

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1980, Friends of the Columbia Gorge is the only conservation organization entirely dedicated to protecting, preserving, and stewarding the Columbia Gorge for future generations.

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gorgefriends.org





FRIENDS Star COLUMBIA GORGE

A blue-bellied western fence lizard welcomes visitors to Catherine Creek. Photo: Steve Carples

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Cover: Architecture spanning two centuries in The Dalles.

Photo: Meagan Currier, 2022 Photo Contest entry

Director's Letter

This spring, my ventures into the Gorge felt as "normal" as anything I've experienced in the last two years. Flowers, bird songs, and geology greeted me like old friends that made me hopeful for the future. And I'm happy to say I also see changes emerging within Friends that amplify that hope.

Some of the programmatic changes outlined on page 10 by Land Trust Director Dan Bell and Communications Director Burt Edwards have been a long time in the making. Our hiking program was started in the early 1980s to introduce small groups of hikers to rarely visited Gorge locales and to build Gorge support to pass the National Scenic Area legislation. That program morphed into 100 group hikes a year before COVID-19 shut things down. That break gave us time to consider the size and impact of our program. If it kept growing, we might be promoting congestion more than protection. Today, many hiking resources and groups are available, but we still see an opportunity for Friends to fill a gap, to really present the experience of wonder to a wider audience. So, we're scaling back the number of hikes we offer and casting a wider net to include those who might not otherwise find ready access.

This "less is more" thinking also extends to our stewardship program. Before the pandemic, we held many large work parties, but we've had time now to reflect more thoughtfully on the ecological benefits of our

stewardship efforts. Moving forward, we're working to increase ecological benefits by creating a volunteer land steward program providing land trust properties more consistent care from



dedicated volunteers. This in turn will give our stewardship staff the bandwidth to tackle larger stewardship challenges. This new strategy will increase opportunities for Gorge residents to be engaged—meeting community members who have wanted to participate where they are, but with more scheduling flexibility. We'll continue with group work parties on public lands, but these different strategies will allow us to better understand what best serves the land as well as our volunteers as we move forward.

The past few years gave us an unexpected chance to hit the "pause" button on our activities, to better understand what was working and what wasn't. Having relaunched in 2022, we're committed to working harder to connect with those we inadvertently left out by how our outdoor and stewardship programs had been structured.

The rare opportunity of the past two years has allowed us to re-emerge with programs that will provide deeper benefits for the land, for our volunteers, and for our greater community.

Kevin Gorman, Executive Director



By Air or By Land: An Unforgettable Stewardship Season

Sara Woods, Stewardship Manager



Staff assessing damage from the Lyle Hill fire. Photo: Frances Fischer

Winter is usually hunker-down time for us at the land trust. We write reports, work on data entry, plan the coming year's work, and generally catch up on our to-do lists. This past winter, however, was very different, with several major projects, both planned and unexpected, that demanded our attention and creative responses.

Taking stewardship to new heights

Last July, the Lyle Hill fire burned approximately 90 acres of the Lyle Cherry Orchard Preserve, forcing the land trust team to scramble to assess the extent of the burn damage and raise funds to help with wildfire recovery. Portions of the hillsides where we've been controlling yellow starthistle for years were burned, and although fire brings rejuvenation to ecosystems, it can also exacerbate existing invasive species issues.



Seeding Lyle Hill from the sky. Photo: Sara Woods

The clock was ticking for us to get native species planted in the burned areas as quickly as possible, to outcompete the weeds that would undoubtedly arrive with the winter rain.



A "before" look at the Catherine Creek property. Photo: Friends Archive

Friends was awarded a cost-share grant through the Central Klickitat Conservation District to support the post-fire recovery, manage invasive weeds, and reestablish native species. However, by the time the funds were awarded, a solid foot of snow blanketed the hills above Lyle—a situation far from ideal for sowing 2,000 pounds of seed. This slowed our progress to a standstill as we watched and waited for the snow to melt. The saturated soil and steep slopes complicated our access to the land and increased the risk of landslides. We needed to act, and the more time that passed, the harder our job would be.

