

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Protecting the Gorge Since 1980

Summer 2006

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Betsy Toll *Outreach Coordinator*
Sarah Wilson *Legal Intern*

* Gorge residents

Additional Support

Legal Counsel: Gary Kahn
Newsletter Design: Kathy Fors & Kathleen Krushas (To the Point Publications)

Portland Office

522 SW Fifth Avenue, #720
Portland, Oregon 97204
(503) 241-3762

Gorge Office

205 Oak Street, #17
Hood River, Oregon 97031
(541) 386-5268

www.gorgefriends.org



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Take Action Today:

Encourage Senator Smith to Propose a Wilderness Bill that Includes Key Gorge Areas!

Oregon Senator Gordon Smith's support is key to ensuring that Congress passes legislation in 2006 creating more wilderness protection in the Gorge and around Mt. Hood.

The Mt. Hood and Columbia Gorge Wilderness Bill, HR 5025, was passed by the House Resources Committee in July. Drafted by Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Greg Walden (R-OR), this bill would designate more than 22,000 acres of Gorge lands as wilderness, including the majestic ridgeline between Oneonta Creek and Hood River. Friends and our allies are advocating for a stronger Senate bill to include stunning old growth stands near Larch Mountain.

Contact Senator Smith today.

Let him know that there is overwhelming support for a Wilderness Bill that will preserve remaining wild lands around Mt. Hood and in the Gorge. Tell Senator Smith to expand designated wilderness to include **Larch Mountain** and **Tom McCall Point**, two unspoiled areas in the Gorge that are currently not protected by the House bill.

Active citizen support for Gorge protection is crucial to our success. Contact your Senators and Representatives using the information below, or check www.senate.gov or www.house.gov for other offices.

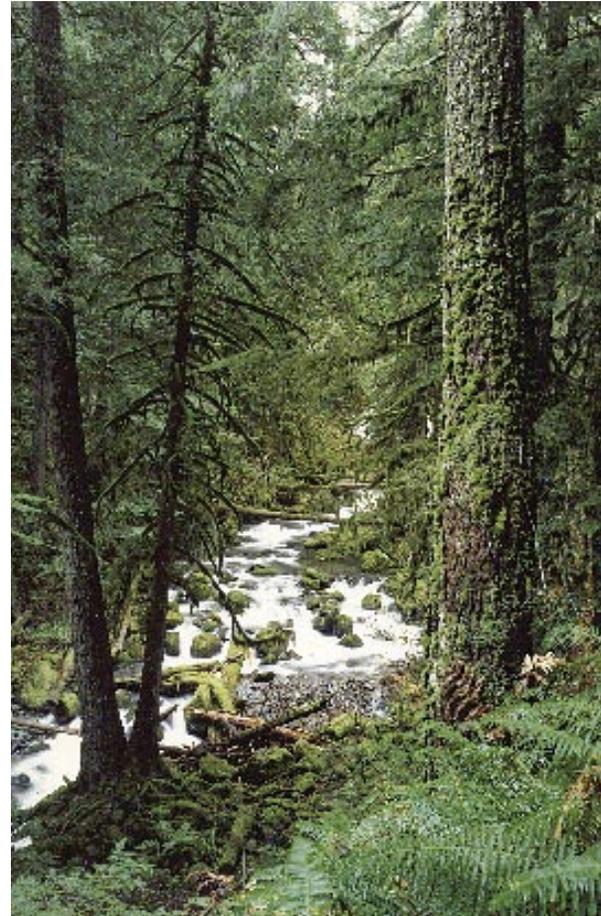
Oregon

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
Rep. Earl Blumenauer, (202) 225-4811
Rep. Darlene Hooley, (202) 225-5711
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/



Upper Multnomah Creek and the surrounding old growth forest should be included in the Senate bill for protection as wilderness. Photo: Oliver Dalton

On the cover: Breathtaking views like this one looking east from Catherine Creek are threatened by growing air quality problems. Photo: James Holloway

Director's Letter

When the going gets tough for Gorge casino supporters, the response always seems to be the same: spin, spin, spin.

