Letter From the Executive Director

Dear Friends:

As the first four months of the year come to a close, the Friends of the Columbia Gorge can look back on a challenging array of activities in building public support for the Permanent Management Plan.

In January, the Gorge Commission released the Draft Management Plan and prepared for seven workshops and four public hearings. Our staff attended all of these, and our Outreach Education Coordinator worked hard to encourage people to testify in support of the Plan and to submit written comments to the Gorge Commission. More than sixty people, mostly Gorge residents, turned out at the various hearings to testify in support of the Plan.

We have met with Gorge residents, legislators, and county and government planning officials to express our concerns and our support for the Plan. We’ve mailed out Action Alerts, correspondence copies, and a wealth of information to members and key contacts—over 1,000 mailings!

This is a critical time for all of us who care about the long term protection of the Gorge. The Permanent Management Plan, scheduled for Gorge Commission adoption in June, will be the guiding force in Gorge protection for the next ten years. We want it to be as strong and as effective as possible.

Springtime in the Gorge brings renewal of the spirit, and with it comes the renewal of our commitment to protecting our beautiful Columbia River Gorge.

I look forward to seeing you on our Spring Hikes!

Gorge Commission and Forest Service Work on Revisions of Draft Management Plan


The public comment period on both documents is completed, and the Commission and the Forest Service are working on revisions of their Draft Plans. For those of you who attended the public hearings and sent in written comments, we thank you for your involvement and support. The Plans are, for the most part, very well done and carry out the congressional intent of the National Scenic Area Act. There are, of course, provisions which we would like to see strengthened to more fully protect and enhance the sensitive resources of the Gorge.

Both Plans, particularly the Plans for the General Management Areas, have come under fire from county governments, Gorge residents and the State of Washington. Many other Gorge residents and the State of Oregon have strongly supported the Plan and have urged that it not be weakened.

-continued on page 2.
The 75th Anniversary Celebration of the Historic Columbia River Highway: The Diamond Jubilee

In June, 1916, Oregon’s unique, first highway through the Columbia Gorge was dedicated with ceremonies at Crown Point and Multnomah Falls. The Scenic Highway served well for over fifty years, before being bypassed by I-84.

In 1987, the Oregon Legislature established the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee to advise and oversee the repair and restoration of the useable sections and to prepare a plan to connect abandoned segments for hiking and biking trails.

The Historic Highway Advisory Committee is sponsoring the 75th Anniversary Celebration, scheduled for the weekend of June 14, 15 and 16. The celebration, titled the Diamond Jubilee, includes re-enactments of the original dedications, antique cars, Friends of the Gorge 11th Annual Hiking weekend, the Corbett “Village Marketplace”, and much more. For specific events, locations, and times, call Nancy Goss at Northwest Strategies, Inc. (who is coordinating the activities) at (503)241-8383. Come join in the celebration!

Rising Postal Rates Cause Budget Crunch

Would you consider writing a $5.00 check for postage?

The delay of the Management Plan for the National Scenic Area has meant that we have had additional time to continue our Education Outreach Program to educate people and encourage their participation in the Plan drafting process. That is good. However, it has also meant many more mailings to interested people, and that is expensive. Not only have we continued to mail the latest updates, position papers, and Action Alerts to keep everyone informed, but postal rates have gone up, making it a lot more expensive.

We are hoping you will consider writing a $5 check to help us keep these important mailings going.

Send $5.00. Make check payable to Friends of the Columbia Gorge (not the Postmaster).
Property Acquisitions Help Ensure Preservation of Gorge

Two recent land acquisitions by The Trust for Public Land have contributed greatly toward the preservation of valuable scenic and recreational property in the Gorge.

On January 31, 1991 the 1,380 acre floodplain meadow at the western entrance to the Gorge, known as the "Reynolds Tract", was purchased from Reynolds Metals Company. The Trust, in turn, sold it to the Forest Service for $2.8 million made available from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and directed to the Gorge with the strong support of Senator Mark Hatfield and Congressman Les Aucoin. The area will be managed to preserve its natural values and for hiking and fishing.

Also, in March 1991, The Trust purchased Bridal Veil, a one-time lumber community of 58 acres, approximately 25 miles east of Portland.

