

# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

*Protecting the Gorge Since 1980*

*Spring 2007 Newsletter*

## *Inside:*

Let's Clear the Air

*Page 4*



Cape Horn  
Clean-Up

*Page 7*



Measure 37  
Victory

*Page 8*



# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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# Take Action for Gorge Air!

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act and Management Plan require state agencies to adopt air quality strategies. Unfortunately, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has neglected taking any serious action to address Gorge air pollution. Visibility and air quality continue to worsen while large industries continue to pollute Gorge air.

Please urge DEQ to adopt a comprehensive Gorge air quality and visibility strategy *this year* that will:

- Protect and enhance air quality and visibility in the Columbia Gorge.

- Address all major sources of air pollution, both within and outside the Gorge.
- Include an effective combination of regulatory and voluntary measures.
- Specify timetables for implementation and measurable goals for air pollution reduction.

**Send comments today to:**

**Stephanie Hallock, Director,  
Department of Environmental Quality  
811 SW 6th Avenue, Portland 97204-1390  
[hallock.stephanie@deq.state.or.us](mailto:hallock.stephanie@deq.state.or.us)**

Or take action online at [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org).

*Above photo: Mount Adams and Burdoin Mountain as seen from Tom McCall Point. Photo: James Holloway*

*Active citizen support makes the difference!* Your actions for Gorge protection are crucial to our success. Contact your Senators and Representatives using the information below, or check [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) for other offices.

## Oregon

**Sen. Gordon Smith**, (202) 224-3753  
<http://gsmith.senate.gov/public/>  
**Sen. Ron Wyden**, (202) 224-5244  
<http://wyden.senate.gov/contact/>  
**Rep. David Wu**, (202) 225-0855  
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**Rep. Greg Walden**, (202) 225-6730  
**Rep. Peter DeFazio**, (202) 225-6416

## 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. Brian Baird**, (202) 225-3536  
**Rep. Doc Hastings**, (202) 225-5816  
**Rep. Norm Dicks**, (202) 225-5916

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

*On the cover: Mount Hood as seen from Coyote Wall in Washington on a very good Gorge air quality day.*

Photo: Darryl Lloyd

# Director's Letter

At our annual meeting last month, Friends of the Columbia Gorge honored a woman who has been a Gorge wildflower enthusiast for decades and has a passion for buying land to protect it. If you assume I'm talking about Friends' founder Nancy Russell, this time you would be wrong.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge presented a Lifetime Achievement award to Barbara Robinson. Barbara has been a tireless volunteer for the Gorge and her contributions span beyond this organization's history. For nearly 30 years, she has watched over the eastern Gorge as a dutiful mother watches a beloved child. Let me give you three examples:

- Nearly 30 years ago, Barbara fell in love with the area now called the Rowena Plateau. A lover of wildflowers and dramatic landscapes, she knew cattle grazing could destroy it, so in 1978, using her own limited resources, Barbara purchased 34 acres on the Plateau for \$5,000, two years before Friends of the Columbia Gorge was founded. Soon after, The Nature Conservancy purchased the parcel from her for the same price, and Barbara began talking with Oregon State Parks



Photographer Ken Denis and Executive Director Kevin Gorman present a Lifetime Achievement award to Barbara Robinson at Friends' 2007 Annual Meeting. Photo: Bob Hansen

and a Portland woman named Nancy Russell about protecting the rest of the area. Today, several thousand acres at Rowena Plateau and Tom McCall Point are protected because of Barbara Robinson's first steps.

- Another example of Barbara's extraordinary contributions can be found surrounding the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center. Walking the grounds of this beautiful facility, it is hard to imagine that this land once held a cement plant. Barbara has put in hundreds of volunteer hours rehabilitating the land and planting native species. What surrounds the Discovery Center today is a labor of Barbara's love.

- Finally, Barbara helped lead the effort to open the Klickitat Trail and today serves on the Klickitat Trail Conservancy board of directors. She is the embodiment of consistency: leading hikes, participating in work parties, and patiently working with the state and federal agencies as they work to improve the trail.

Friends awarded Barbara a beautiful framed photo of the iconic eastern Gorge petroglyph *SheWhoWatches*. But it is perhaps more appropriate to refer to Barbara Robinson as *SheWho Gets Things Done*.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Gorman".

Kevin Gorman  
Executive Director

*For nearly 30 years, she has watched over the eastern Gorge as a dutiful mother watches a beloved child.*



Barbara Robinson shares her knowledge and love of the Gorge with hikers of all ages. Photo: Kevin Gorman

*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.*

# Let's Clear the Air in the Columbia Gorge

## Declining Gorge air quality requires action by agencies

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

Recent newspaper headlines say it all: “Scenic and Acidic,” and “Bad Air Days Ahead for the Gorge.”

