

FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

Celebrating 25 years 1980-2005

Fall 2005 Newsletter



Friends Celebrates 25 Years and Salutes Founder

By Jane Harris, Development Director, jane@gorgefriends.org

Friends of the Columbia Gorge celebrated our 25th anniversary with a gala event on November 12th in the newly renovated Mark Building of the Portland Art Museum. The evening program was a fitting tribute to our founder Nancy Russell, a celebration of Friends' successes during 25 years of protecting the Gorge, and the official launch of our new land trust program.

Acting as master of ceremonies, Al Jubitz guided the attendees through a seamless, heartfelt tribute that included personal reminiscences of his life-long friendship with Nancy, a beautiful video honoring her work, and eloquent tributes from Oregon Senator Ron Wyden and Congressman Earl Blumenauer.

The gala setting featured a stunning exhibit of early photos of the Gorge assembled by the Art Museum Curator of Photography Terry Toedtemeier, including very early and rare photos of the Gorge by San Francisco photographer

Carlton Watkins. Watkins' remarkable black-and-white photos were taken in 1867 using mammoth plates from a camera that was hauled through the Gorge by horse and cart. Only two albums of these photos exist. One is at the Stanford Museum and the other, seen at this event, was recently restored by Mr. Toedtemeier and is on view in the photography exhibit in the Museum's new wing.

A beautiful display of early 1900s Gorge photos by scenic photographer Fred Kiser further connected the evening to Gorge history. This collection had been meticulously hand-tinted in a process common prior to the advent of color photography. The photo exhibit was accompanied by a textile display of large-scale weavings of classic Gorge scenes. Some of these textiles were specially produced for the event by program sponsor Pendleton Woolen Mills, including a piece measuring 7 ft. x 9 ft. that recreated a photo of Nancy hiking alone in the Gorge.

In looking back at the years of effort establishing Friends and fighting for Gorge protection, as well as the successes since the National Scenic Area Act was passed, Nancy commented, "We've made tremendous progress over the past 25 years, but the Gorge will always need strong advocates who don't bend to political pressure and weaken the protections we have in place. We will always need Friends of the Columbia Gorge."

Looking forward, the evening included a preview of Friends' future and a strong call for support of the new Friends of the

(continued on page 7)

Friends' 25th Anniversary festivities brought Nancy Russell, friend Al Jubitz, and Nancy's sister Betsy Smith together for an evening of celebration.

Photo: Lee Ann Gauthier

preserving a legacy

INSIDE:
Holiday Gift Insert

Executive Director's Letter

Where were you in November 1980?

Friends of the Columbia Gorge was founded in November 1980, and the question above came up frequently at our 25th Anniversary event last month. Many who attended our celebration were helping to start our fledgling organization in 1980 with Nancy Russell, Dave Cannard, Multnomah County Chair Don Clark and others. Other gala attendees were just starting families or finishing college or high school. Some were barely even toddlers.



Kevin Gorman was a high school cross country runner in 1980.

In November, 1980 I was a senior in high school in Michigan and captain of our cross country team. We went undefeated that year and won the state championship. It was a seminal moment in my life, and that effort reminds me of our work here to protect the Gorge. First, it demonstrated that dedication, perseverance, hard work, and focus can bring rich rewards. Second, it taught me that individual accolades pale in comparison to the achievements of a dedicated group of individuals working together.

Cross country races record the finishing places of the top five runners of each team, then add up all the places as the team score. The lowest-scoring team wins. At the state championship race, two other teams put three runners out in front of our first runner but our top five runners that year ran well and stayed together. And at the end of the race, we won. Those other teams could boast of all-state individual runners, but we were the state championship team that year.

That strong sense of teamwork came back to me as I was working on the documentary video to show at our anniversary event. While everyone attending the celebration left in awe of Nancy Russell's incredible accomplishments—and she indeed has been our all-star—my preparations leading up to that evening reminded me just how many other people have played critical roles in our success.

Thousands of individuals have volunteered, donated, governed, and worked for Friends over the past 25 years. Hundreds of new members join each year. The race to protect the Gorge is a long-distance journey that will be carried on by countless people for generations to come. Fortunately, Friends of the Columbia Gorge is an ever-evolving, ever-expanding organization with the vision, skills, and tools in place to achieve our goal. We're a championship team, and we look forward to the challenges and successes ahead.

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



Citizen Involvement

Outreach & Activities

By Betsy Toll, Outreach Coordinator, betsy@gorgefriends.org

Become a Friends Hike Leader!

This winter, Friends will launch an exciting hike leadership training program. Our goal is to have 10 to 15 new leaders ready to lead hikes for our spring season.

If you enjoy Friends hikes or have volunteered as a shepherd, now's your chance to be trained by experienced leaders to become a bona fide leader yourself. We welcome you to be part of our 2006 program. Here's the schedule:

The Big Picture: Thursday, Feb. 2, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Comprehensive background about Friends' history and mission, current Gorge issues, and our role in Gorge protection. (Light supper provided.)

