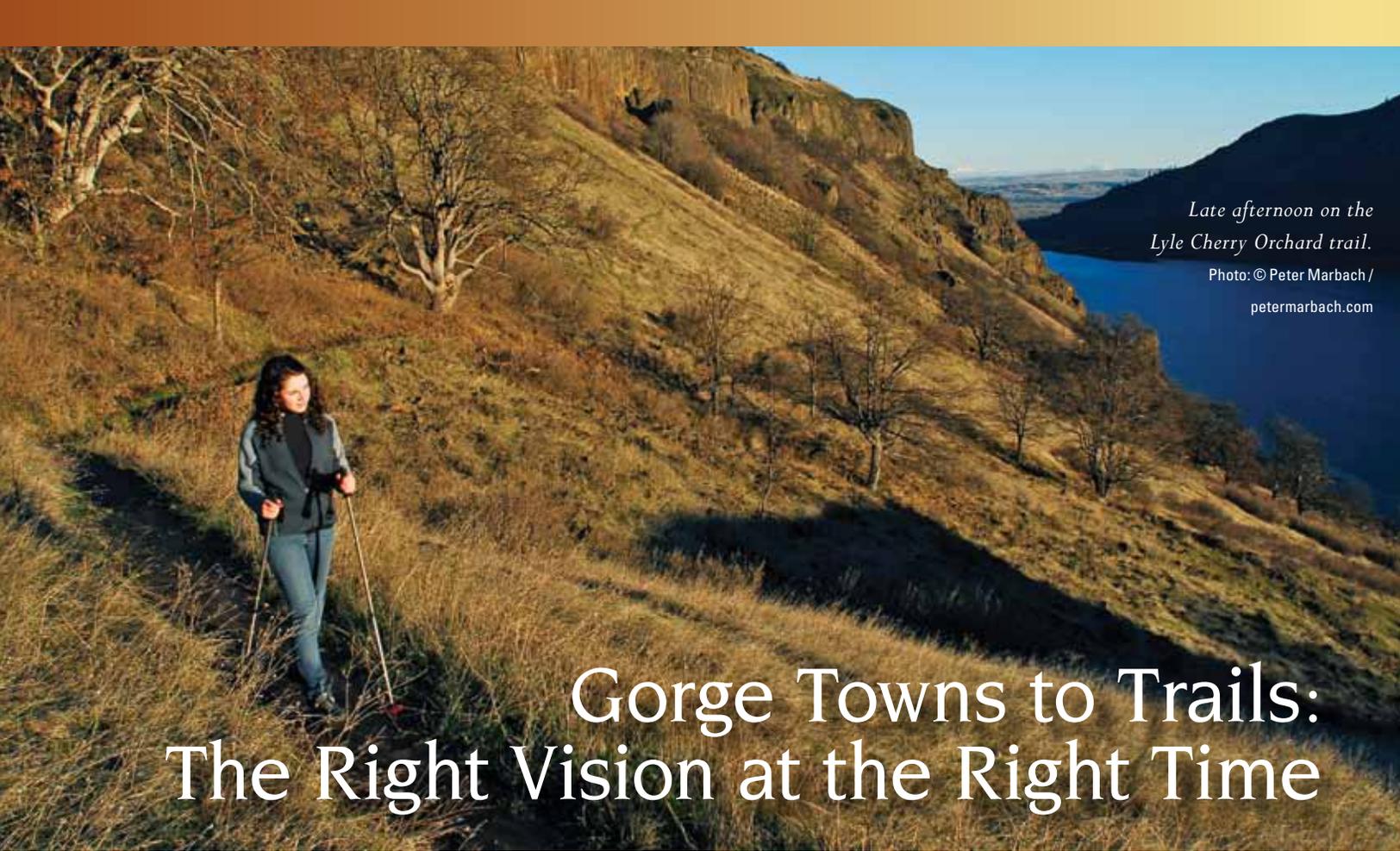
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Kevin Gorman'.

Kevin Gorman, Executive Director
kevin@gorgefriends.org

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.

Autumn view from Cape Horn.

Photo: Kyle Strauss



Late afternoon on the
Lyle Cherry Orchard trail.

Photo: © Peter Marbach /
petermarbach.com

Gorge Towns to Trails: The Right Vision at the Right Time

Renee Tkach, Gorge Towns to Trails Coordinator, renee@gorgefriends.org

Long before anyone started talking about “sustainability,” the concept was embedded in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act.

More than 25 years ago, Congress passed the Scenic Area Act, a one-of-a-kind conservation model that President Ronald Reagan signed into law. Like most place-based environmental legislation, the Scenic Area Act calls for protection – in this case of the scenic landscapes, habitat for wildlife, and cultural resources that fill the Gorge, as well as promoting recreation enhancements. But the law also calls for supporting local economies, as consistent with its first protection mandate.