The Columbia River Gorge is one of America's natural scenic treasures and an icon of the Pacific Northwest. And it is also one of the most polluted airsheds of all protected areas in the West. Despite requirements of federal and state laws to protect air quality in areas like the Columbia River Gorge, the agencies responsible for that protection have been slow to respond.

In 2007, certain opportunities could lead to cleaner air in the Gorge, but this can only succeed if the public speaks out in support of significant Gorge air quality improvements.

### Air quality mandate

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act and its Management Plan require protection and enhancement of the Gorge's scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources, and adoption of a strategy for regulating air pollution affecting the Gorge. Related state laws require the Gorge Commission and state agencies to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the Scenic Area Act.

Yet 21 years after the Scenic Area Act passed into law, those agencies have not taken any meaningful steps to address air pollution in the Gorge.

This inaction is not due to lack of information. Air quality in the Columbia River Gorge has been studied since 1993; numerous studies have also examined where Gorge pollution is generated and the effects it is having on resources.

Monitoring and research shows that visibility is impaired 95% of the time

in the Gorge. High levels of nitrogen oxides, ammonia, and sulfur dioxides are adversely affecting Gorge ecosystems. Acid deposition in the eastern Gorge reaches the acidity of vinegar and is harming sensitive plant, fish and wildlife habitat. Cultural resources important to Columbia Gorge Tribes such as rock images and petroglyphs are jeopardized by the effects of pollution.

### Regional pollution sources

Major sources of air pollution are located at both ends of the Gorge. As the only sea-level passage through the Cascade Mountains, the Gorge acts like a funnel. During summer, winds blowing in from the west bring airborne pollutants generated in the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area. During fall and winter, winds carry pollution generated predominantly to the east.

West of the Gorge, major sources of Gorge air pollution appear to be shipping,

pulp mills, other industrial sources, cars and other mobile sources.

Recent studies such as the “Cause of Haze in the Gorge Report”<sup>1</sup> and “Who is Polluting the Columbia River Gorge”<sup>2</sup> identify two significant sources of air pollution located east of the Gorge near Boardman, Oregon: Threemile Canyon Farms, one of the largest dairy operations in the United States, and Portland General Electric's aging coal-fired power plant.

In 2005, Threemile Canyon Farms reported that their 52,300 dairy cows emitted up to 15,500 pounds of ammonia into the air daily, or 5.58 million pounds per year, or 75,000 pounds more than the nation's largest manufacturing source of ammonia air pollution. Ammonia emissions from large feedlots and dairy operations form ammonium nitrate, which causes haze. The worst measurements of haze in the Gorge were recorded during winter



and contained high levels of ammonium nitrate. Yet Threemile Canyon Farms has a permit for up to 90,000 head of cattle, which allows an increase of more than 70% in their herd size.

The PGE Boardman coal-fired power plant is the largest source of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides in the state of Oregon. The Forest Service has studied emissions from the PGE Boardman Plant and determined that they are a major cause of air pollution and visibility impairment in ten wilderness areas, one national park, and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Yet this power

plant is uncontrolled for sulfur dioxide emissions and has obsolete controls for nitrogen oxide emissions, pollutants which cause haze and damage to ecosystems.

### **Action this year**

Action to address air pollution in the Gorge may finally gain traction in 2007, the deadline for air quality agencies to adopt a Gorge-wide strategy to protect and enhance air quality in the Gorge. In April, an Oregon State Senate committee passed amendments supported by farmers, environmental groups, and downwind landowners requiring stronger standards

for large agricultural sources of air pollution like Threemile. Oregon will also move to adopt a federally-mandated “Regional Haze Rule” to improve visibility to “natural” levels in federally protected airsheds in Oregon by the year 2064.

In 2006, Oregon’s Environmental Quality Commission responded to public demands for meaningful reductions of toxic mercury emissions and adopted new rules to reduce mercury emissions from the PGE Boardman plant. Staff of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) originally proposed adoption of weak rules drafted by the Bush administration. Only after hundreds of letters poured into the agency from citizens demanding meaningful standards did the agency change course.

This was an important lesson: agencies responsible for environmental quality do not automatically assume that citizens want clean air and a healthy environment. We need to make it clear to DEQ that we don’t want the Gorge to be poisoned by mercury; we expect them to implement and enforce high standards for air quality.

