

FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

Celebrating 25 years 1980-2005

Winter 2005 Newsletter



gambling in the state, calling it "something akin to an arms race." Kulongoski wrote a 1996 editorial in the *New York Times* titled "When Gambling Calls the Shots." He warned of an expanding gambling market in Oregon in which "gambling drives public policy, not the other way around." With expanding lottery games and six on-reservation casinos, Kulongoski warned, "Oregon now has a bad case of what is being called a 'level playing field syndrome,' something akin to an arms race." (This article may be read in its entirety on Friends' website: www.gorgefriends.org)

Throwing out Oregon's policy banning off-reservation casinos would only escalate the concerns raised by Attorney General Kulongoski in the 1990s.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) limits tribes' ability to buy new land for the purpose of casino development. On land acquired by tribes after 1988, the date of the passage of IGRA, new casinos are generally prohibited unless certain criteria can be met. In 2003, the National Indian Gaming Association reported that only three off-reservation land-into-trust acquisitions have occurred since the passage of IGRA in 1988. There are 354 tribal gaming operations, with less than

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Will the Governor Gamble Away the Gorge?

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

■ Governor Ted Kulongoski continues negotiations with gambling advocates to break the state policy prohibiting off-reservation casinos and site Oregon's first off-reservation tribal casino in the heart of the Columbia Gorge—contrary to warnings raised by former Attorney General Ted Kulongoski about the spread of gambling and casinos in Oregon.

In the 1990s while serving as Oregon's Attorney General, Kulongoski raised significant concerns about the proliferation of

Will this unparalleled national treasure become the backdrop for casinos and related development?

photo: © James O. Holloway

protecting the Gorge

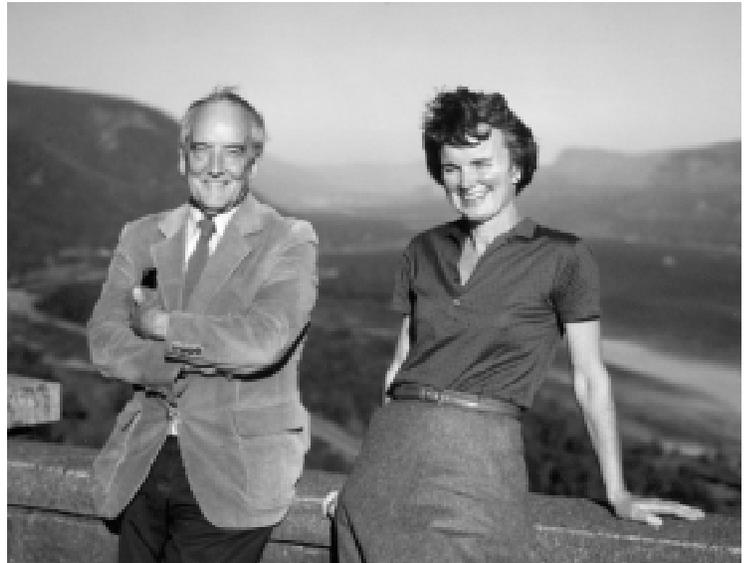
*Special Inserts:
Annual Report and
Spring Hiking Brochure*

Executive Director's Letter

Twenty-five years ago the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area designation did not exist. Lands we now know as the Sandy River Delta and Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge were zoned for industrial use, with the Sandy River Delta property owned by Reynolds Aluminum. Proposed (or soon to be proposed) subdivisions were popping up across from the Vista House and Multnomah Falls, on top of Cape Horn, and near Beacon Rock.

In early 1980, there was no Friends of the Columbia Gorge. But famed architect John Yeon, son of John Baptiste Yeon (roadmaster for the Historic Columbia River Highway), was working to create a non-profit organization that could build public and political support for federal legislation to protect the Gorge. Ignoring conventional thinking, he recruited a Portland homemaker with no fundraising or political experience to lead the effort.

Obviously, John knew what he was doing. Nancy Russell launched Friends of the Columbia Gorge in November 1980 and six years later delivered the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act.



Gorge advocate John Yeon and Friends founder Nancy Russell at the Vista House in the early 1980s.

photo courtesy Nancy Russell

Had it not been for that six-year legislative campaign and Friends' continued advocacy, the Gorge would be a far different place today. There would not have been over \$12 million in federal funds to restore the Historic Columbia River Highway, including reopening the Mosier Twin Tunnels. There would not have been more than \$50 million in federal land acquisition funds to purchase 35,000 acres of land for public to enjoy. Instead, there would be subdivisions in the most scenic spots in the Gorge, with the intense suburban development of Troutdale and Washougal pushing farther and farther eastward.