Tax Wise Contribution, 
To The Friends of the Columbia Gorge

The annual contributions received from the membership of the Friends of the Columbia Gorge continue to provide the life blood that allows us to sustain our activity at the necessary level for the Gorge’s protection. Individuals have expressed an interest in gifting property other than cash to the Friends. With this in mind, we would like to take the opportunity to present a “tax wise” method of making charitable contributions to the Friends.

Gift of Securities

As an alternative to giving cash, one can give securities, usually stocks, in which there is a substantial capital gain. Such a gift provides a donor with double tax savings. First, one is entitled to an income tax deduction equal to the full market value of the gift, and second, one totally avoids the obligation to pay capital gains tax on the gain. With capital gains tax rates at today’s historic high, many investors find this a convenient and painless way to give and to support the cause they believe in.

Over the next several editions of the Friends’ newsletter, we will continue to explore the various considerations related to making gifts of appreciated property to the Friends. By using a variety of techniques, the gift of closely held stock to the Friends can provide the donor with annuity income, capital gains relief and generous charitable contributions deduction.

If you are interested in any possible gift plans discussed in our newsletter, please contact our office at (503)241-3762. We look forward to hearing from you.

FOCG 1991 Audit Complete

The audit of the financial statement and balance sheet of Friends of the Columbia River Gorge for the period ending December 31, 1990 has been completed. Carol M. Jones, Certified Public Accountant, prepared the audit. To quote from Ms. Jones’ independent auditor report:

“In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Friends of the Columbia Gorge, Inc., as of December 31, 1990 and 1989, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.”

Thanks go to Helen Ehelebe, our office bookkeeper, and Mike Ryan, Treasurer. Copies of the financial statement are available in our office for review.
GORGE OLD-TIMER'S CORNER

Lillian Hilts,
Inspiration To A Community

A Washington State special task force held a hearing in the early 1980's concerning Columbia River Gorge management. Speakers debated the merits of management by local governments versus a partnership of local, state and federal governments.

During that hearing, standing at the microphone in the White Salmon hearing room was an impressive gray-haired woman, Lillian Hilts. She spoke in a clear, quiet voice, emphasizing her desire to have the scenic beauty of the Columbia River Gorge preserved.

She addressed some anxieties expressed by prior speakers about the federal government’s authority to condemn property. Such fears could not be the basis for a sound decision on the most effective way to protect the Gorge, she pointed out, because all levels of government, local, state and federal, have condemnation authority. She then sighted a non-federal condemnation case of which she had personal knowledge.

Lillian’s comments at this stage of the discussion on Gorge management were important in clearing up some misconceptions which blocked the path to a suitable solution. The National Scenic Area Act later passed which has specific limitations on eminent domain.

Lillian Hilts’s remarks were founded on a background of experience gained during a long life of community service. She was at this time in her mid-eighties. She spoke with ease and conviction to an audience containing neighbors and friends, some of whom disagreed with her point of view. However, she was always able to express herself directly, but in a manner which kept her friendships intact.

Her love for the Gorge began when Lillian and her husband Leon Hilts moved to White Salmon in 1946. Later, Leon Hills was appointed to the Columbia Gorge Commission. This was the beginning of Lillian’s unflagging interest in Gorge protection. Lillian Hilts has been described by one who recalls those years as a, “wise and thoughtful person on Gorge issues who provided good counsel while working with her husband on efforts to preserve the scenic Gorge.”

Wherever Lillian Hilts lived, she took on the jobs that needed doing. Prior to their move to White Salmon, the couple owned ranches as well as fruit packing and cold storage plants in Tieton, Washington. Lillian managed these plants along with her husband. After moving to White Salmon they purchased Mt. Adams Forest Products, a Bingen sawmill, where she became the bookkeeper.

Lillian Hilts died at the age of 87 on December 8, 1984. Friends remember her as one who constantly focused on needs of the people of her community. Add to that Lillian’s role as a visionary for the Columbia River Gorge, and one has a picture of the ideal public servant.

FOCG Welcomes New Board Member

Greg Bessert brings tax expertise and business experience to the Friends’ Board. Greg has relocated his family and redirected his career in the last ten years. He graduated in engineering and operated a construction company in the midwest. Recently, he obtained a law degree from Gonzaga University and an advanced tax degree from the University of Florida.

He is now a partner in the Vancouver firm of Williams, Kastner and Gibbs. He serves on the board of the newly created Columbia Land Trust for southwestern Washington.

We welcome all his skills and his warm sense of humor.