Citizen action is imperative to demand that these agencies take action now to reduce air pollution in the Columbia Gorge. See our Gorge Air Quality alert on Page 2, or check [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org) to take action online today.

*Action to address air pollution in the Gorge may finally gain traction in 2007, the deadline for air quality agencies to adopt a Gorge-wide strategy to protect and enhance air quality in the Gorge.*



<sup>1</sup> Fenn, et al, Desert Research Institute, March 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Dan Jaffe, PhD, Northwest Air Quality, Inc., Dec. 2006.

*Photos taken from the Wishram air-quality monitoring station in the eastern Gorge on “good” (far left photo) and “poor” (near left photo) air-quality days. Photos: Courtesy U.S. Forest Service*

# Scenic Landscape Preserved

## Trophy houses averted

Kate McBride, Land Trust Manager  
kate@gorgefriends.org



*View looking west from the Russell property near Mosier.*

Photo: Kevin Gorman

In addition to Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust’s property acquisition efforts, we are currently setting the stage to facilitate the donation and transfer of approximately 600 acres owned by Friends founder Nancy Russell to the Land Trust. Over a span of nearly two decades, Nancy purchased 35 different Gorge properties to ensure their protection. About one-third of those parcels have already been transferred or sold into public ownership of agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, Washington State Parks, and Oregon State Parks.

One of the more spectacular parcels Nancy currently owns is a 43-acre Oregon property she

purchased in 2005, adjacent to the east end of the city of Mosier. The land’s open vistas provide views across the river west to Underwood Mountain and east toward Dalles Mountain Ranch.

This particular parcel sits directly across the river from Coyote Wall and is visible from numerous vantage points on Washington SR-14. Two small manufactured houses are currently on the property, but the real threat to this scenic parcel was the economic potential in replacing those dwellings with enormous “trophy” homes boasting million-dollar Gorge views. Instead, Nancy’s intention was to protect the land, and her donation of this property to Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust ensures that her intention will be honored.

The property also carries special meaning for Land Trust Manager Kate McBride. Kate’s great-grandparents once owned the property and she fondly remembers many long walks on the land with her grandfather

when she was a child. Kate describes those formative walks as a motivating factor in her becoming an advocate for land protection.

The Land Trust will eventually remove the current structures, return the land to its natural state, and pursue possibilities for creating public park and trail opportunities in the future.

## Land Sales/ Donations and Conservation Easement Inquiries

If you are interested in joining Nancy Russell by donating property inside or outside the Gorge to Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust, contact Kate McBride at 541-386-5268 or [kate@gorgefriends.org](mailto:kate@gorgefriends.org).



*The Russell property is visible for miles from both the Oregon and Washington sides of the river.*

Photo: Friends of the Columbia Gorge GIS



Volunteers will help remove fencing at Friends Land Trust property on Cape Horn.

Photo: Friends of the Columbia Gorge Archives

## Cape Horn Clean-Up Party

Renee Tkach, Outdoor Programs Coordinator  
[renee@gorgefriends.org](mailto:renee@gorgefriends.org)

It's spring clean up time at Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust's Cleveland Property at Cape Horn. Two work parties are scheduled, and we need lots of help. Mark your calendar, grab your work gloves and boots, and come lend a hand!

**Sunday June 9, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.** Help us take a big first step toward restoring this land to a more natural state by clearing cyclone fencing from a couple of acres and preparing it for recycling.

**Saturday July 7, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.** Join us for a "chop and pile" day, cutting non-native plants and piling them for removal.

Located high on the bluff above Washington SR-14 between Washougal and Stevenson, the Cleveland property has stunning views to the east and will be part of the 8-mile Cape Horn trail. For details and directions, contact Renee at 503-241-3762 x 103 or [renee@gorgefriends.org](mailto:renee@gorgefriends.org).

## Spring Hikes

Our spring hike season is in full bloom, with more member-only hikes, wildflower hikes, and special-focus outings such as geology, history, birding, and photography still to come. Check our schedule at [www.gorgefriends.org/hikes](http://www.gorgefriends.org/hikes) and join us for a wonderful hike in the Gorge.

## Wilderness Week, June 23 to July 1

Friends staff members are leading hikes into Gorge wilderness and proposed wilderness areas, in partnership with Oregon Wild.