Last month, on the heels of the Department of Interior's rejection of the Governor's compact with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the DOI added another setback: withdrawing the Tribes' scoping report, the document used to create an Environmental Impact Statement. The report was deemed inadequate by the DOI because it did not provide a non-Gorge alternative, such as locating the casino on the Warm Springs' 640,000-acre reservation. This move mirrors the sentiment in Congress, where efforts to ban off-reservation casinos are heating up.

Faced with this bleak news, casino proponents decided to respond with a casino-naming ceremony in Cascade

Locks, where they told the media that their naming of the casino nearly seals the deal. The only thing more ridiculous than that comment was the fact that the *Hood River News* ran it on their front page.

In fact, since the April 2005 signing of the Governor's compact, the prospects of a Gorge casino have grown dimmer and dimmer. Local opposition continues to build with the emergence of *No Gorge Casino!* and with political leaders such as Cascade Locks City Council President Tiffany Pruitt, Washington Representative Jim Honeyford and former Oregon Representative Bob Montgomery all coming forward to oppose the proposed Gorge casino.

Governor Kulongoski said on recent televised debates that he wouldn't have supported a Gorge casino except that the Tribes have a right to build on their Hood River trust land. The Department

"By giving it a name, we are sending a signal to the Gorge that we are 85 to 90 percent done in the process."

—Warm Springs Tribal Chief Delvis Heath in the 7/15/06 *Hood River News* on the naming of the yet-to-be-approved Gorge casino

"Advertisements... contain the only truths to be relied on in a newspaper."

—Thomas Jefferson

of Interior knows this is a false choice, which is why they are requiring the Warm Springs to consider an on-reservation alternative. Former Governor Kitzhaber knew this was a false choice, which is why he rejected the Cascade Locks proposal in 1999. Hopefully, our current governor will recognize the local, statewide, and national opposition to a Gorge casino and push for an on-reservation alternative that will benefit all Oregon Tribes and preserve a national treasure.



Kevin Gorman
Executive Director



Kevin Gorman talks with members about the proposed Cape Horn Park and Trail. Photo: Angie Moore

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.

It's Time to Clean Up Air Pollution in the Scenic Columbia River Gorge

Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org

The Columbia River Gorge, recognized worldwide for its stunning scenery and diversity of plants and wildlife, is also increasingly recognized for something not so scenic or natural: air pollution.

After 10 years of studying air pollution and its effects in the Columbia Gorge, the Forest Service has documented some disturbing facts. Air pollution clouds Gorge views 95% of the time (U.S. Forest Service Air Quality Management Staff, "Air Quality Issues in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area"). Acid rain in the form of fog deposition hangs over

the eastern Gorge during the winter, harming ecosystems and potentially damaging Native American cultural resources, including ancient rock images concentrated in the eastern Gorge (Fog Water Deposition in the Eastern Columbia River Gorge NSA, Mark Fenn, USFS, Feb. 2005).

In the past, the causes of haze and sources of other air pollutants have been difficult to confirm, though pulp mills, power plants, aluminum plants, a combined animal feeding operation in Boardman, and mobile sources were all suspected of contributing to toxic

pollution. For example, high levels of acid fog and rain may result from nitrogen oxides emitted from PGE's Boardman plant commingling with ammonia gas emanating from Three Mile Canyon Farm's massive cattle operation in Boardman. This produces an acidic cloud that settles over the eastern Gorge in winter. Summertime haze and pollution are linked to point sources and mobile sources to the west of the Gorge, particularly in the Portland/Vancouver metro area.

Now the Forest Service has completed two studies indicating that

The ridge of Seven Mile Hill, where this photo was taken, is an air quality monitoring site.

Photo: James Holloway



PGE's coal-fired power plant in Boardman is most likely a primary contributor to air pollution in the Gorge and across the Northwest. Using the tried-and-true computer modeling regime called "CALPUFF," air quality specialists working with the Forest Service determined that the PGE Boardman plant is a major source of haze and air pollution not only in the Columbia Gorge, but in 10 Northwest Wilderness areas and Mt. Rainier National Park as well.