A quarter century later, Friends of the Columbia Gorge is launching the first Gorge-wide project to focus on both purposes of the National Scenic Area Act: our *Gorge Towns to Trails* project. *Gorge Towns to Trails* is a vision for a

comprehensive trail system linking Gorge communities to the protected National Scenic Area lands. The program supports low-impact recreation, benefits tourism, and protects and enhances the natural landscapes of the Gorge.

A Clear Need

As the Gorge gains worldwide attention (*National Geographic Traveler* magazine recently ranked the Columbia Gorge 6th in the world among 133 iconic, sustainable destinations), the need for recreation infrastructure is growing. Yet right now, congested recreation areas often exceed capacity and unauthorized trails are damaging sensitive lands. Further, Gorge communities do not benefit optimally from this increased recreation. Millions of visitors drive through Gorge towns on their way to and from trailheads, without stopping in these communities.

Gorge Towns to Trails will establish trail systems starting and ending in Gorge communities, to connect communities with the natural areas surrounding them. These systems would allow easy access into spectacular National Scenic Area lands for visitors and local residents alike, as well as create the opportunity for multi-day trekking, as found in Europe. Approximately 80 percent of the sixty miles of potential *Gorge Towns to Trails* corridors are already in public hands. This project seeks to finish the connections and allow for sustainable recreation planning.

Gorge Towns to Trails will protect key lands that are vulnerable to logging and other inappropriate development. It will expand recreation opportunities by opening access to hidden waterfalls and magnificent vistas, providing a relief valve to more heavily frequented areas. Using trails that feed into communities,

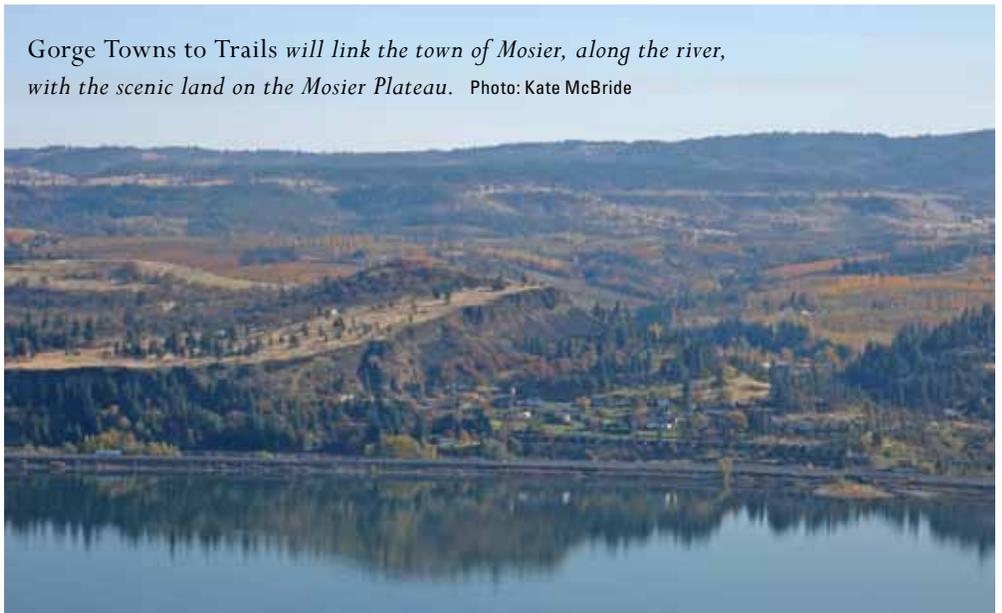
recreation users are more likely to support local Gorge businesses.

This effect is already apparent with Friends members who patronize Gorge businesses as a result of our *Gorge Towns to Trails*-themed hikes. Gorge tourism leaders say they have all the business they can handle in the summer, but desire an expansion of tourism in the “shoulder” seasons of spring and fall, and the transformation of the Gorge from a day-use area to a multi-day destination. Long, linear connections between communities will allow for multi-day excursions using bed-and-breakfasts, yurts at campgrounds, and perhaps even hut-to-hut opportunities, eventually.

Federal, State and Local Support

Since Friends launched the *Gorge Towns to Trails* effort last year, we’ve made huge strides in building support for the project. Recently, U.S. Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell of Washington, Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley of Oregon, and Rep. Earl Blumenauer of Oregon signed a letter to the U.S. Forest Service, praising the *Gorge Towns to Trails* concept as a “unique opportunity” to advance Gorge preservation and sustainable economic opportunities, and urging the Forest Service to give the plan strong consideration. The vision has received

Gorge Towns to Trails will link the town of Mosier, along the river, with the scenic land on the Mosier Plateau. Photo: Kate McBride