**Sunday, June 24** – Lost Lake Circle, easy-moderate 5 miles, with Hood River Field Representative Peter Cornelison.



Beautiful Wahclella Falls is the destination for our June 30 Wilderness Week hike. Photo: Ken Denis

**Wednesday, June 27** – Herman Creek, moderate 5 miles, with Conservation Organizer Kelley Beamer.

**Friday, June 29** – Tanner Creek/Wahclella Falls, easy and family-friendly 2 miles, with Outdoor Programs Coordinator Renee Tkach.

For more information including meeting places and carpool information, contact Renee at [renee@gorgefriends.org](mailto:renee@gorgefriends.org) or 503-241-3762 x 103.



Outdoor Programs Coordinator  
 Renee Tkach. Photo: Angie Moore

## New Faces at Friends

This spring two new Gorge enthusiasts joined Friends' staff: **Renee Tkach** as Outdoor Programs Coordinator and **Marilyn Lipko** as Development Assistant.

Renee has volunteered for Friends since 2003, spearheading creation of a citizens group to protect and maintain the Cape Horn Trail. A Gorge resident, Renee is now coordinating our hiking and stewardship programs.

Marilyn comes to us after six years as development assistant for Sisters of the Road Café. An enthusiastic hiker since moving to Oregon 12 years ago from a yoga community in Massachusetts, Marilyn will be an avid member of our Gorge protection team.



Development Assistant Marilyn Lipko.  
 Photo: Angie Moore

# Friends Prevails in Measure 37 Appeal

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

In February, the Oregon Court of Appeals upheld a Friends legal victory and confirmed that Oregon's Ballot Measure 37 does not apply within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The ruling will help protect the Gorge's sensitive and unique resources.

Measure 37, authored by the property rights group Oregonians in Action (OIA), became state law in January 2005. The measure forces state and local governments to either compensate landowners for alleged reductions in property value caused by land use and environmental laws or to waive the laws, allowing harmful development to proceed.

Fortunately, the Columbia Gorge is protected by the National Scenic Area

Act and an interstate compact, both of which prevail over state law in the event of a conflict. The text of Measure 37 recognizes this legal principle, and forbids claims challenging rules required by federal law.

In spring 2005, two landowners attempted to file Measure 37 claims within the National Scenic Area. Shortly thereafter, the Columbia River Gorge Commission sought a ruling from the Hood River County Circuit Court that Measure 37 does not apply to the Scenic Area rules. Friends intervened in the case on the side of the Gorge Commission.

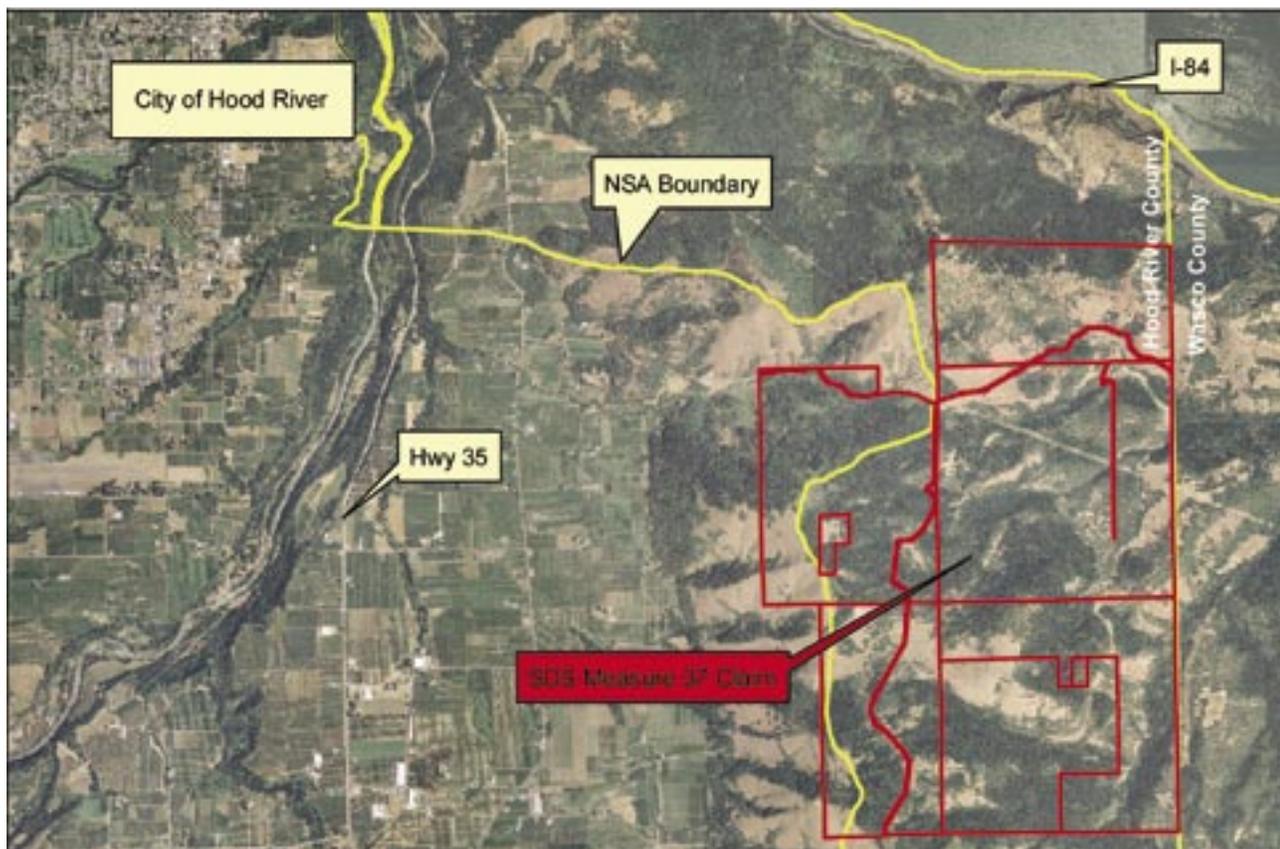
The Circuit Court held that the Scenic Area rules are required by federal law and are therefore not subject to Measure 37. OIA, representing the