Come join us for the 1991 Annual Summer Picnic at The Shire

Date: Sunday, July 28
Place: The Shire

Mark your calendar NOW! The Shire is a private nature preserve on the Washington shore of the Columbia River, just across from Multnomah Falls. The green lawn is perfect for picnicking, and it slopes down to a beautiful bay, just right for swimming. Bring your friends, family, beach balls, binoculars for birdwatching, and a big picnic basket.

This will be the last time the Friends Annual Summer Picnic will be held at The Shire. Members who have not yet been to this marvelous spot are in for a treat. It is not open to the public, and the annual Friends picnic is a rare opportunity to visit this serene and special place.

We will be sending you more details and a reminder as the date approaches.
1991 Annual Meeting

Anniversaries Commemorated

Birthday cake, balloons and celebration marked the Friends’ 1991 Annual Meeting on March 7th. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the Historic Columbia River Highway and the tenth anniversary of the Friends were both commemorated.

The past seventy-five years of the highway were visually captured by the multi-media production, *Samuel Hill's Civilization Wilderness: The Columbia River Highway, 1913-15*... by Don Hunter and Patty Krier. The present plans for the highway were detailed by Lewis McArthur, chairman of the Historic Columbia River Highway Citizen's Advisory Committee.

We all enjoyed learning of Samuel Hill’s passion for automobiles and road building. His passion is best exemplified by his building of Maryhill. Automobiles could drive up to each entrance and unload guests or drive through his home. Samuel Hill envisioned the “drive-through” long before McDonalds.

Our volunteer of the year, Martha Pedersen, was presented with a framed Ron Cronin photograph of the Gorge. Martha is the artist who designed our wildflower shirts which are sold all over the country. These shirts serve as a source of funds and publicity for our organization.

Volunteer of the year, Martha Pedersen, graphic designer-artist. Thank you Martha!

Feature Hike of the Quarter
With Don & Roberta Lowe

The Weldon Wagon Trail

As you follow the 3.6 mile long Weldon Wagon Road, which begins at Husum a few miles north of the Hood River Bridge, you experience some local history, observe views of farmlands and mountains, and, if you act soon, savor the pleasures of spring.

You can expect to be delighted by impressive displays of dogwood and balsamroot near the end of April. Also interesting, but in a considerably more sobering way, is the possible (0.5 mile, level) side trip to a Native American cemetery. One of the graves is of Jacob Hunt, Sr., a chief of the Klickitat, who lived to be 109 years old!

One-third of the hike is along rustic unpaved roads which can only be driven when dry weather permits. The route is bordered by private property so you should plan to begin from Washington Hwy 141. On foot you will enjoy wildflowers and other delights you would never spot from a vehicle. Note that you should also be on the watch for ticks, poison oak and rattlesnakes. If you stay on the trail you shouldn’t come into contact with the first two; as for the snakes, just watch where you walk and sit, and keep in mind that they aren’t all that quick either, especially when aroused from a nap! The elevation gain is about 1,500 feet. The grade, although persistent for the most of the final 1.8 miles, is never steep.

From Portland, drive on Washington 14 for 22.3 miles east of the Bridge of the Gods or 1.5 miles west of the Hood River Bridge, (bridge toll is 50 cents), to the road to Washington 141 and Trout Lake at the east end of the bridge over the White Salmon River. After 2.2 miles, stay left on Washington 141. Continue north 3.9 miles to a large sign on your right (east) that identifies the start of the Weldon Wagon Road at Husum. This marker is at unpaved Indian Creek Road, just before the bridge over Rattlesnake Creek. Drive another 0.2 miles to a large parking strip off the east side of the highway just north of the span over the rambunctious White Salmon River.

Walk the 0.2 miles back to the start of the Weldon Wagon Trail and head east. This route originally was completed in 1911 and most likely was part of the “apple boom” that occurred in the area during the first two decades of the 1911’s. Four-tenths mile from the highway, cross a cattle guard, and just beyond it, stay left at a fork. Here the surface of the road changes from lightly graveled to dirt. After O.2 mile stay left again and then in another 0.4 mile turn right, again following the sign to the Weldon Wagon Trail. (The road that continues straight, left, here ends at the cemetery.) In 0.2 mile look for a sign on your right just before the road makes a slight dip. Follow the wide trail that is thickly carpeted with deciduous leaves for another O.2 mile to its merge with an old road bed. The Weldon Wagon Trail, named for one of the two men who originally built the route, was re-opened one year ago, and thanks to the work of Dan Jagelski of the Klickitat County Paths and Trails program.

