LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

The lifeblood of this organization is the support we receive from our members. Memberships and private donations provide over half the financial resources needed to carry on the daily efforts that enable us to successfully attain our mission. This generous giving is a testament to your dedication and to the Friends' twelve years of accomplishments.

We have a great staff, a 20-member volunteer board, a strong membership, and 400 "key contacts" who are ready to respond on vital issues. These talented people, combined with a lean budget and your financial support, allow us to focus our energy on protecting this unique part of the earth -- the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

Fundraising is never easy, and sometimes the day-to-day search for dollars must, by necessity, take our attention away from our mission. The simple fact is, it takes money to do this work. This is why it is especially gratifying when a special gift comes our way. We have recently been offered a matching grant of $10,000. This match is an unrestricted gift. That means the money can go to support our highly successful Education Program, our popular Hiking Weekend, our Management Plan Implementation Program, or a specific protection issue that has not received the attention it deserves because of lack of resources.

Your help is needed in meeting this match. It is a rare opportunity to have each of your dollars equal two...two times the effectiveness in saving the things you love, the extraordinary scenic beauty and priceless resources of the Gorge.

Thank you for your generous contributions, both in time and money. You provide the largest percentage of our success!

See you at the Annual Picnic.

Please indicate that your contribution is for "Matching Funds". Thank you!

Friends of the Columbia Gorge 12th Annual Summer Picnic to Feature Historian Stephen Dow Beckham

Come to where the history is! The Friends' 12th Annual Picnic will take place at Major Creek Ranch, just west of Lyle, Sunday, August 2nd, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lewis and Clark camped at the mouth of Major Creek in 1806. We will enjoy all the traditional summer fun with spectacular views of Mt Hood, Memaloose Island, the Mosier orchards, and the Columbia River.

A special picnic feature this year is Lewis & Clark noted historian and lecturer Stephen Dow Beckham. Dr. Beckham's long list of accomplishments includes research historian for the projected Columbia River Gorge Discovery Center and the Wasco County Museum at Crate's Point. The program, "Visions of Opportunity: Interpreting the Columbia River Gorge", will begin at 1:30 PM.

The picnic is free of charge, and members are encouraged to bring their friends and family. Please see special insert for directions and details.
Management Plan Transmitted to Gorge Counties

In accordance with the National Scenic Area Act, the Gorge Commission forwarded the Management Plan to the Gorge counties on April 15, 1992. This starts the clock ticking for the adoption of consistent county land use ordinances.

The counties have until June 15, 1992, to send a letter to the Gorge Commission indicating whether they intend to develop ordinances. For those counties who do so, it is expected they will begin public involvement and review by their respective planning commissions sometime this fall. Friends of the Gorge will continue to be involved on a local level through our Education Outreach Program and will closely review all proposed land use ordinances. The counties have until January 15, 1993, to submit the ordinances to the Gorge Commission for review.

As we go to print, three of the six counties have responded to the Gorge Commission. Multnomah County and Skamania Counties have indicated they will adopt the Plan and develop consistent ordinances. Hood River County has notified the Commission they will begin work on ordinances with certain provisions exempting 350 acres of county lands located east of Hood River along the abandoned stretch of the Old Columbia River Scenic Highway. There has yet to be an official response from Clark and Klickitat Counties. If a county chooses not to adopt the Management Plan and enact consistent ordinances, the Gorge Commission enacts and implements the ordinance, and the county forfeits any of the appropriations authorized in the Act.

Looking north across the Columbia to Lyle, Washington, located in Klickitat County. Photo: Ken Denis

Court Rejects Klickitat County Claim

On December 6, 1991, Klickitat County sued the State of Washington and the Columbia River Gorge Commission asking the court to declare the State liable for all costs incurred by the county in connection with the adoption, implementation, and administration of the Management Plan. The county also asked the court to determine whether the State of Washington must indemnify them for all costs incurred in defending takings claims by private landowners as well as compensating any private landowner who brings a successful takings claim. On May 12, 1992, Judge Kolbaba of the Klickitat County Superior Court ruled against Klickitat County in both instances.

Hike Planned for Historic Columbia River Scenic Highway Corridor

The abandoned Historic Columbia Highway between Hood River and Mosier is a five-mile stretch being proposed as a park for pedestrian, bicycle, and wheelchair access, which offers panoramic Gorge views, opportunity for botanical and geological interpretation, hiking, limited camping, and much more. This segment of the Gorge traverses a highly scenic and botanically unique area representing the transition from the wet, western Gorge to the drier plant communities of the eastern Gorge. All four resources (scenic, recreational, natural, and cultural) protected by the Act are present.

The Oregon Department of Transportation is interested in using a major portion of the $2.8 million allocated in the Act to restore the Old Columbia River Scenic Highway and open up the Mosier Twin Tunnels, allowing complete use of this area. Other monies may come from the $10 million allocated for recreation facilities.