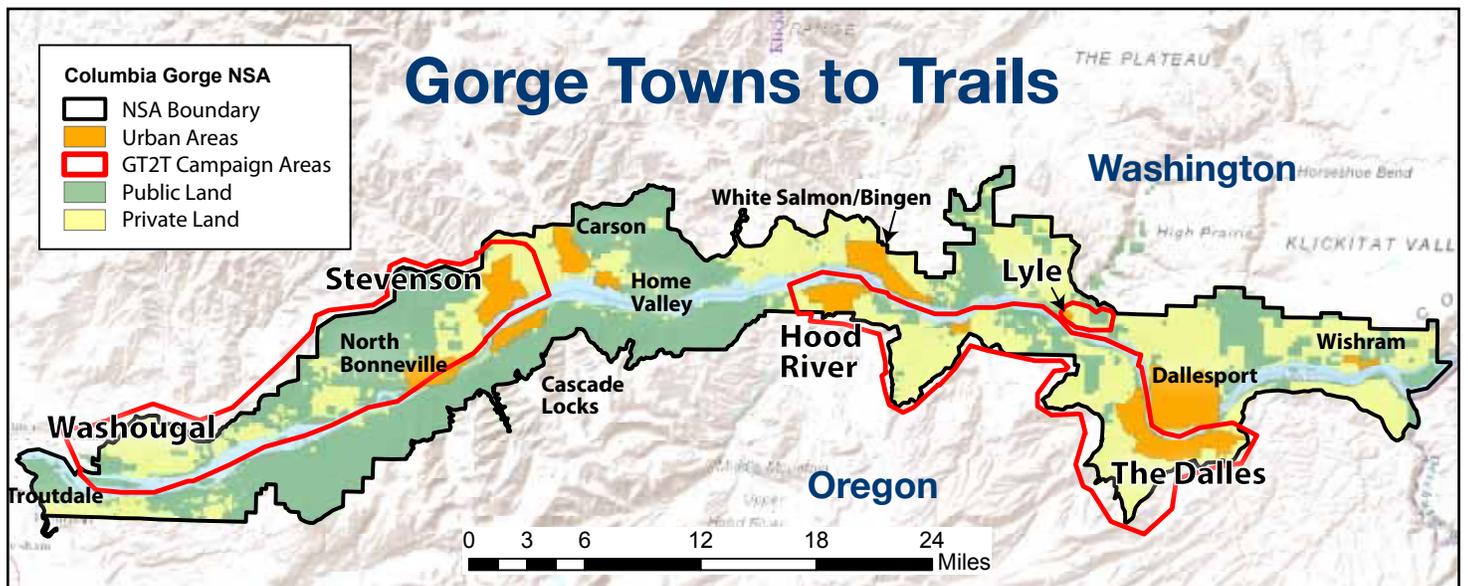
support from partners including the National Park Service, Beacon Rock State Park, the communities of Washougal, North Bonneville, Stevenson, Mosier, and Lyle, and the Skamania County Chamber of Commerce. In total, more than forty entities have listed themselves as supporters of the vision.

From Vision to Reality

Turning *Gorge Towns to Trails* from an exciting vision to an on-the-ground reality first requires securing key lands that provide the links to literally connect Gorge towns to trails. Friends’ land trust is already meeting with landowners on some of those links and will launch a fundraising campaign to help us secure

these lands. We are also working with Congress to secure federal funds to allow the Forest Service to purchase lands from willing sellers. Friends has hired Josh Kardon, former chief of staff to Senator Wyden and John Engber, former state director for Senator Patty Murray, to help us in these efforts. Friends of the Columbia Gorge has a long record of successfully advocating for federal funds for public land acquisition, resulting in upwards of \$50 million appropriated and more than 40,000 acres purchased for public benefit.

The time is right for *Gorge Towns to Trails*, providing a legacy that will benefit the Gorge and its communities for generations to come. For more information, visit www.gorgefriends.org. ■



Map: Ryan Cooper, NPS. Updates: Kathy Fors. Sources: ESRI, DeLorme, TANA, USGS, NPS

Helping Hands on Land Trust Lands

Kate McBride, Land Trust Manager, kate@gorgefriends.org



Stewardship volunteer Larry Richardson, taking a break at the Mosier Plateau. Photo: Merritt Hoeh

Acquiring land to protect is exciting for Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust, but management and stewardship of these lands is a high priority – for us and for our members.

Land Trust and stewardship volunteers set new records this year, not only helping to create and build new trails, but also removing invasive plant species. More

than 150 Friends participated in thirteen stewardship activities this year, providing nearly 740 volunteer hours on our lands. This show of commitment topped the volunteer participation on land trust lands in 2011 by double.

Our efforts started early this year, out above Lyle, with hardy volunteers braving winter winds and cold weather to hack back

poison oak on the Lyle Cherry Orchard Trail, before the spring hiking season began. Further to the west, volunteers worked at the new Nancy Russell Overlook at Cape Horn, cleaning up the trail and putting in native plants.