A more recent study of the "Cause of Haze in the Gorge" (CoHaGo) analyzed data on Gorge air quality monitoring conducted between July 2003 and February 2005. The results from this study indicate that the Boardman power plant **"is contributing significantly to sulfate and nitrate in the Gorge during winter."**

In retrospect, air quality agencies such as Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) should have recognized much earlier that PGE Boardman was an obvious source of air pollution in the Gorge that needed to be cleaned up. The PGE Boardman plant is the largest source of sulfur dioxide (SO₂)

"Acid rain in the form of fog deposition hangs over the eastern Gorge during the winter, harming ecosystems and potentially damaging Native American cultural resources, including ancient rock images concentrated in the eastern Gorge."

and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) in the state of Oregon. This old coal-fired power plant does not have any pollution control devices to reduce emissions of these pollutants or of the large amounts of toxic mercury that it continually spews into the atmosphere.

When the PGE Boardman plant was constructed in the late 1970s, PGE was not required by the DEQ or the EPA to install pollution control devices, despite the fact that agency officials at the time acknowledged in interoffice memos that the power plant was not eligible for an exemption to clean air rules. The DEQ has had numerous opportunities in the past three decades to require this aging dinosaur of a plant to clean up its act, but instead has routinely issued renewals of Title V permits (pollution permits) without requiring installation of modern pollution control devices.

"The Boardman power plant is contributing significantly to sulfate and nitrate in the Gorge during winter."

To address these problems, Friends of the Columbia Gorge has joined forces with more than 20 other environmental and health organizations to form the Columbia Clean Air Alliance (CCAA). Our focus at this time is to have modern pollution control devices installed on the PGE Boardman plant as soon as possible. This includes SO₂ scrubbers, NO_x emission control devices and carbon injection to dramatically reduce mercury emissions from the aging plant. All of these control measures are readily available and proven effective in reducing air pollution.

The DEQ is currently processing PGE's application to renew its Title V permit for the Boardman plant, again with no requirements to install pollution control devices. The DEQ is also taking comment on its federally mandated rule



Expansive Gorge views like this from McCall Point are increasingly marred by air pollution.

Photo: Ken Denis

requiring mercury emission controls for coal-fired power plants. After receiving hundreds of public comments in favor of strict mercury controls, the DEQ is redrafting its proposal to require stricter control measures and a more aggressive timeline.

PGE is currently conducting modeling to determine its contribution to regional haze and has told Friends' staff that the earliest it could install SO₂ scrubbers is 2013. This marks progress for the utility company, albeit slow progress. However, the Columbia Clean Air Alliance knows that if required, PGE can accelerate this timeline. Friends and the CCAA will be working with PGE and the DEQ to improve the pollution-control timeline to make real progress toward cleaning up this major source of air pollution in the Columbia Gorge as soon as possible.

Friends Land Trust Moves Forward

Kate McBride, Land Trust Manager

kate@gorgefriends.org

Some folks have good reason to complain about their job commutes, but last month when my job as Land Trust Manager took me from the Dalles Mountain Road to Corbett, I felt extremely blessed to have such a beautiful drive!

Cape Horn

Friends has recruited an on-site caretaker to watch over the Land Trust's recently purchased Cleveland property. With the help of a crew of volunteers, the caretaker is coordinating removal of Scotch broom, ivy, and other invasive species from the property. Deconstruction estimates are being submitted and plans are being formulated for the eventual removal of the house.

U.S. Forest Service Scenic Area Manager Dan Harkenrider joined us for a tour of the property in July. He agreed it was one of the



Friends' Land Trust trustees tour a potential property in the Memaloose area.

Photo: Angie Moore

premier viewpoints in the Gorge and should be in public hands. The Land Trust will soon submit a request asking the Forest Service to purchase this parcel. Appropriations for such an acquisition are at least one or two legislative sessions away, so an actual transfer of the property will probably not occur for several years.

In May Friends staff met with local Cape Horn trail supporters; area resident Renee Tkach coordinated logistics for the meeting. Thirty-six volunteers from the surrounding area signed up to support future trail efforts. This group of active citizens shares Friends'

goal of creating a mechanism for strong local support of the Cape Horn Trail, similar to the Klickitat Trail Conservancy in Klickitat County. A Cape Horn group would work with the U.S. Forest Service on trail and land management projects for Cape Horn.