Hike Leadership 101: Thursday, Feb. 9, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Nuts and bolts information about common procedures and best practices on the trails; safety and preparation; scenarios and situations that arise on hikes. (Light supper provided.)

First Field Day: Saturday, Feb. 18, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Meet to team



Friends' hike leaders have shared the wonders of the Columbia Gorge with hikers for 25 years.
Photo: Oliver Dalton

up with mentor leaders and take small groups out for Gorge hikes.

Second Field Day: Saturday, Feb. 25, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Team up with new mentor partner and hike on different trails.

Wrap-up date will be determined by the group. Friends-sponsored Red Cross first aid training can be

scheduled on an individual basis.

Space is limited, so register soon. Trainees will co-lead two spring hikes, and lead a hike in summer or fall. Thanks to a grant from REI, we are offering this training free of charge. For more information or to register, contact Cathy or Betsy at 503-241-3762 or hikes@gorgefriends.org. ■



Partnerships Strengthen Friends' Programs

Much of the success of our recent fall outdoor season can be attributed to the cooperative and supporting relationships we have with many groups and organizations.

Our partners included the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, the Army Corps of Engineers, Dog River Coffee Company, Skamania County Chamber of Commerce, Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center, the Oregon Zoo Condor Breeding Program, the Yakama Nation Wildlife

Resource Program, and the Confluence Project. Our friends at Norm Thompson also contributed their support to the program on California Condors and People of the Gorge.

The Lewis and Clark Bicentennial in Oregon fund supported our Lewis and Clark fall series.

And we're excited that our Land Trust program is getting special support from Norm Thompson's Sahalie line, with donations to Friends for every pair of Super Merino wool socks purchased. See www.sahalie.com for full details. ■



Conservation and Legal Program Highlights

In the Courts and in the Field...

By Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org

Environmental Review of Casino Proposals Begins

The scoping comment period for the National Environmental Policy Act review of the proposed casino came to a close on October 15 after five scoping meetings. Friends of the Columbia Gorge and its members and allies provided thousands of public comments raising concerns and opposition to the proposed 500,000-square-foot casino resort. Consultants for the casino project are now preparing the draft environmental impact statement, expected to be released for public comment in winter 2006. So many significant environmental problems have emerged with the Gorge casino proposal that the environmental review is likely to be delayed for some time.

Interest in restricting off-reservation casinos continues to build across the country and in Washington, D.C. Senator John McCain (R-AZ), Chairman of the

Senate Indian Affairs Committee, recently appeared in Portland and voiced his opposition to off-reservation casinos and his support for amendments to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. In the House, Rep. Richard Pombo (R-CA), Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee has drafted legislation that further restricts off-reservation tribal casinos. ■

Historic preservation and commercial exploitation

The new owners of a historic building in Corbett listed on the National Historic Register have proposed an amendment to the Gorge-wide Management Plan to allow opening a full-service restaurant and commercial events business at the site of the old inn, near the intersection of the Historic Highway and Larch Mountain Road. The owners of the building claim that they can't preserve the historic structure

unless they're allowed a restaurant, bar, and events facility. The building has been used exclusively as a residence since 1962, except for illegal operation as a restaurant in 1997-1998. New commercial uses within the scenic area are restricted to urban areas or special zones already dedicated to current commercial uses.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge has long supported historic preservation in the Columbia Gorge but we are concerned that large-scale commercial uses may be inconsistent with the National Scenic Area Act and may cause conflicts with neighboring property owners.

The Gorge Commission decided to expand the plan amendment to apply to all buildings eligible for listing on the National Historic Register. This could result in commercial uses being established in at least 54 old buildings within the scenic area. Neighbors of these properties are concerned that the noise, traffic, and parking generated by the commercial activities will harm their property values, disrupt the peace and quiet of their rural lifestyle, impact scenic views, and harass wildlife in the area.

As this issue plays itself out, Friends will make sure that historic preservation and Columbia River Gorge protection are balanced in a way that protects scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources of the Gorge, and also the rights of neighboring property owners. ■



Proposed casino site on Cascade Locks port land; the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail runs along Gorge cliffs in the background.

photo: Kevin Gorman



Tsagaglala, also called "She Who Watches," has looked down from the rocks of the Gorge for thousands of years. This world-famous pictograph and other Native American rock imagery may be endangered due to acid rain and fog.

Photo: Angie Moore

What's in the air? Winter acid rain and fog cloud the eastern Gorge

By Peter Cornelison,
Field Representative,
peter@gorgefriends.org

This spring the Forest Service released a scientific study that shocked the public and policymakers throughout the region. The study found that winter rain and fog in the eastern Gorge contains extremely high levels of acid, at times nearing the acidity of vinegar and rivaling Pittsburgh and other polluted areas in the Eastern U.S. Acid rain at these levels can kill fish and amphibians and harm soil and trees.

Two pollution sources near Boardman, Oregon, one hour east of The Dalles, are suspected of contributing to this problem.

The Boardman coal-burning power plant is among the dirtiest in the region and may be polluting 12 wilderness areas and national parks in the Northwest. The facility lacks pollution control devices typical on modern plants and should be retrofitted to reduce air pollution.