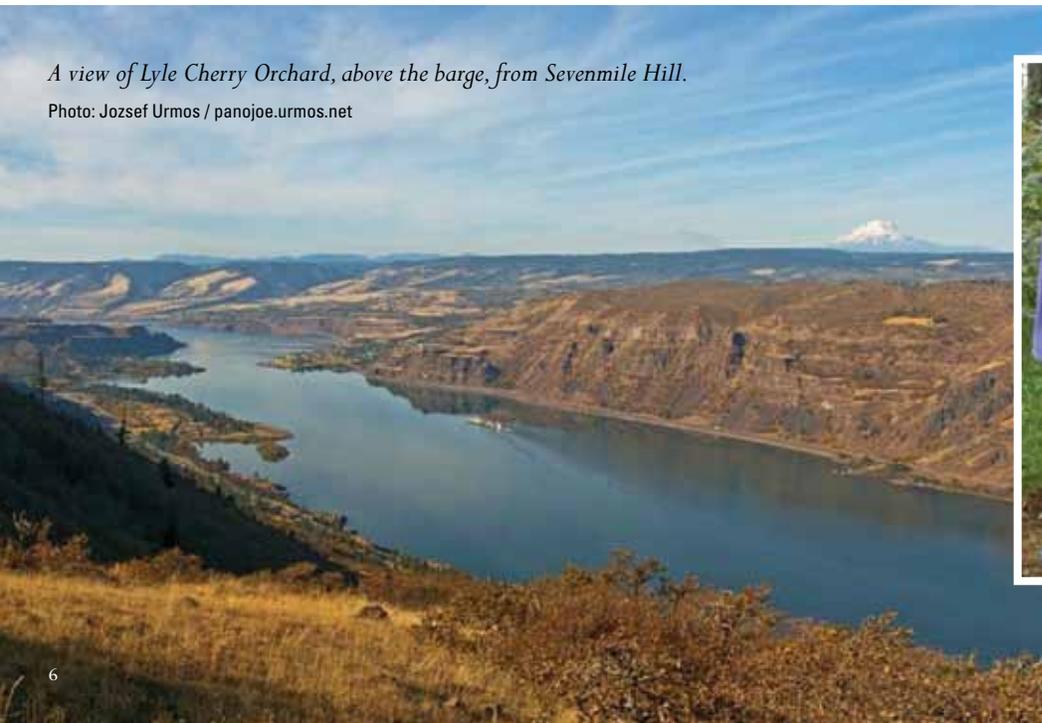
From pulling and hacking back Himalayan blackberries, to cutting teasel and thistle, to beginning construction of our first *Gorge Towns to Trail* trail at the Mosier Plateau, enthusiastic participants from Gorge communities were joined by volunteers from the Portland and Vancouver areas to make this the most productive stewardship year in Friends history.

Volunteer Ellie Hughes, from Portland, is a great example of this dedicated volunteer spirit. Ellie has become such an avid supporter of *Gorge Towns to Trails* (see article on page 4) that she used vacation time from her job to stay in the Gorge while she hiked and worked on our stewardship projects. Thanks to Ellie and so many others, for walking the talk!

We'll be hosting more stewardship events in 2013, to finish our Mosier Plateau trail and begin vision work for an improved trail system at the Lyle Cherry Orchard. Check for scheduled dates on our website at www.gorgefriends.org, and in our upcoming newsletters. ■

A view of Lyle Cherry Orchard, above the barge, from Sevenmile Hill.

Photo: Jozsef Urmos / panojoe.ursos.net



Volunteers on the trail at Cape Horn.

Photo: Maegan Jossy

Bald Eagle Viewing

Maegan Jossy, Outdoor Programs Coordinator
 maegan@gorgefriends.org

Join us to view the winter migration of bald eagles to the Klickitat River, out near Lyle. Wildlife Biologist Cathy Flick will bring spotting scopes and introduce us to eagles that nest in the area. This is an easy outing, very little elevation, usually walking less than a mile. The exact date and more details will be announced in early January, when we know how this season's migration is going.



Photo: A bald eagle soaring above the Columbia Gorge.

Photo: Ken Denis

Friends' Bald Eagle outing is a great opportunity to enjoy the Gorge in winter, and learn about the amazing species who make it their home. Visit www.gorgefriends.org/hikes to register.

Photo: Ann Campbell

Good Friends!

Anyone who has met or spoken with any of Friends' staff has probably noticed our friendly demeanor and relaxed, cheerful attitude as we go about advocating for the Gorge. Why the perpetual glow? Because Friends of the Columbia Gorge is a great place to work. We love our jobs and love the opportunity to be protecting the Columbia River Gorge.

Recently, *Oregon Business* magazine officially confirmed what we already knew, by ranking Friends #7 (small organization category) on its annual "100 Best Nonprofits to Work for in Oregon" list. The magazine's rankings were based on anonymous questionnaires completed by employees at Oregon-based non-profit organizations.



Friends' staff goofing around in the Gorge. Back row, from left: Kevin Gorman, Michael Lang, Peter Cornelison, Nathan Baker, Stan Hall, and Rick Till. Front, from left: Marilyn Lipko, Nanita Sammons, Maegan Jossy, Sandy Wright, Kate McBride, Samantha Lockhart, and Renee Tkach.