At the May meeting, Scenic Area Manager Harkenrider was presented with a list of projects the trail volunteers would like to initiate to move the trail project forward. Permission from the Forest Service has been received for mowing the invasive blackberry thickets that are taking over the pasturelands.

Memaloose

A wonderful new trail east of Memaloose State Park is in the early visioning stages, a route that will allow hikers to bypass a dangerous rock outcropping and avoid a section overgrown with high poison oak. The Land Trust is working with the land owners to procure an easement over this area. Our longer-term goal is to see this section become part of a larger public trail system in the Memaloose area.

Land Inquiries

Several landowners have contacted Friends to inquire about the possibility of sale or donation of property both inside and outside of the Gorge to the Land Trust. We welcome all inquiries.



Autumn evening from Cape Horn.

Photo: James Holloway

Friends Adds New Staff

Betsy Toll, Outreach Coordinator

betsy@gorgefriends.org

Several new staff members have joined Friends' Gorge protection team this year as we broaden our strategies, strengthen educational outreach, and work to keep Gorge protection strong. Our new Land Trust Manager Kate McBride was profiled in our May newsletter.

Four more outstanding individuals are playing key roles in Friends' work this year:

Conservation Organizer Kelley Beamer

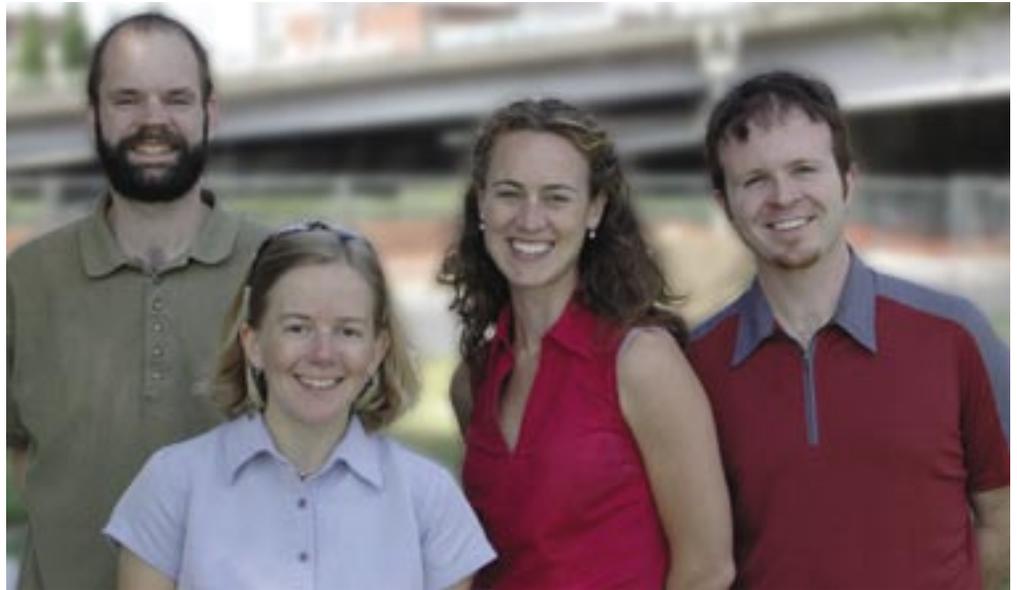
Kelley graduated from the University of Notre Dame and holds a Master's Degree in Environmental Policy from American University in Washington, DC. She served as Policy Assistant for The Wilderness Society in Washington, DC, then made her home base in Oregon when she worked as a hiking-and-biking eco-tour guide in the U.S. and Costa Rica. She returned to live in Portland full time earlier this year.

Executive Assistant Justin Carroll

A Brown University graduate, Justin joined Friends with a background in marketing and communications, writing, and instructional design. He pursued his Master's Degree in Conservation Biology at University of Missouri-St. Louis before shifting his focus to environmental advocacy. At Friends, Justin applies his skills to grant writing, fundraising research, and administrative support.