Our partners at the Central Klickitat Conservation District advised us to utilize helicopter services to get native bunch grasses and forbs out into the burned area. We scheduled the flight and lucked out with a spectacular winter day. Clear, calm skies provided perfect conditions for dispersing native grass seed like bluebunch wheatgrass and prairie junegrass from the helicopter. Although a helicopter isn't our typical method of seeding, it was the right tool for the job and the project was successful.

Recycling and repurposing at Catherine Creek

Five miles west of Lyle, the land trust was simultaneously working to take down five outbuildings at our recently

acquired Catherine Creek Land Trust Preserve. These unpermitted buildings had been on the property for years in longstanding violation of the National Scenic Area rules, and after securing a permit from the Columbia River Gorge Commission to remove the buildings, Friends hired a contractor to begin deconstruction.

In just over a month's time, crews worked nearly 550 hours removing the buildings, including a double story pole barn, a garage and sheds, lots of old refuse, and internal livestock fencing. Much of the deconstructed material was repurposed or recycled, even the concrete foundations, which requires a process of crushing and separating the aggregates to be used again.

Planning for this Catherine Creek site is still under way and will engage multiple perspectives and community voices. Our goal is to craft a plan that supports the broad range of human, plant, and wildlife populations that are drawn to this special place.

Maybe next winter we'll get that much needed down time, but maybe not. Either way, memories of our helicopter seed adventure in winter 2021-22 will last a lifetime. ■



The Catherine Creek Land Trust Preserve after deconstruction, debris removal, and cleanup. Photo: Kevin Gorman



Dan Bell, Land Trust Director

This spring, after more than a year of effort and outreach, the draft Climate Change Action Plan for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area was released for public comment. Developed by the Columbia River Gorge Commission and the U.S. Forest Service, the Climate Change Action Plan is the first attempt to create a focused, comprehensive plan to address the impacts of climate change in the Gorge.

Over the past decade, Friends of the Columbia Gorge has worked and partnered with community leaders and climate activists to encourage the Gorge Commission and Forest Service to adopt strong climate change policies in the new Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan that was adopted last year. In the process, the commission explored climate resilience efforts already underway, including by local governments such as the cities of Hood River and The Dalles, and regional tribes. Friends has participated with representatives from stakeholder groups in a special review committee convened to provide input to the Gorge Commission staff. A key concern was that the plan focus on climate action strategies encompassing the entire National Scenic Area.

A good start

The draft Climate Change Action Plan establishes objectives to strengthen resilience and support adaptation to adverse effects of climate change including warming temperatures, changing ecosystems, habitat degradation, and increased risks of wildfire. It incorporates many of the stakeholder concerns and strategies, including protections for cold water habitat for salmon and for culturally important plants, Oregon white oak habitat, and winter range for deer and elk. It also proposes to identify areas in the Gorge that provide climate resilience in order to ensure their ongoing protection through land use policies and zoning designations.

Overall, the draft plan is a good start, the beginning of a serious conversation on how we protect the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources of the Gorge, as well as its communities, from the dire threats posed by climate change. But more will need to be done going forward. Stay tuned as we scrutinize the details of the plan and develop specific recommendations on how to strengthen it.

For updates and ways to engage, subscribe to our e-newsletter and stay tuned to Friends' website at **gorgefriends.org**.

The public comment period on the draft Climate Change Action Plan is open until July 5, and will include opportunities to comment at the Gorge Commission meeting on August 9.

Visit gorgecommission.org/initiatives/climate-change to learn more about the draft plan.

Teaming up for Farmworkers with Comunidades

Denise López, Conservation Organizer

Since joining Friends of the Columbia Gorge as staff last summer, I have worked closely with Comunidades—a Gorge-based advocacy group focused on amplifying community voices for environmental and social justice. Founded by Columbia Riverkeeper's Senior Organizer Ubaldo Hernández, Comunidades has prioritized protections for farmworkers for several years. This year, Friends supported Comunidades and the Fair Shot for All coalition to successfully enact Oregon House Bill 4002.