landowners, appealed.

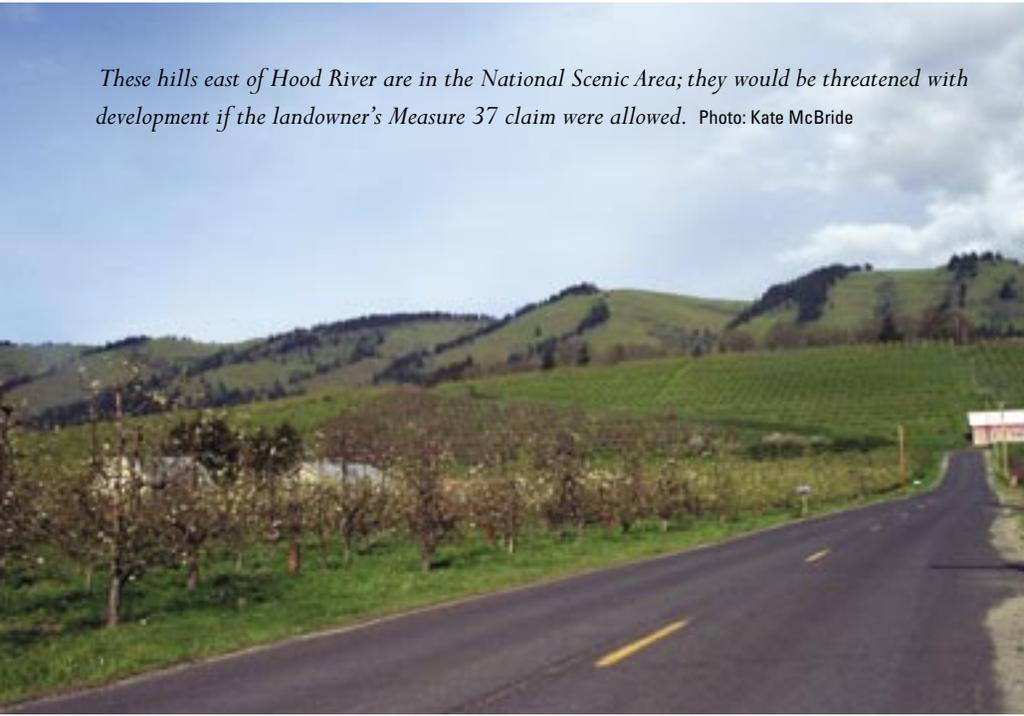
The Court of Appeals upheld the Circuit Court ruling, stating that OIA's "view of what the Scenic Area Act 'requires'. . . is artificially and implausibly crabbed [and] cannot be reconciled with the federal Act's comprehensive design and operation." The court elaborated that "the Scenic Area Act provides for a degree of federal oversight that belies [OIA's] assertion that the county ordinances in question are not 'required to comply with federal law.'"