Outdoor Programs Coordinator Karen Hardigg

A native Oregonian with family in the Gorge, Karen has conducted field research in several National Parks on wildlife species including bears and wolves. She graduated from Vassar and received her Master's Degree in Environmental Management from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Karen coordinated the Volunteer and Species Conservation programs for the Grand Canyon Trust in Arizona before returning to Oregon two years ago.



Friends' new staff members from left to right: Rick Till, Karen Hardigg, Kelley Beamer and Justin Carroll.

Photo: Betsy Toll

Land Use Law Clerk Rick Till

Born in Maple Valley, Washington, Rick earned his J.D. from Lewis and Clark Law School after receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from Washington State University. A member of the Washington State Bar Association, he became a native plant enthusiast while working as a Wilderness Ranger and on fire crews for the U.S. Forest Service in the Wenatchee and Baker-Snoqualmie Forests. At Friends, Rick is responsible for commenting on development applications and assists in appealing land use decisions.

Volunteer for the Gorge

Our work protecting the Gorge means committed participation by many engaged volunteers. Friends volunteers work on short-term and continuing projects, in our Portland and Hood River offices, out on the trails and from the convenience of their own home or office.

Whether you have technical expertise and special skills to offer, can help with mailings and ongoing office tasks, or want to lead hikes and help with stewardship efforts, we would love to hear from you.

To volunteer, contact us in Portland or Hood River at (503) 241-3762 or (541) 386-5268, or email info@gorgefriends.org.



Landscape architects assisted Friends in reviewing Gorge rules during Plan Review. Photo: Michael Lang

Feds Issue Major Setback for Gorge Casino

Back to the Drawing Board for Casino Resort Proposal

Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org

In a major victory for opponents of the proposed Gorge casino, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) has declared that the Warm Springs Tribes' casino application failed to meet federal environmental requirements and announced that the scoping report, the fundamental justification for the project, must be rewritten. This action casts the entire proposal in doubt and may require the Tribes to build their new casino on their 640,000-acre reservation.

This announcement has enormous significance because it requires the Tribes to rewrite their "purpose and need" statement, the fundamental cornerstone of the casino proposal. The DOI decision requires the Tribes to go back to the drawing board; the Bureau of

Indian Affairs will supervise revision of the purpose and need statements and will require an on-reservation casino alternative to be analyzed.

The decision acknowledges that an off-reservation megacasinoproposal in the heart of a National Scenic Area has significant legal problems and is not favored by the Department of Interior. The Department also is aware that the proposal is overwhelmingly opposed by residents of Oregon by a 2:1 margin.

The announcement confirms that the Warm Springs Tribes should pursue a new casino resort on the Tribes' 640,000-acre reservation where federal laws are more favorable. A new on-reservation casino located on U.S. Highway 26 would protect the Gorge and its communities,

provide additional revenue for the Tribes, provide more jobs for tribal members and would be fair to all the other tribes in Oregon.

The Columbia River Gorge, a national treasure, is absolutely the wrong place for a 600,000-square-foot casino resort. The development of a massive resort and casino complex would bring an unprecedented level of development to this protected area, inevitably scarring its natural landscape, causing profound damage to its sensitive resources and destroying the character of the small town of Cascade Locks forever. Friends of the Columbia Gorge applauds the Department of Interior for upholding federal law and helping protect the Columbia Gorge for future generations to enjoy.

Washington Initiative #933 Threatens Gorge Protection. Vote "NO"

Photo: Friends of the Columbia Gorge Archives



Friends of the Columbia Gorge has joined a broad coalition of citizen groups and elected officials who oppose Initiative 933, which will be on the ballot in Washington State this November. Like Oregon's Measure 37, I-933 would set up a "pay or waive" system that would force taxpayers to either pay certain people to follow basic laws and community protections, or else waive those rules, regardless of the effect on neighbors and the community. I-933 would mean more irresponsible development, more traffic, and a huge price tag for taxpayers.