On Saturday, July 25th, Friends of the Gorge plans to get folks out to see for themselves the importance and unique opportunities in this area. We will be meeting at O.D.O.T., located at N.E. 60th and Glisan, at 9:00 a.m., to car pool out to the site. Second meeting place, at 10:00 a.m., will be in the parking area south of the Waucoma Center, Wasco Ave., Hood River. Bring daypack containing lunch, water, insect repellent, camera, binoculars, and personal items. Prior sign-up is not necessary, and everyone is invited! For more information, call FOCG, (503)241-3762.
Lawsuit Attacks Management Plan

On May 12, 1992, the Birkenfeld Trust, S.D.S. Lumber, Broughton Lumber, Ellett Construction, et al., filed suit against the Columbia River Gorge Commission, the U.S. Forest Service, the States of Oregon and Washington, and the Secretary of Agriculture. The lawsuit asserts three separate claims.

First, the suit claims that the Open Space designations constitute a taking of private land without just compensation. Plaintiffs seek a declaration from the court that these designations are unconstitutional and, therefore, void.

The second claim is against the Forest Service and makes a similar argument. In this claim, the plaintiffs seek an order declareing that the SMA Open Space and other restrictive land use designations are in violation of the National Scenic Area Act and, therefore, void.

In the third claim, plaintiffs seek a declaration by the court as to what political entity is responsible for the taking of private property due to the Open Space and other land use designations. The claim asserts that the plaintiffs should not be forced to litigate these cases against multiple public bodies. It requests that the court declare whether it is the counties or the states of Oregon or Washington that are responsible for the taking of the property.

Friends of the Gorge will seek to intervene in this case on behalf of the defendants.

Volunteers Lend A Hand

Earth Day Clean-Up

On Saturday, April 18, nine volunteers and two Forest Service staff worked under the direction of Duffy Dufresne, Trails Coordinator for the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area, to repair some of the fire damage from last spring on the Waukeena Trail. Volunteers worked over six hours to clean up the area between the beginning of the paved trail and the first switchback. Special thanks to Vera Dafoe, coordinator of the event, and to all who participated!

1992 Northwest Trails Fair

We are most indebted to the volunteers who worked at the Friends of the Gorge booth at the World Forestry Center’s Trails Fair on Sunday, May 3rd. Thanks to you all! Volunteers distributed Hiking Weekend brochures and answered questions about the Friends and Gorge issues. The booth was coordinated by Marie Hall-Steinberg with the help of Elizabeth Clack, Joann Price, and Cynthia Volante.

Office Help

When you call the office on Tuesdays you may hear a new voice on the other end. Elizabeth Clack began March 9th, coming into the office every Tuesday to help with answering the phones, filing, copying, and any other task that may come her way. Elizabeth came to us via R.S.V.P., a volunteer organization working with retired seniors. It’s great to have you Elizabeth!

Successful Spring Saturday Hikes

We have just concluded another very successful Spring series of Saturday hikes. The Gorge scenery and wildflowers were spectacular and so was the attendance—an average of 55 hikers each week. Following knowledgeable leaders (experts in botany, geology, history, and Gorge legislation) hikers from eight to eighty years of age, and in numbers from 35 to 101, watched the wildflower bloom unfold from east to west.

The earlier blooming season this Spring produced wonderful surprises for the photographers and wildflower enthusiasts: the Deschutes River Canyon purple with Phlox, Cluster Lily, Lupine and Sage; the special Dogwood tree in full bloom on Weldon Wagon trail; the bank of white Shooting Stars above Cross-over Falls on Eagle Creek; the hundreds of Phantom Orchids scattered through the forest on Dog Mountain, plus all those Indian Blanket-flowers in the open meadows.

A special thank you goes to our hiking heroine, Board Member Julia Ferreira, who coordinated these wonderful outings!
Reflections of the Gorge

Basketry: An Ancient Art

Mary Schlick is a scholar and author on Native American art. Currently Ms. Schlick is guest curator at the Maryhill Museum. The exhibition, Ancient Images of the Columbia River Gorge, will be shown through July 19th.

Columbia Gorge native families have depended since the earliest times on the food roots that grow plentifully in the hills above the river. To gather the great quantities needed to last a year, the family had to have containers to hold the roots during the digging and to carry them home. For this purpose, native weavers twined soft bags of Indian hemp and grass.

These soft bags, known to the Wasco/Wishxam as aquashk and to their Sahaptin-speaking neighbors as wapaas, were generally called “sally” bags in English. In addition to root gathering and storage, the bags also were used for carrying or storing other foods, medicines, and personal treasures.

These bags are held in high regard by the native people of the Columbia Gorge. To these people, the bag is more than a useful or beautiful container. It is a reminder of the ancient past, a symbol of the earth’s great capacity to provide for the people who live on it. As such, the twined Wasco/Wishxam root bag is an important integral part of the Columbia River native life.