Signed into law this spring, HB 4002 will require 40-hour overtime pay for agricultural workers and help guarantee that farmworkers enjoy the same rights as employees in other industries.



Farmworkers in the Columbia Gorge and throughout Oregon deserve the same dignity, respect, and labor rights as other workers. This is especially important as the effects of climate change increase. With rising temperatures, more frequent extreme weather events, and the hazards of wildfire smoke, farmworkers need additional protections.

Friends has worked for decades to ensure that agricultural lands in the Gorge are protected for agricultural purposes, to prevent these lands from being converted to residential or commercial development. But advocating for the health and well-being of the Gorge's environment also includes protecting vulnerable communities that reside there.

Ensuring that farmworkers have a safe working environment is critical to protecting the agricultural economy of the Gorge, now and in the future.

Working together with Comunidades to bring new voices to the table around the HB 4002 debate, all united around our shared love of the environment and Gorge communities, was a powerful experience. Meeting the farmworker community, learning about their concerns and passions, and seeing the ways they



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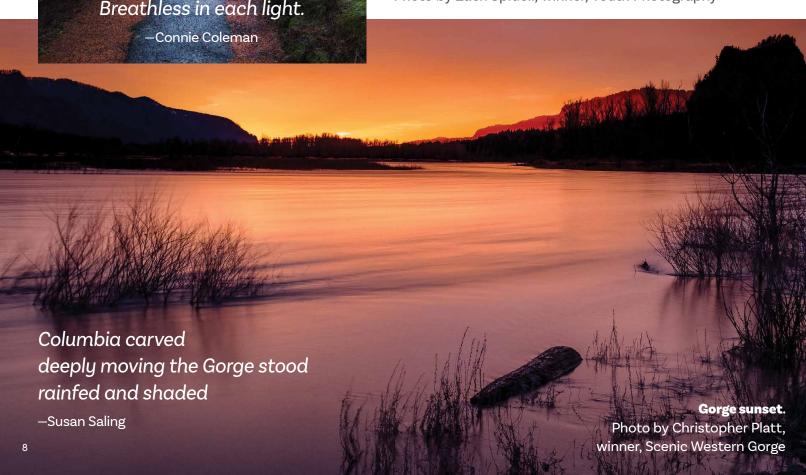
care for each other expanded my understanding of Friends' work, as part of the larger Gorge community. Together, we not only helped enact important new protections for Gorge farmworkers, but also planted seeds for joint conservation efforts in the future that will center the voices and experiences of Gorge communities of color.

HB 4002 will improve pay and working conditions for Oregon farmworkers, including Vicente, left, and Claudia, above, who work in cherry orchards near Mosier, Oregon. Photos: Paloma Ayala

Expressing Love for the Gorge with Art

Kassy Delgado, Community Engagement Specialist | Stan Hall, Digital Communications Manager