I-933 does not contain language exempting federal laws like the National Scenic Area Act, though federal law preempts state law whenever there is a conflict. However, if I-933 passes, claims will undoubtedly be filed within the National Scenic Area, resulting in costly litigation.

Private forestland along this stretch of the Pacific Crest Trail in the Gorge could be affected by I-933.

New Poll: 71% of Oregonians Oppose a Casino in the Gorge

New poll results released in July show that the proposal to locate a casino in the heart of the Columbia Gorge is opposed by 71% of registered voters in Oregon. Respondents also opposed large-scale development in the Gorge by a margin of 74.5% to 16.5%. The statewide poll during the week of July 17 was conducted by Mercury Public Affairs. Four hundred voters across the political spectrum participated; the margin of error was plus/minus 4.9%. Friends participated in the joint poll with several other conservation groups addressing a wide range of environmental issues.



Mt. Hood seen from the Sandy River Delta. Metro Bond Measure #26-80 would extend protection along the Sandy River to the west side of the river. Photo: Oliver Dalton

on Ballot Initiative 933

Land use and development exempted from regulation under the Scenic Area Act could be allowed by I-933. For example, in most cases logging within the General Management Area of the Scenic Area is only subject to state law. If I-933 were to pass, huge clearcuts on the Washington side of the Gorge could result; forests on state and private land (see photo) could be opened to large-scale timber sales.

Urban areas in the Columbia Gorge are also exempt from protection under the Scenic Area Act. I-933 could result in poorly planned development within urban areas and increased pressure to expand urban area boundaries into the Scenic Area.

Contact Friends' Conservation Organizer Kelley Beamer to find out how you can help defeat I-933. kelly@gorgefriends.org or (503) 241-3762, ext. 110. For more information, check the No on 933 website at www.noon933.org.

Friends Endorses Measure to Protect Natural Areas

Vote "YES" on Metro Bond Measure #26-80

In the Portland metro area, the Natural Areas, Parks and Streams Bond Measure #26-80 is an opportunity to preserve the quality of life and natural beauty of the region as it grows by an expected 1 million people in the next 25 years.

Referred to the ballot by the regional Metro Council, this measure requires that the \$227.4 million generated by the bond only be spent on projects that maintain and improve water quality, preserve fish and wildlife habitat, protect natural areas, and improve parks.

Lands targeted for protection by the bond measure include the Sandy River, which is the western boundary of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Cost to the average homeowner is estimated at \$2.92 per month; the measure will appear on the November 7, 2006 ballot.

For more information on the Natural Areas, Parks and Streams Bond Measure, visit the website: www.savenaturalareas.org or call (503) 808-1266.

Annual Summer Picnic a Sizzling Success

Jane Harris, Development Director, jane@gorgefriends.org

Despite temperatures in the 100-degree range, our 27th annual picnic was a great success. About 130 members and friends came out to enjoy the world-class view from Cape Horn, along with banquet tables full of great food, live bluegrass music, and a classic hay ride to a local organic farm.

This year's event took place at Cape Horn, on the 36-acre Collins property, adjacent to the Cleveland property purchased by our Land Trust this spring. Friends founder Nancy Russell holds an option on the Collins land allowing current residents Irma and Jack Collins to remain in their home in a life-estate arrangement. Friends will eventually provide the funds to complete the purchase when the Collinses are no longer living in the home.

This property will represent the final piece in the plans for a 1000-acre public park on the top of Cape Horn. Members and guests at the picnic were also treated to a guided tour of the Cleveland parcel now owned by Friends. Despite the heat,

everyone agreed enthusiastically that this project has enormous regional significance and is a fitting tribute to our founder, Nancy Russell.

Campaign for Cape Horn

The \$4 million campaign to raise funds for the purchase of the Cleveland and Collins properties and create a viewpoint honoring Nancy and Bruce Russell is well underway, with more than \$1.2 million pledged to date. Friends board and staff are working with major donors and with funders in Washington state to realize our vision for a park at Cape Horn with views comparable to Oregon's Crown Point.