Our thanks to everyone who volunteered this year on our hikes, in the office, at our stewardship projects, and tabling at events. And kudos to everyone who wrote letters, contacted decision makers, and offered public comments on behalf of Gorge protection. We've had a fantastic year, thanks to you. Happy Holidays!

Winter view from the Mosier Plateau.

Photo: Aubrey Russell



Failure to Protect Resource Lands Challenged

Nathan Baker, Staff Attorney, nathan@gorgefriends.org

In September, Friends of the Columbia Gorge and Save Our Scenic Area filed suit challenging a decision by the Skamania County Board of County Commissioners to lift a development moratorium from thousands of acres of unzoned land in Skamania County. The county's decision threatens forest and agricultural lands, fish and wildlife habitat, and open spaces throughout the county, including lands bordering the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

The lands involved in the lawsuit have never been zoned, leaving them potentially open for large-scale energy facilities, factories, and other industrial uses, rather than channeling such uses into appropriately designated zones. In addition, because most of these unzoned

lands contain commercial timber, Skamania County has been required by Washington state law since 1991 to designate them for protection as forest lands. The county also missed a mandatory December 2008 deadline under state law to update its planning regulations to better protect sensitive fish and wildlife habitat and other important resources by, among other things, incorporating best available science and best management practices.

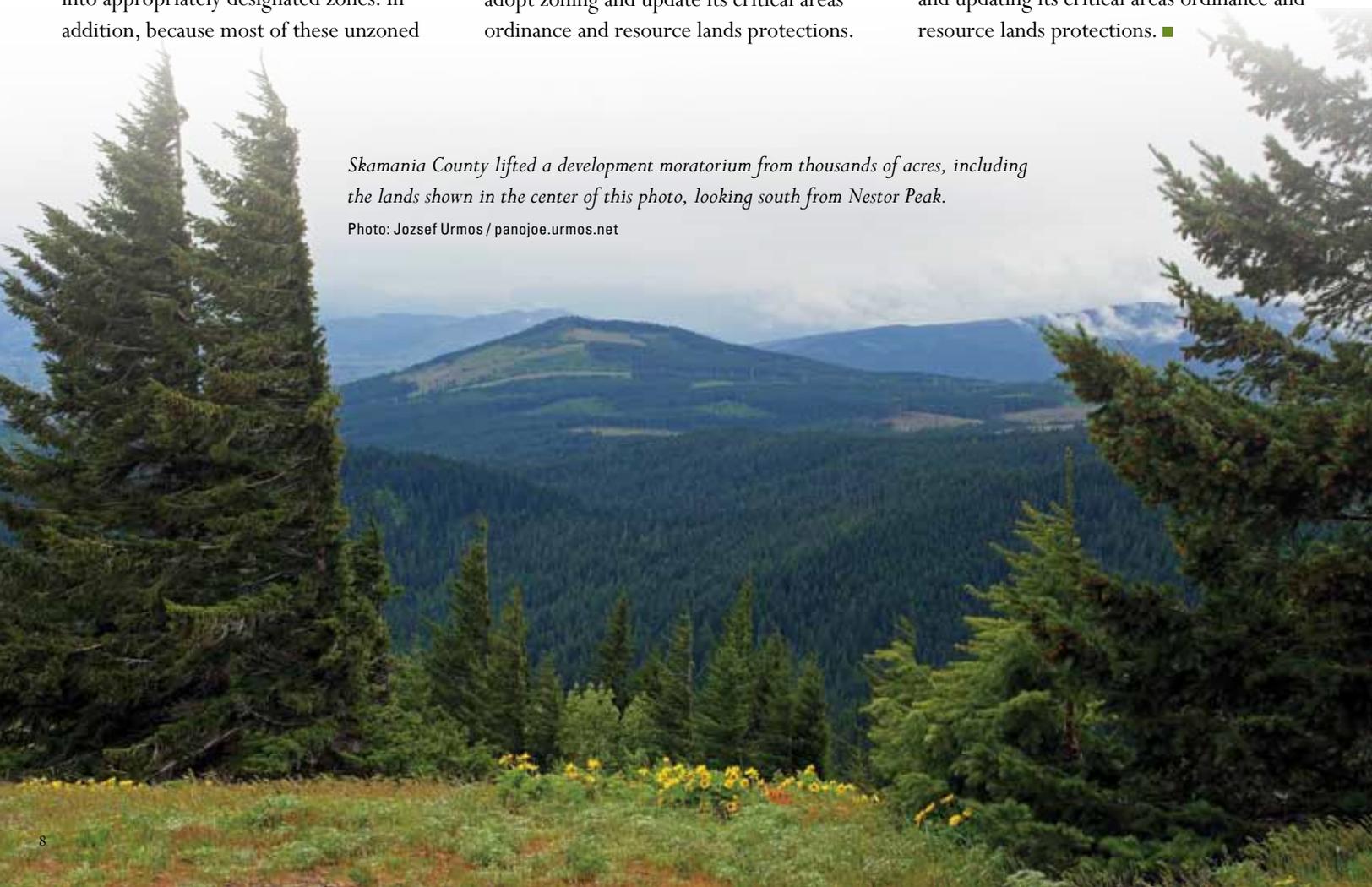
Beginning in 2007 and lasting for approximately five years, Skamania County had a stopgap measure in place: a moratorium that prevented development and forest practice conversion activities on the unzoned lands until the county could adopt zoning and update its critical areas ordinance and resource lands protections.