2022 Grand Prize winner

Photographer: Jesenia Robles



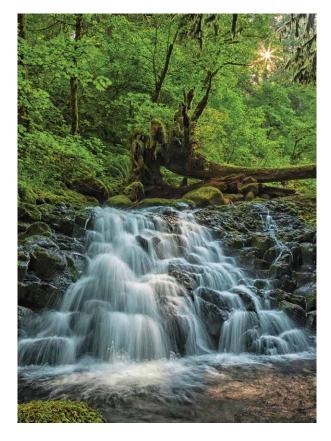
BEHIND THE PHOTO

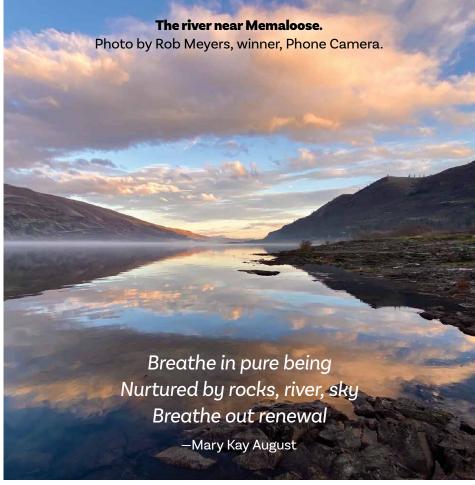
My dad, Enrique, has always been in agriculture. His family comes from a long line of farmers in Zacatecas, Mexico. My grandfather was a bracero in California, and both my dad and my mom have worked at Diamond Fruit Growers for 30+ years now. My dad's favorite hobby is gardening. In the summers he will spend all day outside tending to his garden; it's who he is. And to me this picture represents my family history, and a beautiful cultural legacy of caring for the Earth and providing sustenance for generations."

-Jesenia Robles
Friends' 2022 Photo Contest winner

Immense, dramatic Falling water, soaring trees Leaves the soul spellbound

-Scott Mueller





Upper McCord Creek.

Photo by Daniel Rappaport, winner, Waterfalls



Dan Bell, Land Trust Director | Burt Edwards, Communications Director

In the spring of 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, Friends faced the urgent challenge of quickly shuttering two of the organization's most popular programs—our volunteer stewardship activities and our educational guided hikes and outings.

The past two years have been difficult on many fronts, but they've also provided Friends' staff an important opportunity for reflection. As we looked beyond the pandemic, it was clear that returning to the way we had done things before wouldn't be the right approach for either the stewardship or outdoor programs. Thinking outside that box, innovation would shape how we could relaunch those programs after a long hiatus.

A new approach to stewardship

Friends' stewardship program is widely popular with volunteers and Gorge land managers alike. But in stewarding the Gorge today, organizing more and more work parties just isn't the answer. The challenges are too great and the resources too limited. Habitat restoration takes time, and many activities are best accomplished over months or longer, not in a single day.

In 2021, as the pandemic wore on, we cautiously launched a pilot program of volunteer land stewards. The vision was to engage volunteers by assigning them ongoing management tasks at specific natural areas across the Gorge. The idea of having stewards "adopt" a place to care for represents a safer, more convenient way to engage our long-term volunteers. The approach will reduce the overall number of large work parties, but it will noticeably improve the volunteers' ecological impact and reduce the administrative load on our limited stewardship staff.

This new approach is providing individual volunteers with greater flexibility and a greater relationship to the land. It will be an important next step for our land trust in deepening connections with Gorge community members interested in more fulfilling, hands-on land stewardship experiences.

Increasing outdoor access and inclusion

As one of Friends' oldest programs, our guided educational hikes and outings have been our key public education tool for decades. Then, in 2017, the Eagle Creek fire forced us to quickly move past that on-the-



Members of The Next Door Inc.'s Mid-Columbia Health Equity Advocates cohort enjoy a community lunch after a hike at Friends' Cape Horn Land Trust Preserve. Photo: Nic Raingsey

trail approach. We pivoted to creating a public series of community forums, organized with local partners. The forums explore issues from wildfire impacts to the links between art and conservation. Thousands have attended.

In 2020, the pandemic forced us to move completely online for public engagement. Again, the pressures of adversity led us to innovate, and our new public webinars have been widely successful, engaging more than 3,000 participants in the past two years. Moving ahead, we plan to offer both virtual and in-person public forums—public education tools that don't add more people to the trails or more traffic to the Gorge.

As we relaunch our outdoor programs, we'll focus on a balanced approach that reduces the size and frequency of our guided hikes and outings, yet increases access and inclusion. This will include reducing our overall number of outings; leading smaller hike groups; and developing further collaborations with local BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and other recreation groups with whom we've deepened

relationships during the pandemic. Our efforts will build on work that Friends started years ago to offer a wider array of activities, including family-friendly outings and art and culture-based outings that appeal to individuals beyond the Portland-based hiking community.

Focusing on the future

The changes we've outlined represent a natural progression. Friends has grown and changed a lot in four decades, and especially over the past five years. We've also faced significant challenges, from the Eagle Creek fire to the coronavirus pandemic—challenges that have tested how well our public engagement programs actually work. The changes we're rolling out this summer are crucial steps in building programs tailored to the challenges of today, that will also create a stronger foundation for success in the years ahead.