Friends' successes since 1980 give us plenty of reason to celebrate our 25th anniversary throughout 2005. The celebration begins with the back page of this newsletter showing "Then & Now" depictions of the Gorge, and will continue all year with hikes, outings, and special events. The commemoration culminates on November 12, 2005, with our 25th Anniversary Celebration in the newly renovated wing of the Portland Art Museum where we will celebrate our accomplishments, announce exciting new initiatives, and pay special tribute to our founder, Nancy Russell. Please plan to join us. I promise it will be an unforgettable evening.

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 Update

Friends' Outreach & Activities

By Betsy Toll, Volunteer Coordinator, betsy@gorgefriends.org and
Cathy Robart, Outdoor Programs Coordinator, cathy@gorgefriends.org

Spring Hiking Season

Friends' 2005 spring hiking schedule will feature a great range of special-focus events in addition to the perennial wild-flower favorites that make Friends' spring hikes a Northwest tradition.

We've added a few very strenuous activities for serious hikers, and history buffs will enjoy outings that highlight lore from the Lewis and Clark journals. Other outings will focus on Friends' 25th anniversary, Gorge protection efforts, and stewardship activities.

Check the schedule in the enclosed brochure, lace up your boots, grab your pack, and get ready to hike! ■

Hike Volunteers Needed

Every hike needs a volunteer "shepherd" to assist the designated leader. Shepherd is a fun and easy way to volunteer while you enjoy a wonderful hike yourself—no shepherding experience necessary!

Help create a wonderful hiking season this spring. For details, e-mail Cathy at cathy@gorgefriends.org, or call 503.241.3762 x106. ■

Hands-on Work in the Gorge!

Our volunteer stewardship team began 2005 with a planning meeting at Menucha Conference Center in Corbett. We brainstormed strategies for increasing volunteer crews at Bridal Veil and we plan to offer volunteer opportunities and partnerships to community groups throughout the Gorge.

In late spring and summer we will add weekday, Sunday, and special sunset work parties. Check www.gorgefriends.org for dates.

Join us at Bridal Veil on Saturday, March 12, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Other dates will be on the website, including a special "No Ivy Day" on Saturday, May 7. Come on out and make a difference in the Gorge! ■

Volunteers Make All the Difference

We count on active supporters to help make sure the Gorge stays beautiful for our kids and grandkids to enjoy. Our highest volunteer needs this spring will be in three categories:

Activists: We need active Gorge supporters to write letters to officials and Letters to the Editor on crucial Gorge protection topics; contact representatives and Gorge Commissioners about Gorge issues; and offer citizen comments at public hearings. Contact katy@gorgefriends.org.

Office and Data-Entry Support: We need a strong team of data entry volunteers to support our Conservation, Outdoor, and Member programs. If you have data entry or office skills, we'd love to have your help. Contact betsy@gorgefriends.org.

Outdoor Volunteers: Stewardship activities and the hiking program need dozens of volunteers of all ages. Contact cathy@gorgefriends.org.

Be a Hike Shepherd! Come to a one-hour Shepherd Training to get all the information you need and sign up for your hikes.

Hike Shepherd Training
Tues., March 8, 6:45 p.m.–7:45 p.m.
Hollywood Branch Library
4040 NE Tillamook, Portland

For more information contact Betsy at 503-241-3762 x103 or betsy@gorgefriends.org. ■

Environmental Lobby Day

The Oregon Conservation Network (OCN) urges the Oregon Legislature to address environmental issues affecting the Gorge and all of Oregon.

During each legislative session, OCN brings hundreds of Oregonians from around the state to Salem for Environmental Lobby Day to urge state legislators and to support for environmental protection.

**Environmental Lobby Day
State Capitol, Salem
Monday, February 28
9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.**

Contact Katy Daily at katy@gorgefriends.org or OCN's Gretchen Fogelstrom at gretchen@olcv.org for details. ■



Spring hikes high above the river offer fantastic views.

Photo: Ken Denis



Conservation and Legal Program Highlights

In the Courts and in the Field...

By Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org and Katy Daily, Conservation Organizer, katy@gorgefriends.org

New Clearcuts Mar Scenic Views

In recent months Friends of the Columbia Gorge has been contacted by members and other Gorge-lovers wondering how the huge new clearcuts east of Stevenson, Washington could happen within the Columbia River Gorge. After all, isn't the Gorge protected as a National Scenic Area?

Here's the problem: these clearcuts are located within the General Management Area (GMA) of the National Scenic Area. The National Scenic Area Act (the Act) exempts most non-federal forest practices in the GMA from regulation under the Act. Why? The timber industry and Skamania County officials lobbied Congress to exclude forest practices in these areas from the protections of the Act.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge and others supported prohibiting clearcutting throughout the Columbia Gorge. In 1986, a compromise was struck when the National Scenic Area Act was passed in its current form, which regulates or prohibits logging on 112,000 acres within the Special Management Areas (SMAs) and on land designated as "Open Space." Still, the Act excludes most land within the GMA from regulations limiting clearcuts. Passage of the Act was a huge step toward protecting the Columbia Gorge, but the GMA exemption that allows clearcutting is a major flaw that remains to be addressed.

The clearcuts near Stevenson are subject only to the Washington Forest Practices Act, which does not provide adequate protection for scenic landscapes, water

quality or wildlife habitat. Unfortunately, our past lawsuits challenging similar clearcuts within the GMA have not succeeded in establishing these protections.

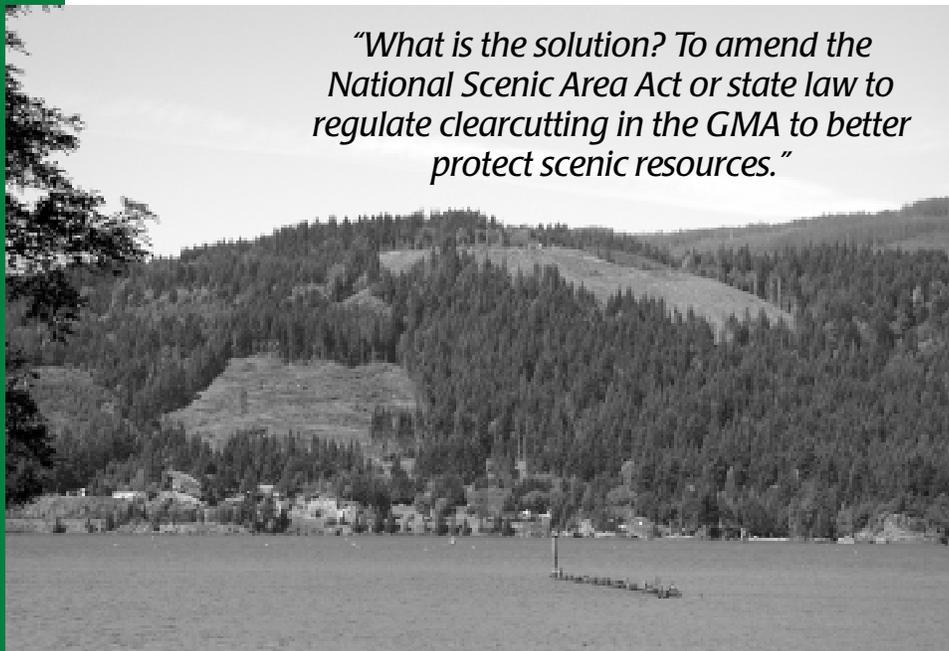
Friends' legal staff sent written comments to the Department of Natural Resources regarding this recent forest practice application and raised concerns about its visual impacts. We reviewed the decision and determined that we did not have a reasonable chance of winning an appeal because of this key weakness in the National Scenic Area Act, compounded by deficiencies in state law.

The Solution is at Hand

What is the solution? To amend the National Scenic Area Act or state law to regulate clearcutting in the GMA to better protect scenic resources.

Contact Doug Sutherland, Washington's Commissioner of Public Lands, and urge him to support stronger rules to better protect scenic landscapes within the General Management Area of the Columbia Gorge.

"What is the solution? To amend the National Scenic Area Act or state law to regulate clearcutting in the GMA to better protect scenic resources."



These clearcuts near Stevenson are glaring examples of the huge loopholes for forest practices in the National Scenic Area.

Photo: Michael Lang

Write or e-mail to encourage stronger protections for scenic landscapes in the Columbia Gorge GMA:

Doug Sutherland
Commissioner of Public Lands
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 47001
Olympia, WA 98504-7001
Phone: (360) 902-1004
Fax: (360) 902-1775
E-mail: cpl@wadnr.gov ■

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In the Courts and in the Field...

By Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org and Nathan Baker, Staff Attorney, nathan@gorgefriends.org and



Photo: ©Darryl Lloyd/LongshadowPhoto.com

Agricultural land similar to this pear orchard near Hood River is at stake in Measure 37 claims.

Measure 37 Update

Since Measure 37 was passed by Oregon voters last November, there has been considerable uncertainty about how the measure will be implemented, what lands and landowners are actually affected, and how different counties and jurisdictions are handling Measure 37 claims.

1000 Friends of Oregon and several county farm bureaus and landowners have filed a lawsuit in Marion County challenging the constitutionality of Measure 37, the property rights measure passed in 2004. The plaintiffs claim that the measure violates Article 1, Section 20 of Oregon's constitution by creating a special class of property owners with special privileges and immunities at the expense of all Oregonians.

In addition, Measure 37 may violate numerous other provisions of Oregon's constitution, including separation of powers, sovereign immunity, suspension of laws, compensation of religious institutions, due process, and freedom of speech.

To date, two owners of Scenic Area lands seeking to profit from Measure 37 have filed claims in Hood River County. One landowner has demanded \$14 million in compensation or a waiver of Gorge protection rules to develop half-acre riverfront lots and 12 houses or condos. The other owner has asked for the ability to divide a Scenic Area parcel in half—even though it is already more than two-thirds below the minimum allowable lot size—and has asked for \$120,000 if the land division is denied.

The Columbia Gorge is largely protected by federal law under the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act. Because federal law preempts state law and Measure 37 explicitly exempts federal laws, both claims are invalid.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge will continue to protect Gorge lands from overdevelopment by monitoring and opposing Measure 37 claims in the National Scenic Area. ■

Oregon and Washington Legislatures in Full Swing

It's that time again. Both the Washington and Oregon Legislatures opened their respective sessions on January 10. The biggest issue facing the Gorge is funding for the Gorge Commission's 2005-07 budget.

In 2003 the states appropriated \$601,000 each for the 2003-05 biennium, which was equivalent to a starvation diet. More funding is needed so the Commission can fulfill its statutory obligations to protect the Gorge with increased monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations. In addition, the Commission has yet to implement a cumulative effects monitoring system, something for which Friends has advocated for years.

There are reasons to be optimistic about securing increased funding this session. Washington voters elected both a pro-environment legislature and governor, and for the first time in over a decade Oregon voters elected a pro-environment Senate. In fact, the budget recommended for Washington by Governor Gregoire is 60% higher than 2003. Oregon's proposed budget is 45% higher.

Both states must pay an equal amount for Gorge Commission funding, so our biggest hurdle will be the Oregon House, as well as the budget crisis facing both Oregon and Washington.

The other big issue affecting the Gorge is Measure 37. Friends is a member of the Oregon Conservation Network, which is actively focused on a set of seven priority issues including Measure 37.

Visit our website at www.gorgefriends.org for the latest information about the Oregon and Washington legislative sessions. ■



Funding Gorge Protection

Development Director's Report

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

Get Ready for a Wonderful Year

As Friends celebrates our 25th Anniversary, we promise this will be a very exciting year for everyone who attends our special events. Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, March 13 at the Discovery Center in The Dalles. If you haven't been to this wonderful museum built with federal funding made possible by the National Scenic Area Act, you are in for a real treat.

We'll enjoy a delicious lunch served in the main foyer overlooking the Gorge, while the museum's director Ken Karsmizki outlines the Lewis and Clark Cargo Exhibit for us. After lunch we'll tour the exhibit, which replicates the 30 tons of cargo the Voyage of Discovery took on their two-year journey.

Mark your calendars and look for news about the special location where we will hold our 25th Anniversary Summer Picnic this coming July. ■

25th Anniversary Celebration

In addition to our recurring Annual events, Friends will host a very special 25th Anniversary Celebration on November 12, 2005, in the newly renovated wing of the Portland Art Museum. This gala evening will celebrate the history and successes of Friends of the Columbia Gorge, announce the launch of an exciting new Gorge protection program, and celebrate the lifework of our founder Nancy Russell. Look for your invitation in early fall and plan on coming to this exciting celebration. ■



Friends' Annual Meeting will include a tour of the Lewis and Clark Cargo Exhibit at the Dalles Discovery Center.