Unfortunately, Skamania County decided in August 2012 to repeal its moratorium for the majority of its remaining unzoned lands. The county's decision opens the floodgates to unplanned development and makes it easier for destructive projects like the Whistling Ridge Energy Project – a large-scale commercial wind energy facility proposed in a spotted owl protection area adjacent to the National Scenic Area – to go forward.

The time has long since come for Skamania County to adopt zoning to protect its magnificent resources, economy, and quality of life. Accordingly, Friends' lawsuit seeks to require Skamania County to comply with state law by adopting appropriate zoning, designating commercial forest lands, and updating its critical areas ordinance and resource lands protections. ■

Skamania County lifted a development moratorium from thousands of acres, including the lands shown in the center of this photo, looking south from Nestor Peak.

Photo: Jozsef Urmos / panojoe.ursos.net



Coal companies have ramped up pressure to speed approval of export facilities along the Columbia River.

Communities, Tribes Oppose Coal Exports

Michael Lang, Conservation Director
michael@gorgefriends.org

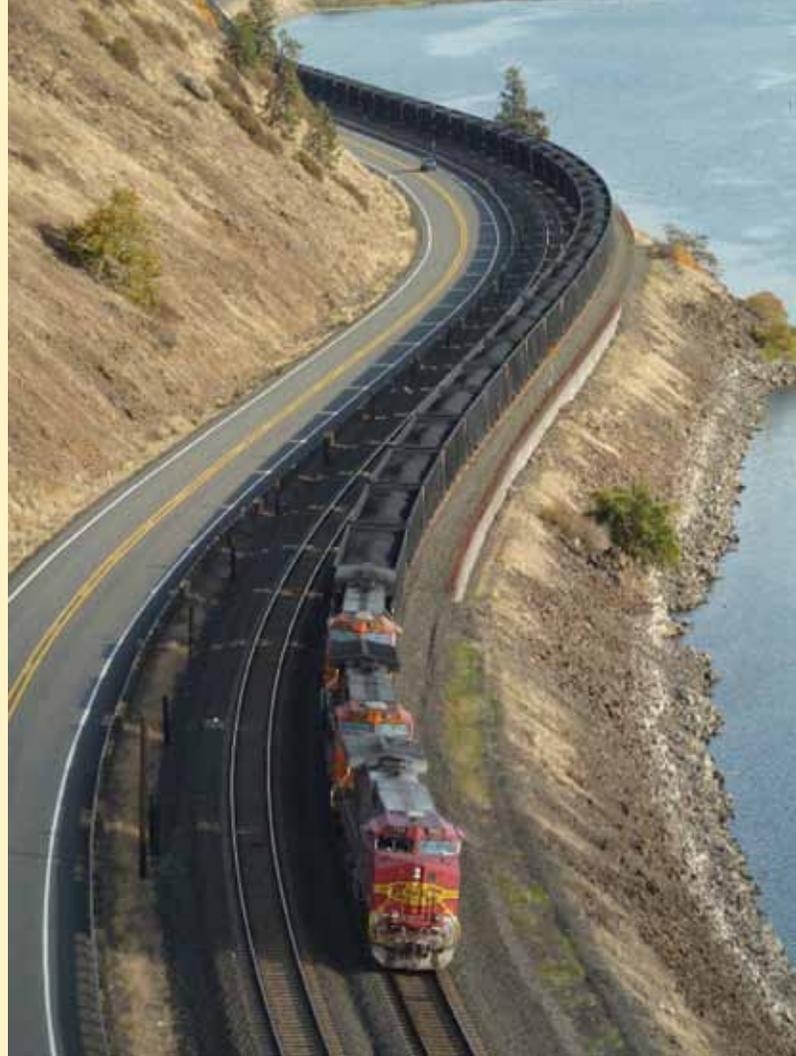
The Oregon cities of The Dalles and Portland have more in common than their proximity to the Columbia River. Both are now on record raising concerns about the impacts of proposals to transport millions of tons of coal through their communities for export to Asia.

In September, The Dalles, Portland, and the Metro Council adopted resolutions calling for a thorough environmental review of the impact of five coal export proposals through the Columbia Gorge that cumulatively would double U.S. coal exports.

Tribal Nations across the Northwest have warned federal officials that coal export projects could harm salmon runs and tribal health, and may also violate treaty rights. In September, in a stunning display of tribal solidarity, a coalition of fifty-seven Northwest Tribes called on the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to “conduct a full environmental analysis for all six proposals to transport and export coal through their shared lands and waters.”