Nearby Threemile Canyon Farms, one of the nation's largest factory farms, has some 55,000 head of cattle and is suspected of emitting more ammonia gas than all other major sources in Oregon combined. Current Oregon regulations exempt factory farms from regulation and may violate the Clean Air Act. Friends has joined Northwest Environmental Defense Center and others in petitioning the EPA to require the removal of this exemption. ■

*The impact of mountain goat introduction on rare and native Gorge plants such as Longbeard hawkweed (*Hieracium longiberbe*), shown here, has not been determined.*

Photo: Angie Moore



Friends Challenges Mountain Goat Introduction Plan

By Matt VanderZanden,
Legal Program Intern

In April 2005, the U.S. Forest Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission entered into an agreement to release Rocky Mountain goats in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area near Cascade Locks. The agencies acted too hastily, however, and failed to review the project under the National Scenic Area Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. When the agencies declined to correct this mistake, Friends of the Columbia Gorge and In Defense of Animals (IDA) filed suit in federal court.

Friends is not generally opposed to wildlife releases in the Gorge, but the agencies' actions set a bad precedent of uninformed decision making. In particular, the agencies did not determine whether the goats might harm rare and endemic plant habitat. Additionally, the agencies provided little to no evidence to support their claim that Rocky Mountain goats are native to the Scenic Area.

After Friends and IDA filed suit, the agencies indefinitely postponed their plans to introduce mountain goats to the Scenic Area. Unless the agencies agree to perform the required analyses, Friends and IDA will request a ruling from the court. ■



Funding Gorge Protection

Development Director's Report

By Jane Harris, Development Director, jane@gorgefriends.org

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

received many gifts this fall in recognition of our 25th anniversary. Special thanks for your generous contributions honoring the exceptional dedication and accomplishments of Nancy Russell.

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GIFTS RECEIVED AFTER NOVEMBER 8 WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED
IN OUR WINTER 2006 NEWSLETTER

ADDITIONAL SPECIAL GIFTS
LISTED ON BACK COVER

25th Anniversary Gala...

(continued from page 1)

Columbia Gorge Land Trust. “We work incredibly hard to limit the incremental development of the Gorge,” commented Executive Director Kevin Gorman. “Now we are adding the ability to purchase land outright to ensure that it will

never be developed and will be open for the public to enjoy forever. The next 25 years will take us to a whole new level of Gorge protections and make it possible for the public to participate in saving the Gorge’s most important places.” ■

Dave Lund, left, and Friends’ Board Chair Ann Wheelock celebrated with Board Members Kim Gilmer and Dick Springer before the evening presentation.



Development Director Jane Harris, second from left, introduced her son Sam Jeffers to Friends members Mary and Laird Brodie.



Photo Curator Terry Toedtemeier and his wife Prudence Roberts enjoyed the special Gorge photography exhibit.

Photographer: Lee Ann Gauthier



Congressman Earl Blumenauer reminisced about Friends’ early days with Executive Director Kevin Gorman.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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* Gorge residents

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*IN MEMORY OF HER HUSBAND,
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ADDITIONAL SPECIAL GIFTS ON PAGE 6

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Then & Now Tunnel Vision

Construction of the Historic Columbia River Highway in the early 1900s included three impressive engineering accomplishments: the Oneonta, Mitchell Point, and Mosier Twin Tunnels. In the 1960s, as the highway fell into disuse, the Oneonta and Twin Tunnels were closed and filled in. Mitchell Point Tunnel was destroyed during construction of Interstate 84.

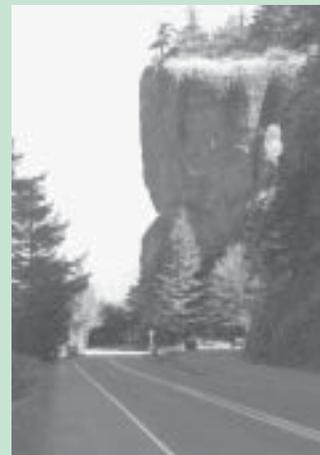
In 1999 the Mosier Twin Tunnels were re-opened for pedestrian and recreation uses due, in part, to the efforts of Nancy and Bruce Russell and Friends of the Columbia Gorge. This fall the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) announced its intention to reopen the 130-foot Oneonta Tunnel in 2006, creating a foot trail and bike path and additional parking for the Oneonta recreation area.

Even more exciting is ODOT's plan to reconnect the Historic Columbia River Highway from Cascade Locks to Hood River. The plan calls for a "new" Mitchell Point Tunnel to be blasted in the area south of the remnants of the original tunnel roadway. Recreating Mitchell Point Tunnel would serve to reverse one of the great historic losses of the Columbia Gorge. ■



Oneonta Tunnel was the next point of interest east of Multnomah Falls on the old Columbia River Highway.

Photos courtesy: Oregon Department of Transportation



The Historic Highway is currently re-routed around the rock bluff where Oneonta Tunnel was located.