Families enjoyed crafts activities and a hayride at the picnic. Photo: Angie Moore

Friends members Al Jubitz and Nanci McGraw both helped kick off the campaign by making \$100,000 gifts. Nancy Russell has pledged \$1 million, and additional gifts totaling more than \$50,000 have been received.

Cape Horn Brochure

A beautiful full-color booklet outlining the project is available on our website at www.gorgefriends.org/CapeHornCampaign.pdf. We are happy to mail the printed brochure to interested donors. If you would like to help with this important and historic project, please call Jane Harris at (503) 241-3762 x102.

Conservator Party set for September

Our annual Conservator Party for major donors will be held Saturday evening, September 30, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. This year's event will be held in the beautiful home of Anne Crumpacker. We look forward to celebrating with some of our strongest supporters.



Right: Magnificent old growth forests and panoramic views await hikers on Larch Mountain.

Photo: Oliver Dalton

Picnic guests relished the spectacular views from the Cape Horn property owned by Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust.

Photo: Ken Denis

Featured Hike: Larch Mountain, Proposed Wilderness

Networks of trails winding around Larch Mountain provide great views, guiding hikers into awe-inspiring old growth forests. Atop Larch Mountain at Sherrard Point is a panoramic view of the Gorge and Cascade peaks Mount Hood, Mount Jefferson, Mount St. Helens, Mount Rainier, and Mount Adams.

There are several trail options around Larch Mountain, so having a good map is essential. The two 6-mile loop options also lead through unspoiled old growth forests that should be added to pending Wilderness legislation.

Directions to the trailhead

The road up to the trailhead at the top of Larch Mountain is open until at least early October each year, or until the first snow in fall. From Portland, take I-84 east to Corbett Exit 22, go up Corbett Hill Road for 2 miles to the "T" at the Historic Highway. Turn left and continue east for 2 miles to the fork at Larch Mountain Road. Take the right fork up Larch Mountain Road, and continue 14 miles until it ends at the trailhead parking area.

- Begin at the Larch Mountain trailhead at the end of Larch Mountain Road. Head north on trail #441.
- After about 2 miles, jog right on Trail #444, which soon crosses a creek and connects with trail #446 to the left.
- Take a right (south) at this intersection to continue on Trail #444 through old growth forests and great views of the mountain. The trail climbs up 0.8 miles to Oneonta Ridge.
- Turn right on trail #424, which leads back to Larch Mountain Road and continue walking 0.3 miles to the trailhead.

Back at the junction of Trails #444 and #446, you can turn left on trail #446 and proceed about one mile to a junction with the Oneonta Creek Trail #424. Turn right on Trail #424 through old growth Douglas fir and hemlock. You will pass the junction with Bell Creek Trail, a fantastic side trail with some immense old growth, though the trail is somewhat overgrown and blocked with deadfall. Continue on Trail #424 back to Larch Mountain Road.

Special Gifts

April 27 through July 24, 2006

In Honor of Nancy Russell

Joan Marie Gamble

In Honor of Steven Smith and Kelsey Wirtzfeld

Kara Jensen

In Honor of Ron and Maria Cronin

Hooter Fund II – Oregon Community Fdtn.