After a couple of hundred feet round the corner onto a more open slope where you’ll have the first of the views down onto the Salmon River Valley, stay right (straight) where a road heads steeply uphill. At 3.2 miles curve left, make the final traverse and then curve right and follow the thickly leafed route 0.1 mile to a clearing and the Bearing Tree, an embattled oak that was first inscribed by surveyors in 1888.

To reach the uppermost end of the Wagon Trail, continue east, along the fence line for the final 0.2 mile.
The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has proposed construction of a full interchange northwest of The Dalles, providing access to and from I-84 near Chenoweth Creek. The present access is a limited interchange only providing an eastbound exit and a westbound entrance.

The purpose of the new interchange is to provide access to The Dalles industrial area, as well as to the new Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Interpretive Center. A Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed and is comprised of local organizations and public interest groups. Its function is to represent the public interest to ODOT and to inform the public about this project. Friends of the Columbia Gorge is a member of the CAC.

ODOT’s first proposed location of the interchange (Alternative 1) is partially within in the General Management Area (GMA) of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The Gorge Commission has preliminarily designated this GMA area as range/agricultural. The land, privately owned, has been offered as a donation for the interchange if Alternative 1 is built.

Alternative 1 violates the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, as it does not protect or enhance the scenic, cultural or natural resources. It converts resource land to transportation uses. Furthermore, the Act requires that commercial development be encouraged to locate inside the urban areas. Commercial development will undoubtedly occur at this interchange if permitted to locate here, and there are local efforts to accomplish this. The City of The Dalles and Wasco County, as well as many local residents, publicly support a change in the Urban Area Boundary.

Urban Area Boundaries were set by Congress and they were not arbitrarily drawn. This Urban Area Boundary follows Chenoweth Creek, a natural dividing line between rural and urban land uses, and it follows the Urban Growth Boundary approved by the Land Conservation and Development Commission.

Alternative 1 is also inconsistent with the Oregon Statewide Planning Goals 3, 5 and 14. Goal 3 requires preservation and maintenance of agricultural lands. Goal 5 requires conservation of open space and protection of natural and scenic resources. Goal 14 requires orderly and efficient transitions from rural to urban land uses. Expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary to encompass the interchange will convert rural lands and encourage urban sprawl.

The Columbia River Gorge Historic Highway, a National Historic Site, would have to be widened to accommodate traffic flow under Alternative 1. Section 4(f) of the Federal Highway Act, requires that no highway project be approved if it alters or uses any portion of a Historic Site and if a feasible and prudent alternative exists. Alternative 1 will alter the Historic Highway and a prudent and feasible alternative exists. Therefore, Alternative 1 cannot be chosen under Section 4(f) of the Federal Highway Act.

ODOT, at the urging of the CAC and FOGC board member, Sherry Grove, proposed examining other alternatives that exist within the Urban Area and do not alter the Historic Highway. One of those alternatives, Alternative 2, is located east of Chenoweth Creek just inside the Urban Area. This proposal will still provide access to the Interpretive Center, the industrial area, and the west end of the city of The Dalles without converting resource land.

The major obstacle to Alternative 2 being chosen is there is no commitment to donate land and/or funds for the project. ODOT does not have any plans to request federal funding.

If community leaders are truly interested in providing access, not just promoting expansion of commercial development where it does not belong, donations of lands and funds for Alternative 2 should be encouraged.
**WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE GORGE**

**April**

Maryhill Museum: Maryhill opens its 1991 season with Checkmate: Chess Sets from Great American Collections, March 15 through July 15, a collection of rare and unique chess sets from around the world. Call for information and times, (503)773-3733.

25th. Gorge 400: Herman Creek to Eagle Creek. Sponsored by the Lake Oswego Recreation Department. Meet 8:45 a.m. at Lewis & Clark State Park, Exit 18 off I-84. For more information call, (503)636-9673.


28th. Northwest Trails '91 The Hiking Fair. A one-day event featuring over 40 hiking clubs, conservation agencies, equipment experts, guides and authors presented by the World Forestry Center and Recreational Equipment Incorporated, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., admission is $3.00 for adults & $2.00 for students and seniors. For more information, call the Education Department at the World Forestry Center, (503)228-1367.