Without protection as a National Scenic Area, it is likely that parts of the Gorge would already have succumbed to development allowed by Measure 37 claims. Prior to the Court of Appeals ruling, several additional landowners

*The Court of Appeals ruling protects the National Scenic Area from Measure 37 claims like this one on Hood River Mountain.*



*These hills east of Hood River are in the National Scenic Area; they would be threatened with development if the landowner's Measure 37 claim were allowed. Photo: Kate McBride*



attempted to file claims within the National Scenic Area, demanding approximately 834 dwellings on 1,857 acres. The largest of these claims was filed by SDS Lumber Company, calling for 293 dwellings on 1465 acres

currently designated as forestland in Hood River County.

OIA has asked the Oregon Supreme Court to review the case. If the Supreme Court grants review, Friends will remain involved.

## Gorge Casino Plan Delayed Again

Kelley Beamer, Conservation Organizer, [kelley@gorgefriends.org](mailto:kelley@gorgefriends.org)

The Bureau of Indian Affairs announced last month that the agency is again postponing the release of its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Columbia Gorge casino. The announcement marked the sixth time the Agency has delayed release of its environmental review, indicating that the draft still contains major flaws.

The Bureau's latest delay coincides with new concerns raised over a proposed highway interchange in Cascade Locks. The proposed casino and its estimated three million yearly visitors would require a new interchange to accommodate the predicted influx of traffic. The proposed interchange is inconsistent with an

Oregon Department of Transportation policy that requires three miles between interchanges along major highways. Building a new interchange at the casino site could therefore mandate the closure or consolidation of the existing exits, routing thousands of additional cars, buses and semi trucks through residential neighborhoods.

This traffic problem confirms that siting a 600,000-square-foot casino in the small town of Cascade Locks (pop. 1,100) would create countless unforeseen problems. The Bureau of Indian Affairs now expects the DEIS to be released in late June or early July, commencing a public comment period and a series of public meetings.

## Gorge Gains More Public Land in 2007!

In March, the U.S. Forest Service received \$1 million in federal funding to purchase properties with high conservation value in the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area. The funding was part of a continuing resolution passed by the new Congress to carry out key federal programs until a 2008 budget is passed.

With this funding, the Forest Service will purchase 17 acres adjacent to Bridal Veil Falls State Park along the Historic Columbia River Highway. The property offers a wonderful hiking opportunity to double-tiered Bridal Veil Falls and, with this purchase, a wheelchair-accessible trail to the falls may also become possible.

Public acquisition of the Bridal Veil land dovetails with Friends' efforts to enhance the recreational potential of this popular area. Since 2001, Friends volunteers have devoted more than 1000 hours to removing invasive plants and restoring native vegetation on the bluff.

We look forward to the opportunities that public ownership of this additional land at Bridal Veil will provide.

*Federal purchase of land near Bridal Veil Falls could provide additional access to this camas field on the bluff. Photo: Angie Moore*

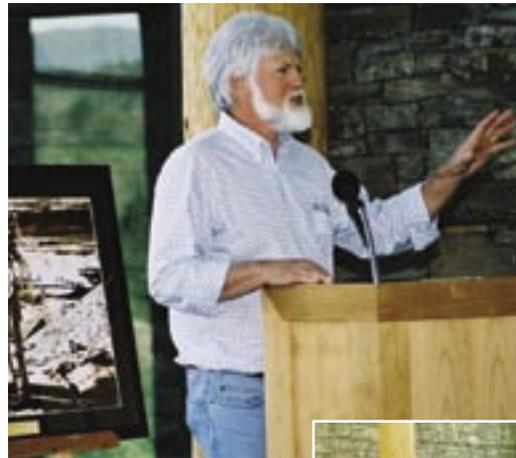


# Honoring Celilo Falls at Annual Meeting

Jane Harris, Development Director, jane@gorgefriends.org

Friends' Annual Meeting was held on April 15 at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in the Dalles. Two hundred members listened to author and rancher George Rohrbacher describe the politics, tribal perspective, and history of Celilo Falls and the rich commerce and community that was lost with the creation of The Dalles dam.

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the flooding of Celilo, and historic photos of the falls and the Native Americans who fished and lived near the once-thundering waters for countless generations were on display.



*What future generations would say to us today if they could is: Don't drop the torch!*

Speaker George Rohrbacher tells the story of the flooding of Celilo Falls.

Photo: Ken Denis

## Picnic at the Shire

Friends' Annual Summer Picnic will be held on Sunday, July 22 at the Shire, property once owned by John Yeon, on the Washington side of the river across from Multnomah Falls. This beautiful site was gifted to the University of Oregon's school of architecture when John died and we have reserved use of the site through special arrangements with the University. Mark your calendars and join us July 22 for a day on the river.