Photo: Courtesy Columbia Gorge Discovery Center/ Wasco County Historical Museum

Thank You for your special contributions

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JAMES AND CATHY WAGNER

ADDITIONAL MEMORIAL GIFTS LISTED ON BACK COVER

Gamble Away the Gorge?...

(continued from page 1)

1% located "off-reservation" on land acquired after 1988.

Under IGRA, casinos on lands acquired after 1988 require dual approval. A casino may be approved by the Secretary of Interior if it is in the interest of the tribes and is not detrimental to other tribes or to the surrounding community. The governor of the state where the casino is proposed may concur, or not concur, with the federal approval. It is likely that Oregon's governor is bound by Article XV, Section (4) (12) of the Oregon constitution, which prohibits casinos from operating in the state.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge opposes the proposed casino for the following reasons:

AIR QUALITY

The proposed 500,000-square-foot casino facility would dramatically increase traffic and congestion on I-84, resulting in more air pollution. The casino facility would have ten times the parking of Multnomah Falls and draw an estimated three million visitors per year, resulting in thousands of additional vehicles everyday. The resultant traffic may require expansion of I-84 within the Columbia Gorge and would worsen existing air pollution problems. State and federal agencies have already determined that air quality in the Columbia Gorge is significantly degraded and that visibility is impaired within the National Scenic Area 95% of the time.

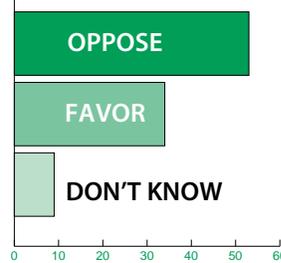
SPRAWL

The 500,000-square-foot casino and associated development would place enormous growth pressure on the small town of Cascade Locks, creating pressure to expand its urban growth boundary into the surrounding National Scenic Area.

PRECEDENT

An off-reservation casino in the Gorge could also set a precedent, encouraging other tribes with Gorge interests to demand equal treatment

Oregonians Oppose a Cascade Locks Casino



A poll taken in 2002 by Grove/Quirk Insight found that 53% of Oregonians oppose a Cascade Locks casino; only 34% favor one (margin of error is 4.4%). In the Cascade Locks region the pro and con positions were more closely balanced.

and each be allowed their own casino in the Gorge. Breaking the existing policy limiting casinos to reservation lands may lead to more off-reservation casinos throughout Oregon, fueling the "arms race" that then-Attorney General Kulongoski warned of in the 1990s.

The Warm Springs Tribes' reservation spans 660,000 acres, more than double the size of the entire Columbia River Gorge. Tribal officials have publicly stated that their biggest problem is the 60% unemployment rate on the reservation. A new casino on their reservation and along Highway 26 would generate additional income for the tribes and provide badly needed jobs for the tribal members.

Please take a moment to write, e-mail or call Governor Kulongoski today and urge him to maintain Oregon's current policy on gambling of allowing casinos only on reservations, and to oppose a casino in the Columbia Gorge.

Governor Ted Kulongoski
State Capitol Building
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-4047
Phone: (503) 378-3111
Fax: (503) 378-6827
E-mail through the Governor's website:
http://governor.oregon.gov/Gov/contact_us.shtml ■

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

www.gorgefriends.org

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522 SW Fifth Avenue, #720
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503-241-3762

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Hood River, OR 97031
541-386-5268

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* Gorge residents

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Then & Now: How 25 years has changed the Columbia Gorge



The Starr property as it looked in 1986 with quarry, trailers, and abandoned vehicles.

Photos: Friends of the Columbia Gorge Archives

Then: In 1980, the "Starr" property was a blight on the landscape. Gravel pits, hundreds of junked cars and numerous buildings littered the property. In 1993, the U.S. Forest Service made one of its most ambitious land purchases, buying the 225-acre property and setting about reclaiming the land. They worked with representatives of the Yakama Nation and the community of Lyle to create a beautiful day-use park.



Today, the publicly owned Balfour Klickitat Day Use Area has been restored to its natural state for public use.

Now: In 2004, the U.S. Forest Service opened the Balfour Klickitat Day Use Area. The park offers expansive grasslands with oak and pine woodlands, cultural resources from the old Balfour home site and an area perfect for eagle watching in the winter. In January 2004, a Forest Service biologist counted 29 bald eagles in a single area. ■