It is our hope that these new models will open the doors for new participants, while continuing to engage Friends' long-term supporters and volunteers in ways they've enjoyed in years past. ■



BIPOC community members enjoy the view at the Catherine Creek Land Trust Preserve during a hike and listening session for the Gorge Accessibility Project. Photo: Mika Barrett



New Arrival at Friends' Web Shop

American pikas in the Columbia Gorge are not only cute and elusive—they also have the attention of climate scientists worldwide for their resilience to climate change. This soft pika plush is the perfect gift for a Gorge protector in your life. Or for yourself, if you're a pika fan and want to celebrate this spunky mammal! Visit gorgefriends.org/shop.

Summer Transitions

Paige Unangst, Finance Director

A New Face at Friends



Fernanda Gwinner

Fernanda Gwinner joined
Friends in April as our
database and development
coordinator. She'll serve
as caretaker of our main
database, which holds more
than 20,000 supporters
and partners, and will also
provide support to our board
of directors.

A passionate volunteer, Fernanda has served in a variety of roles focused on fundraising. Recently, she was instrumental in producing the Junior League of Portland's inaugural Human Trafficking Awareness Day and served as chair of the first Rose Summit.

Fernanda came to the United States from Brazil to obtain her Ph.D. in restorative dentistry at Oregon Health Sciences University. She fell in love with the region and chose to make it her home. Fernanda is a certified sailor and enjoys spending time on the Columbia River with her husband, Brandon, and their two sons.

New Duties, New Adventures



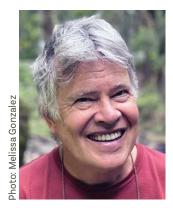
Stan Hall

Stan Hall was promoted in March to the position of digital communications manager. Stan joined Friends' staff in 2012 and has played a vital role in expanding the reach and size of Friends' digital communications channels. He has worked with staff

to develop new digital storytelling tools and led efforts to expand the impact and sophistication of our annual photo contest, which has been featured in numerous local and national press outlets in recent years. Congratulations, Stan.

We also want to acknowledge **Kate Harbour**, our former land use planner, who left Friends in May to become deputy director of the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association. Kate worked at different times with our development and conservation teams, and we appreciate her many contributions to Friends over the past nine years. We wish you success in your new position, Kate.

Farewell, But Not Goodbye



Peter Cornelison

Peter Cornelison, Friends' long-time conservation organizer and a leading voice for Gorge protection for nearly 20 years, officially retired this May.

A resident of Hood River, Peter has been the face of Friends at countless meetings and rallies over

the years, and he was instrumental in educating Gorge communities about the threats of new development, including fossil fuel terminals on the Columbia River, polluting power plants, and coal and oil trains running through the Gorge. He helped mobilize Gorge residents to attend hearings and travel to Salem and Olympia to meet with legislators, and he engaged with high school students who were learning about meaningful steps they could take to build community climate resilience in the Gorge. In all these efforts, Peter's sense of place, his passion for Gorge protection, and his compassion for others set a memorable example for all of us.

Friends is deeply grateful for everything that Peter has contributed to Gorge protection. Your accomplishments set a standard for us, Peter, and your legacy will carry on. Thank you!

Present and Future: Beauty, Inclusion, and Access



Pam Davee, Director of Philanthropy

Twenty-five years ago, Mike Hendricks and Leanne Hogie discovered the Gorge while living in Portland for two years. Occasionally they'd drive into the Gorge to hike or road cycle, and they loved how it differed from their home base in Washington, D.C. Skip forward a few years, and when they had the chance to retire and leave D.C., they knew they'd be moving back to Oregon. Leanne and Mike were thrilled to find a home in Hood River where they can view both Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams.

Leanne was happy to learn about Friends' hiking program and then came to know our advocacy work as well. "I really came to appreciate the quality of Friends' work," she recalled. She feels strongly about how important it is to retain the stunning beauty of the Gorge, especially because it sits right at the edge of a major metropolitan area.