In Honor of Penelope Tarbox

Johnalee Friedman

In Honor of the marriage of Sandy Holden and Tom Montag

William and Katherine Frear

Nancy and Herb Holden

George and Sally Holden

In Memory of Anita Eikrem

Scott Hanson

In Memory of Charlene McClure

James McClure

In Memory of Mary Stooquin

Marilyn and Richard Portwood

In Memory of Ida Folstad

Sandra and William Streeter

In Memory of Jim and Alice Wilson

Kate and Rich McBride

In Memory of John Reynolds

Jane Quinette

In Memory of Lisa Ann Branch

Robert and Enid Branch

In Memory of Noma Underwood

Joan Whiting

In Memory of Oliver Dalton

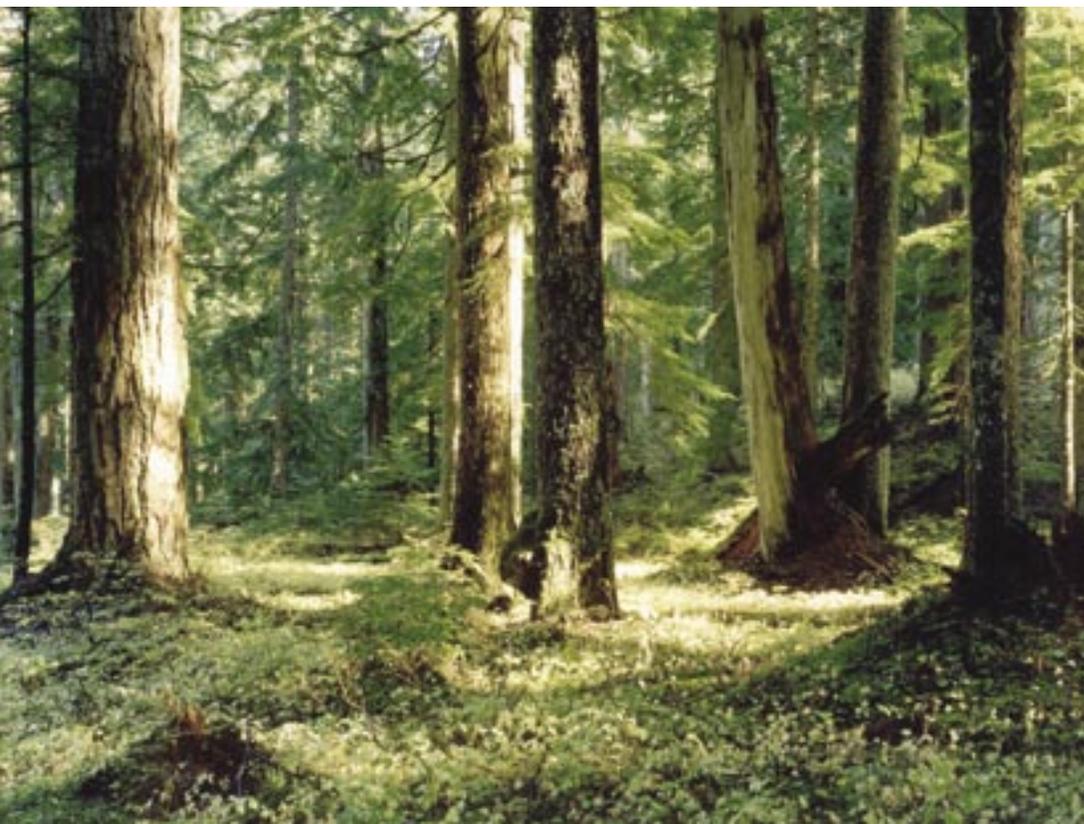
Tom and Sandra Rousseau

In Memory of Waldo Taylor

Margaret Davies

In Memory of William Phippard

Rosemary and Richard Pennell



Know Your Gorge *Two States, One River, Five Ecological Zones*

As the sea-level passage through the Cascade Mountains, the 85-mile-long Columbia Gorge is home to five different vegetative zones.

The Western Hemlock Zone stretches from the western boundary of the Gorge near the Sandy River to Wind Mountain. While the dominant species is currently Douglas Fir, in a

matter of centuries (barring fire, logging, etc.), it will be entirely replaced by Western Hemlock.

The Silver Fir Zone is found in scattered areas of the western Gorge that rise above 3000' in elevation. While Douglas Fir, Hemlock, and Noble Fir inhabit these forests, Silver Fir is the dominant climax tree species.

The Douglas Fir Zone lies just east of the crest of the Cascade Mountains, from Wind Mountain to Bingen.

The Pine-Oak Woodland Zone extends from Bingen almost to The Dalles. Ponderosa Pine and Oregon White Oak dominate.

The Shrub-Grassland Zone extends from The Dalles eastward and is primarily open grassland with scattered shrubs such as Bitter Brush, Mock Orange, and Rabbit Brush.

Adapted from *Wildflowers of the Columbia Gorge* by Russ Jolley

Upper Multnomah Creek in the western Gorge. Photo: Oliver Dalton



View through Fairbanks Gap near the Deschutes River. Photo: James Holloway



Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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