These resolutions are timely, as coal companies have ramped up pressure to speed approval of export facilities along the Columbia River at the Port of Morrow in Boardman, Oregon, and at the Gateway Pacific Terminal near Bellingham, Washington.

Ambre Coal, an Australian Company, has applied for permits to build an export terminal in Boardman to facilitate the export of 8.8 million tons of coal per year. Coal would be transported 1,000 miles by rail from the Powder River Basin in Wyoming to Boardman, then loaded on barges, shipped to St. Helens, Oregon, and then transferred to Panamax freighters bound for Asian markets.



Opposition is mounting as coal companies push for increased coal shipments through the Columbia Gorge. Photo: Tracy Aue

Ambre needs Corps of Engineers approval of a permit application under the Federal Harbors Act. These permits trigger National Environmental Policy Act review and should require the preparation of a full Environmental Impact Statement. Ambre also needs approval from the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) for a removal and fill permit. Governor Kitzhaber has called for a full environmental review of the cumulative effects of this and other export proposals and should use his authority under state law to have the DSL deny the removal and fill permits.

In Bellingham, Washington, a proposal to export up to 54 million tons of coal, transported by rail through the Gorge, has begun an environmental scoping process. Tribes, communities, and members of the public are encouraged to submit comments before January 21, 2013, on the scope of environmental review and potential impacts.

Visit www.gorgefriends.org for more information, and see the “Take Action” section on page 2 of this newsletter to find out how you can help stop coal exports through the Columbia River Gorge! ■

Sandy Wright, Development Director
sandy@gorgefriends.org

Step Up for the Gorge!

A match will make your gift go even further.

We're back with another **Step Up for the Gorge!** giving campaign. A group of donors have created a matching fund of \$50,000 this year, which they are offering to us only if we can match their offer, by raising a matching \$50,000 from you, our membership.

These Friends members are stepping up with large contributions, but they want you to step up to meet them half way. **Step Up for the Gorge!** challenges Friends members to increase their giving to preserve the place they love. The program this year offers to match:

- New membership gifts at 100%.
- For current members, any amount above your giving total for 2011.

The campaign runs through December 31, 2012, or until matching funds are met. Your gift to the **Step Up for the Gorge!** campaign will help our programs be stronger, bigger, and better. And best of all, by stepping up, you will leave your mark on the Gorge, without leaving a mark on the Gorge! ■



Give to Friends through the Give!Guide

Look for Friends of the Columbia Gorge in the *Willamette Week Give!Guide*, on news stands now. Make a gift to Friends through the *Give!Guide* website, and you'll receive incentives that just might help you feel even more generous! REI, our business partner, is offering thermal camping mugs to all donors who give gifts greater than \$20.



Last year, our mission in the Gorge, plus incentives by *Willamette Week* and other sponsors, inspired \$42,000 in contributions. Help us be one of the top nonprofits again this year. Visit wweek.com/giveguide and donate today. ■

All photos: Michael Horodyski / mjhpdx.com

An Evening with Friends

The board and staff of Friends extended a heartfelt thank you to members of the Conservators and Guardians giving circle. Our annual "Evening with Friends" honors those who give \$1,000 or more annually to support Friends' Gorge protection work.





View from a snowy hillside in Skamania County. Photo: Lydie Boyer

Featured Hike:

Winter Wonders in the Gorge

Maegan Jossy, Outdoor Programs Coordinator
maegan@gorgefriends.org

The Columbia Gorge displays different faces and features through the year, from early wildflowers in spring, to shady forests in summer, bright open landscapes in fall, and icy beauty in winter. Best of all, with an extra layer of warmth and good boots, the Gorge can be hiked year-round.

This year, our sunny October delayed the rains, so mushrooms are popping up later than usual. Unassuming and often overlooked, mushrooms provide amazing ecosystem services, especially in their role as primary decomposers. Emerging through duff or in the bark of old trees, they break down branches and fallen trees and recycle vital nutrients back into the soil.

In the Gorge, the trails in the Herman Creek area are great places to see numerous shapes, sizes, and colors of mushrooms and related fungi. Just be sure to never taste a wild mushroom, or touch food if you have touched one, unless you are a qualified mycologist!

During winter, Gorge trails are quiet and the leaves have fallen, revealing new and different views. The waterfalls fill up, and whether iced-over or flowing, they are spectacular in winter. Many trails at lower elevations remain nearly snow-free, so grab your hat and gloves and go hiking. A few of our favorite winter areas include: Latourell Falls, Wahclella Falls, and Elowah Falls, as well as the wide open spaces east of Hood River.