Mike says the main reason they stay involved with Friends is because they trust the organization's commitment to keeping the Gorge as a treasure. As Mike puts it, "I applaud Friends' work at the institutional level—with various governments, with private and nonprofit partners, and even in the courts. That's the kind of work we individuals can't do. We need an effective organization like Friends to deal at that level."

Mike and Leanne are both concerned for the future of the Gorge and the impact of population growth on overuse issues, saying, "The trick is to balance access and protection, but that's a lot easier said than done."

Fortunately, Friends works in that area, and with Leanne as the recent chair of the board of the Columbia Area Transportation District, she sees many potential solutions. She is a big fan of buses as a way to manage all the visitors who come to the Gorge, without increasing traffic congestion.

Another hope they share is ensuring that the Gorge is inclusive and welcoming for all, now and in the future. "As we look around this beautiful Gorge, we want the coming generations to enjoy it as much as we do, and we think Friends is a vital part of making that happen."

As for their motivation for including Friends in their legacy plans, Mike and Leanne agree that protecting it so people of diverse backgrounds and abilities can enjoy it now and in the future is a big factor. "It's actually very comforting to be making a legacy gift to Friends."

Thank you, Mike and Leanne, for your commitment!

Mike Hendricks and Leanne Hogie.
Photo courtesy of Mike Hendricks and Leanne Hogie