**May**

4th. Hood River Mountain Meadow. Led by Jerry Igo, Mid-Columbia Native Plant Society specialist. Hike is part of FOCG Spring Series of Sensationally Scenic Saturdays. See lower box for information.

5th. Columbia Gorge Audubon Society Field Trip: A hike up Greyback Mountain. Meet at convenience store on Washington side of Hood River bridge at 8 a.m. From there carpool up the Klickitat River to Greyback Mountain. This will be a long hike, so come prepared with food, drink, warm clothes, etc. Trip leader: Robin Dobson (503)386-6396.

8th. Columbia Gorge Audubon membership meeting. All interested people welcome. Care Corner, Hood River, 7:00 p.m. Program: Trapping and releasing anelope and big horn sheep in Oregon. Contact person, Laurie Smith, (503)386-6396.

11th. Mitchell Point Loop. Led by Elinor Levin, Mazama pathfinder and conservationist. Hike is part of FOCG Spring Series of Sensationally Scenic Saturdays. See lower box for information.

18th. Nesika Loop. Led by Mary Mason, Trails Clubber and Tryon Creek Park guide. Hike is part of FOCG Spring Series of Sensationally Scenic Saturdays. See lower box for information.


**June**

1st. Angel's Rest Via Wahkeena Falls. Led by Jean Siddall, rare and endangered plant expert. Hike is part of FOCG Spring Series of Sensationally Scenic Saturdays. See lower box for information.

6th. Hamilton Mountain. Sponsored by Lake Oswego Recreation Department. Meet 8:45 a.m. at Lewis & Clark State Park, Exit 18 off I-84. For more information, call (503)636-9673.

8th. Hamilton Mountain. Led by Debbie Craig, FOCG Chair. Hike is part of FOCG Spring Series of Sensationally Scenic Saturdays. See lower box for information.

9th. Wildflowers of the Columbia Gorge. A bus tour with Russ Jolley, sponsored by the World Forestry Center. All day. Cost is $54. For more information, call (503)228-1367.

12th. Columbia Gorge Audubon Society membership meeting. All interested people welcome. Care Corner, Hood River, 7:00 p.m. Contact person, Laurie Smith, (503)386-6396.

14, 15, and 16th. Diamond Jubilee – 75th Anniversary Celebration of Historic Columbia Highway. See article on page 2 for details. Come join in the festivities!

15 and 16th. Friends of the Columbia Gorge 11th Annual Hiking Weekend. See article on page 2 for details.

July 28th. FOCG Annual Summer Picnic at The Shire. Last chance. Mark your calender now!

**Spring Series of Sensationally Scenic Saturdays.** This is a series of eleven day-hikes sponsored by Friends of the Columbia Gorge. We have successfully completed our first two! The hike up Catherine Creek West on March 30th—that beautiful sunny weekend—attracted 66 people and was a wonderful outing!

These are designed as hikes, so participants should be in good physical condition. All hikes are free-of-charge and carpools are available from the Department of Transportation parking lot, NE 60th & Glisan, Portland, at 9 a.m. Second meeting places are at 10 a.m. to accommodate persons outside the Portland area. For more information and a complete listing of the hikes, please call FOCG, (503)241-3762.

If you know of upcoming events that we should include, send a note with a brief description and the date. c/o FOCG, Tamra Lisy, 319 SW Washington, #301, Portland, Oregon 97204 (503)241-3762. Deadline for Summer newsletter is June 10th.
MISSION STATEMENT

Friends of the Columbia Gorge shall vigorously protect the scenic, natural, cultural, historic and recreational values of the Columbia River Gorge, encourage compatible economic development within the urban areas, and educate people about the Gorge in order to gain the public support necessary for effective implementation of the National Scenic Area Act.

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Address correction requested

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Friends of the Columbia Gorge thanks the following people who have made memorial contributions since our last newsletter.

In memory of Lillian Hilts:
   anonymous

In memory of Alyce Decker Jones:
   Richard and Helen Ehelebe

In memory of Gordon Weber:
   Anita C. Eikrem

In memory of Martha Strohecker:
   Elizabeth B. Martin

In memory of Howard Rogers:
   Bette Lou Karamanos

Special Thanks!

Friends of the Columbia Gorge greatly appreciates the efforts and services of volunteers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people for their support and contributions:

Key Lithograph for the printing of our Annual Meeting invitation.

Robert & Betsy Querry and Jeanne Norton for the map showing recent acquisitions presented at our Annual Meeting.