Visit www.gorgefriends.org/planyourownhike for hike information and driving directions. ■



Gorge mushrooms. Photo: Oliver Dalton

Special Gifts

July 25, 2012 – October 10, 2012

IN HONOR OF SUZANNE BADER
SUSAN VANDEWATER

IN HONOR OF ED CASWELL
MARY LOU MCCLUNG

IN HONOR OF JOE EARHART
NOAH BARISH

IN HONOR OF PHILIP HEID
HARVEY SCHMIDT

IN HONOR OF LAWRENCE AND
VELMA SHADBOLT
LARRY SHADBOLT

IN HONOR OF GRACE WEINSTEIN
LEIGH KNOX

IN HONOR OF MAX WILKINS
BARBARA AND BRUCE HAMILTON

IN HONOR OF NORMA WILLIAMS
SONIA CAIRNS

IN MEMORY OF MARJORIE S. ABRAMOVITZ
MARSHALL GOLDBERG

IN MEMORY OF BETTY BONHAM
KATHY HULL

IN MEMORY OF VIC CLAUSEN
SIDNEY CLAUSEN

IN MEMORY OF SANDRA COHEN
BRUCE FOLLANSBEE

IN MEMORY OF NICHOLAS DODGE
FRIENDS OF NICHOLAS DODGE AT
THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

IN MEMORY OF JOHN GIANI
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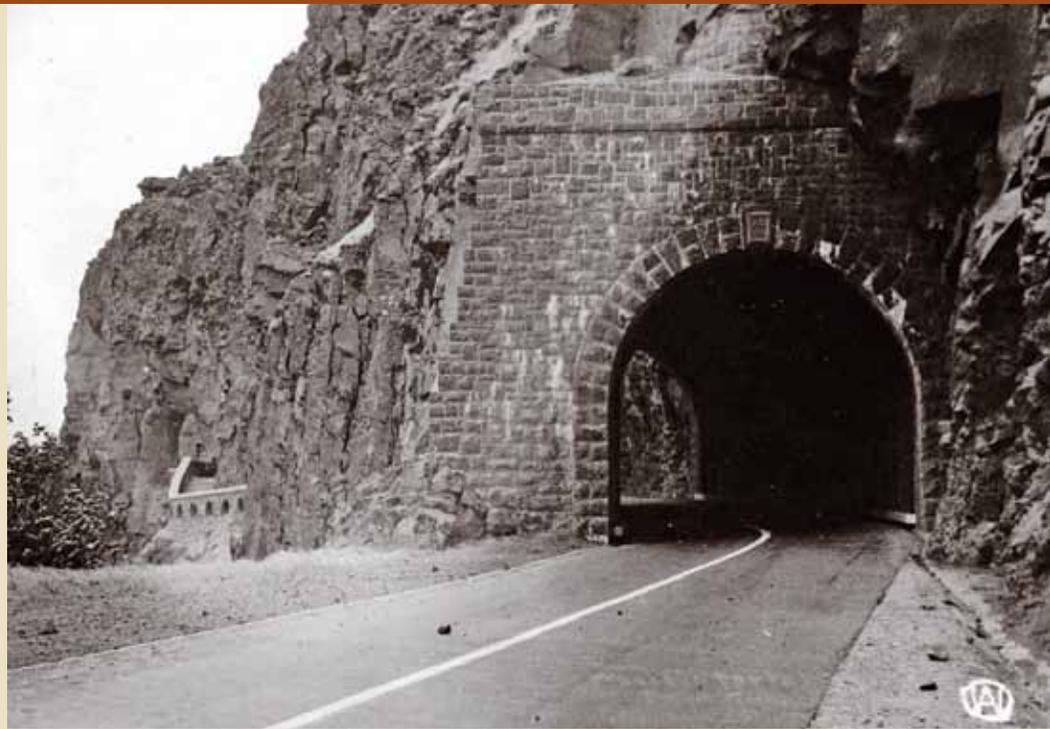
Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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

Know Your Gorge: *Innovations on the Columbia River Highway*

The Historic Columbia River Highway is renowned the world over for its iconic curves, engineering feats, and awe-inspiring views. Few people are aware, however, that the highway was also the birthplace of a traffic safety measure that has since become a national standard: painting yellow stripes down the centers of highways.

The mastermind behind this innovation was Multnomah County Sheriff's Deputy Peter Rexford, who was part of a patrol unit created in 1918 to police Multnomah County's section of the then-new highway. As described by Jewel Lansing and Fred Leeson in their 2012 book *Multnomah: The Tumultuous Story of Oregon's Most Populous County*, Rexford believed that painting a yellow



West portal of the Mosier Twin Tunnels, circa 1922. Photo: Ralph Eddy

line down the center of the highway would help drivers stay on their side of the road, especially in inclement weather.

Although the Multnomah County Commissioners at first declined to fund Rexford's idea, Rexford and his boss, Chief Deputy Sheriff Martin Pratt, were not deterred. Pratt paid from his own pocket for the project, and the first stripe was painted along the highway from Crown Point to Multnomah Falls.

The experiment was successful, and quickly caught on. By 1926, both Multnomah County and the State of Oregon were painting yellow stripes down the centers of all their highways. Today, painted stripes are used on highways throughout the country. The earliest documented use of this simple yet effective safety measure was in the Gorge, on the Columbia River Highway. ■

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