Tribute Gifts

February 2 - April 30, 2022

IN HONOR

In honor of Michael S. Andrews Michelle R. Vanderwev

In honor of Debbie Asakawa

Emily Ail

Mark Bajorek and Susan Palmiter Charles Baker and

Virginia Herndon

Geri Berg

Kelley H. Bishop

Roger Brown and Denise Carty

Sonia Buist

Sheila Bunnell

Clair Carder

Jim Carlisle and Kayleen Shiiba Kay and Michael Carlisle

Joan and Steve Carples Denise and Michael Clegg

Becky and Bruce Copeland

Hal and Kim Curtis

Bob and Pam Davee

Barbara Degenhardt

Jennifer DeVoe

Laurie Dignan

Kris Elliott

Gwen Franham

Kathy Fiskum

Stephen Gerould and

Carolyn Schirmacher

Francene Grewe

Mary Grout

Missy Hall

Maggy Henry

Jean and Jerold Hilary

Jack Hollis and Harriet Norman John and Linda Hughes

Patricia Hutchinson and

Kimberly Threefoot Jayne and Shinya Ichikawa

James Jarzabek and Teresa Meyer

Susheela Jayapal

Amy and Kit Johnson

Dave and Karen Johnson

Y. Lynne Johnston

Jill Kantor

Barbara Kaplon

Monica Kaul

Jan Kelley

Susie Kem

Denise Kleim

Wendy Kogan

Diane and Dirk Koopman

Sarah Krakauer

Patricia Kramer and Clifford Temple

Linda Leyva

Eric and Hollie Lindauer

Janet Liu

Mindy S. Loebner

Jocelyn and Louis Libby

Ingrid Lorensen

Linda and Tom Lovett

D. Carter and Jennifer MacNichol

Bob and Susan Masin

John and Susan McCausland

Suzanne McNally

Iill Mitchell

Marjory and Mark Morford

Barbara Nay

Margaret Noto

Michael and Nancy Phillips

David and Lisa Platt

Amy Polo

Kristin Price

Habib and Lidwina Rahman

Stephen Rallison and

Sharon Stern

Sharon Ross

Francie and Michael Royce

Jennie and Scott Sandler

Anne and John Santa

Claudia and Mark Sanzone James and Ruth Schader

Sue Selbie

Laila Sillay

David Siegel and Elaine Smith

Chris and Jan Sokol

Ellen Stearns

Jeff and Sue Strater

Kate Swabey

Laurie Turnev

Anne E. Villella

Elaine Vislocky

Annie Walsh

Christine Wanderer

Kathryn Gimre Wolfard

G. Woodward

Kathryn Jane Wray

Julie Yeager

In honor of Elizabeth Aughney

Susan Gabay

In honor of Belinda Batcha

Susan Gabay

In honor of Barbara Bowers

Christie Kellev

In honor of Phyllis Clausen

Karen Romanelli

In honor of Jennifer Lynn Diggle

Nasrin Ankaa

In honor of Maria Foote

Dan Foote

In honor of Michael Kania

Kristin Kania

In honor of Douglas B. Miller Deanna and Doug Miller

In honor of Anne Phillipsborn and

Paul and Lisa Blumberg

In honor of Franklin Potts

Kaia Johnson

In honor of Stan and Sue Shepardson

Jay and Teresa Bowerman

IN MEMORY

In memory of Pauline Anderson

Donald and Shirley Clark

In memory of Gerel Blauer

Gary and Joan Kahn

David Kosins Lvnda Olson

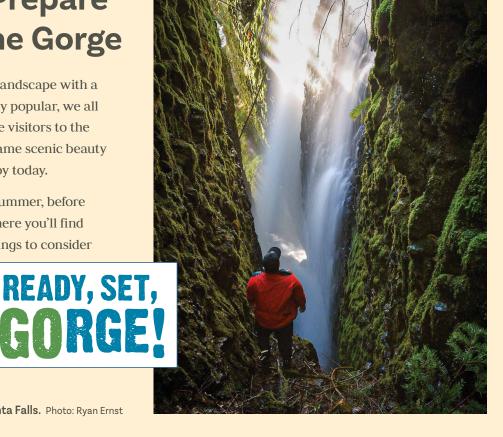
Please Plan and Prepare Before Visiting the Gorge

The Columbia River Gorge is a unique landscape with a fragile ecosystem. As it becomes increasingly popular, we all have an obligation to help ensure that future visitors to the Columbia River Gorge can experience the same scenic beauty and world-class trails that we're able to enjoy today.

If you're planning a Gorge trip or hike this summer, before leaving home visit ReadySetGorge.com, where you'll find an interactive and updated map of trails, things to consider

when choosing a trail, a list of travel resources, and much more.

It's always smart to have a Plan B and Plan C for your outing, in case your destination is too crowded or closed.



slip off socks and boots splash on mossy dripping rock cold brews at sunset

-Julie McQuary

In memory of Bud Clark Donald and Shirley Clark

In memory of Eric Flamm

Betsy Bailey
Catherine Darby
Denise Edgar
Beth Hirschfield
Lisa Katon
Sarah E. Remy
Ellen Stearns
Cicely Thrasher
Amie Wexler
Jennifer Zeldman

In memory of Walter N. Knapp Shelley Knapp

In memory of Eleanor and Marvin Mailman Deborah Samuels

In memory of Kate Mills Sherry Mills

Sheila Richmond

In memory of Nadia Rahman-Pariagh Susan Wagner In memory of Bill Savery

Anne and Ernest Munch Chris and Tom Neilsen Jon and Merrie Ziady

In memory of Melody Mayer and Bill Scheidt

Carolyn and Larry Mastin

In memory of Kurt Shull Jamie Shull

In memory of
John Hidden Van Buren
Evans Van Buren and

Marsha Warner

In memory of Nani Warren Marjorie Nichols

In memory of Matthew Winthrop Linda Chelsky

Katherine Giordano

In memory of Marlene Yates Jason M. Fancher Robert Kerr Edith Parker





FRIENDS % COLUMBIA GORGE

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Wondering what to do with that old car out in your yard?

You might think your old car isn't worth much, but that's not the case. Turn your used car, truck, RV, boat, or trailer into a donation to help protect the Gorge!

Thanks to our partnership with Speed's Towing, your used vehicle can become a tax-deductible donation to Friends of the Columbia Gorge and help us protect, preserve, and steward the Gorge.

Contact Speed's Towing, our vehicle donation partner, to arrange pick up or to drop off the vehicle.

You can reach Speed's at 503-234-5555 or by email at donations@speedstowingpdx.com.