Our 2007 Summer Picnic will be on the river at the Shire. Photo: Diana Karabut



At the meeting, Friends also honored long-time member Barbara Robinson with a life-time achievement award for her tireless efforts to preserve special landscapes in the Gorge including the Rowena Plateau.



More than 200 people enjoyed the Annual Meeting at the beautiful Columbia Gorge Discovery Center. Photo: Ken Denis

Executive Director Kevin Gorman asked members to keep the torch for Gorge protection burning. "Some of you have just picked up the torch. Some have been carrying it for

years," he said, "and some are ready to pass it on. What future generations would say to us today if they could is: Don't drop the torch!"

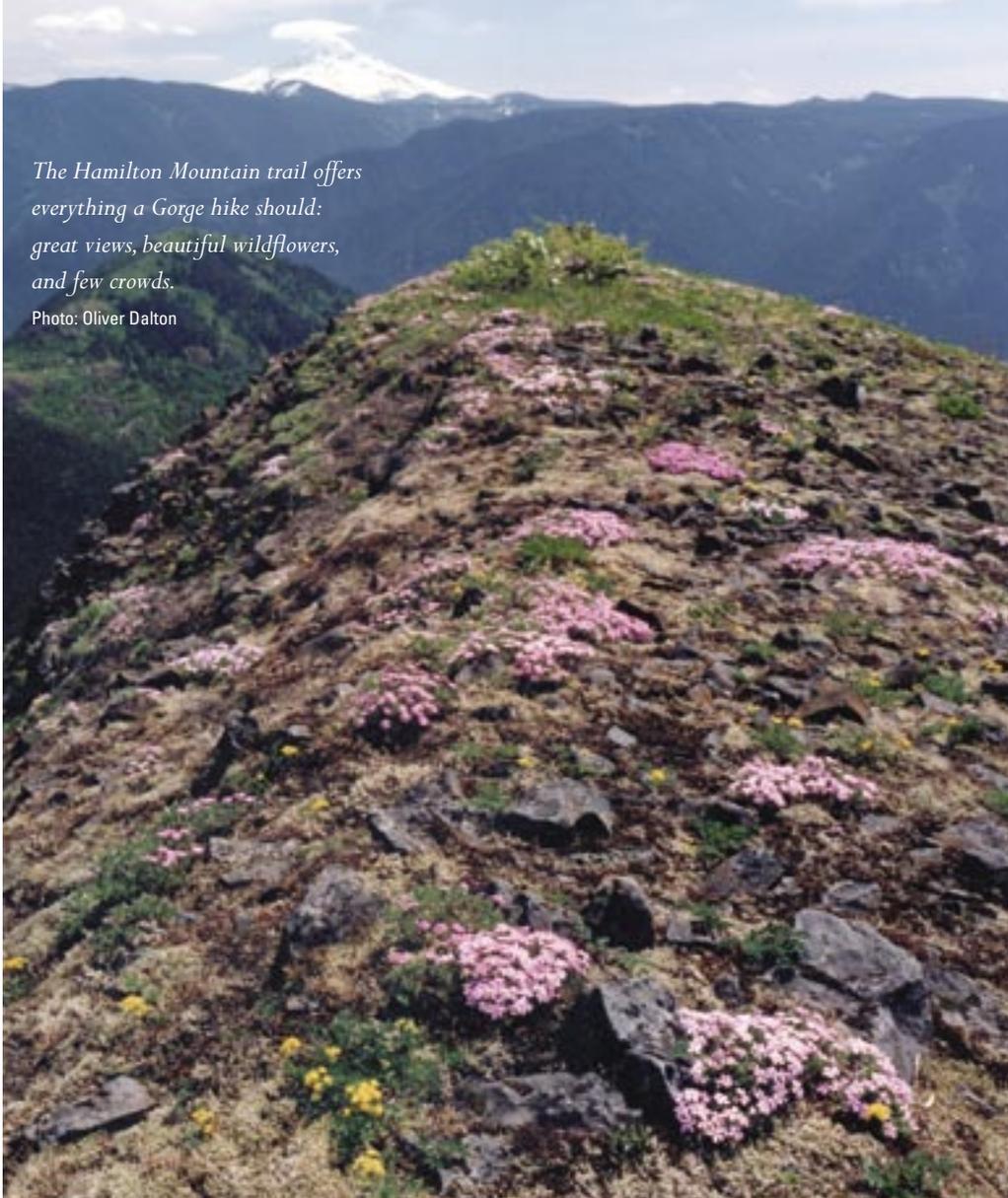
## Members Take Advantage of New Tax Incentive

Friends members are taking advantage of a change in tax laws that allows donors aged 70½ or older to make cash gifts up to \$100,000 from IRA accounts without incurring income tax on the withdrawal.

The H.R. 4 Pension Protection Act of 2006 allows qualified charitable

distributions to be excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes. However, no federal income tax deduction is available. Only outright gifts from IRAs are eligible.

To take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to support the Gorge and save on your taxes, call Jane Harris at (503) 242-3762 x102.



*The Hamilton Mountain trail offers everything a Gorge hike should: great views, beautiful wildflowers, and few crowds.*

Photo: Oliver Dalton

# Special Gifts

January 20 - April 1, 2007

IN MEMORY OF BRUCE KLINGER  
KEVIN GORMAN AND MICHELLE KINSELLA

IN MEMORY OF BETTY GENE WELLMAN  
DONALD AND JUNE HAYS

IN MEMORY OF VIC CLAUSEN  
JERRY F. KING

IN MEMORY OF JIM CAHILL  
MARYLYN AND LETTY MAYHEW  
GARY AND LINDA OFFERMAN

IN MEMORY OF BARBARA MCFARLANE  
DAVID AND GREGORY MCFARLANE

IN MEMORY OF TAZ LARSON  
JEFFREY RICHTER

IN MEMORY OF DORISANN BALSINGER  
JAMES STRATTON

IN MEMORY OF EDA COOPER  
ANNE TAGGARD

IN HONOR OF NANCY RUSSELL  
CAROL S. NEWMAN

IN HONOR OF JEAN ELLIS'S 80TH BIRTHDAY  
MARY MIMMACK

*Loowit Falls in Eagle Creek Canyon.*

Photo: Greg Lief, [Liefphotos.com](http://Liefphotos.com)

## Featured Hike: *Hamilton Mountain*

**Distance: 6.5 miles with 2000-ft elevation gain**

In late May, when many Gorge wildflowers further east or near the river are already gone, wonderful late-spring color still splashes across higher elevations on Hamilton Mountain and Dog Mountain. Hikers can enjoy fabulous views and late-season wildflowers and avoid the large crowds that flock to Dog Mountain by hiking up the Hamilton Mountain trail from Beacon Rock State Park.

Hamilton Mountain offers a little bit of everything a Gorge hike should: great views, waterfalls, wildflower meadows, and a good workout. A short way into the trail, hikers come to Hardy and Rodney Falls, two of the more beautiful but less

well-known Gorge waterfalls. Switchbacks along the main south ridge lead to expansive views up and down the Gorge. At these viewpoints, it is easy to see how the Bonneville Slide probably dammed the Columbia, as told in the Native American story of the Bridge of the Gods, pushing the river one mile to the south.

**Directions:** From the Portland area, take I-84 East to Cascade Locks Exit 44 and cross the Bridge of the Gods (\$1) to Washington SR-14. Turn left and drive 6.5 miles to Beacon Rock State Park. Turn right at the road to the picnic area and campground and follow it up 0.3 mile to the picnic area and trailhead.



# Know Your Gorge

## *The Columbia Gorge goes to the birds*

**W**hile wildflower diversity is a great attraction of the Columbia Gorge, the Gorge also attracts a wide diversity of birds. A recent compilation from Columbia Gorge bird specialists reveals more than 300 bird species in the Gorge, and new species are observed annually. The reasons for bird diversity are unique ecosystems (sage-steppe, oak pine forest, Silver fir forest, etc.) with varied altitudes, in a small concentrated area with a major river coursing through it.

Approximately 800 breeding bird species are found in North America, and the Columbia Gorge is visited by nearly 40% of those species. With the restoration of wetlands at the Sandy River Delta and Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge, conditions that attract birds and support breeding

Photo: Ken Denis



populations will improve. Bird enthusiasts are hopeful that we will see even greater numbers of birds in the coming decades.

For a complete list of bird sightings in the Columbia Gorge, visit: <http://community.gorge.net/birding/CGNSAchecklist.htm>.

To volunteer on Columbia Gorge bird counts such as the Lyle and Hood River Christmas Bird Counts sponsored by Friends of the Columbia Gorge, contact Bob Hansen at [bobhansen@gorge.net](mailto:bobhansen@gorge.net).

*Nearly 40% of bird species that breed in North America visit the Columbia Gorge, including the delightful Acorn Woodpecker (below) which has been sighted recently near Lyle, WA.*

Photo: Greg Gillson, <http://thebirdguide.com>



## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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