The earliest records of the people of the Plateau exist in their rich oral tradition. The legends of the Columbia River are evidence that baskets were part of life for the earliest ancestors of the native people here. These bags are mentioned in many of the long ago stories.

The written history of the Southern Plateau begins in 1805 with Lewis and Clark. The explorers returned to the East with a beautiful twined bag of native grass and Indian hemp. Covered with an intricate design of stylized faces and dogs, the bag is now in the Peabody Museum at Harvard. This historic bag documents the fact that such sophisticated designs had developed long before outsiders entered the scene on the Columbia River.

New Expressions of Traditional Images

The fur traders who followed the early explorers down the great river brought tiny glass “seed” beads, inspiring a few Wasco or Wishxam women to fashion bead-woven carrying bags that incorporated the traditional images from the Petroglyphs and basketry. These artists made the earliest of these beaded bags in the shape of the tabbed “octopus” bags or panel bags worn by the colorful voyageurs they saw on the river. The voyageurs’ bags had been made by Ojibwa, Cree and Metis women from the Northern Great Lakes region.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, one woman, Taswatha (Ellen Underwood), continued to work the familiar Wasco-style figures into small bead-woven handbags and pouches. Taswatha was born about 1841 to an Upper Chinookan (Wasco) family living near present-day Hood River. (Maryhill Museum of Art has a fine collection of Columbia River material given by members of the Underwood family.)

Some basket makers living in the Gorge also decorated their coiled cedar root berry baskets and the flat twined “cornhusk” handbags with the ancient Wasco-style motifs.

By the late 1800’s, basketry designs began to reflect new influences on the people of the Columbia. Some artists gave up the traditional arrangement of images and worked lively rodeo scenes, and fishing and religious ceremonies into their bags. Carrying on the tradition of innovation are today’s artists who use the images of their heritage as inspiration for work in contemporary forms and materials.

These works of art reflect the great wealth of art and ceremony enjoyed by the original residents of the Columbia Gorge and by their descendants today. Distinctive and exciting artistic expressions were produced from a rich aesthetic tradition that began long before Columbus landed on the shores of this continent.
Birkenfeld Mountain lies just inside the boundary of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area north of Table Mountain. Thanks to the labors of Frank and Charlotte Head, long-time Mazama trail finders, a path now loops up and over the summit ridge from the Pacific Crest Trail (P.C.T.). New routes are always fun, and even more enticing with this circuit are the 360 degree views and their unfamiliar perspectives.

Although the trip can be shortened by beginning from one of the more southerly access roads, the route described below is a good compromise between hiking on scenic trails and driving on rough, complicated logging roads. Also, this longer approach affords the opportunity to experience a section of the P.C.T. most people wouldn’t take just for itself. At a reasonable pace with time for a summit lunch, allow 5 1/2 to 6 hours for the round trip of 13 miles and 2,450 feet of uphill. If you don’t visit the area this year, keep in mind for next year that the impressive flower gardens along several open stretches are at their peak around the end of May. Begin with adequate water.

From the north end of the Bridge of the Gods head east on Washington 14 for 1.5 miles and turn left (north) on Rock Creek Drive, following the sign to the Fairgrounds. After 0.3 mile turn left onto Foster Road and in 0.4 mile continue in the same direction, but now on Ryan Allen Road. In another 0.5 mile turn left onto Red Bluff Road and after 0.3 mile come to the end of the pavement. Four-tenths mile farther, stay right at a fork and after 1.8 miles stay left, following signs to Three Corner Rock, Washougal River and County Road 2000, the route you’ll be on until the last few tenths mile. After 3.4 miles cross a bridge at an attractive waterfall. Eight-tenths mile farther pass Sedum Trail to the P.C.T. and 0.6 mile beyond it stay left, immediately cross a bridge and on the other side stay right. One and six-tenths mile beyond the span stay right and in 0.3 mile pass the P.C.T. (All these mileages are intended as reassuring fixes. Except at either end of the drive, all you need to do is stay on Co. Rd. 2000.) Nine-tenths mile beyond the P.C.T. come to a maze of intersections at Rock Creek Pass. Turn sharply left on Co. Rd. 2090 and head steeply uphill for 0.4 mile to where the P.C.T. crosses just before the road heads downhill. Park and begin your hike.

Walk south through lovely woods at a comfortable uphill grade. Eventually, come to a more open, east-facing slope where you’ll have views north to Mounts St. Helens, Rainier and Adams. Farther on, a large sign on the ground marks the junction of the new trail to Three Corner Rock. Although you’ll have views of it and its attendant microwave installation later on, this short side trip is highly recommended. Re-enter woods and begin descending gradually. Cross one road, come to another, but parallel below it for a bit before actually crossing and travelling above it. Climb and then descend to a dirt road and continue on the P.C.T. up the wooded west-facing side of Birkenfeld Mountain. Eventually, come to an open area with spectacular views of the Gorge and beyond to Mt. Hood.

Curve around to the south face of the open slope and pass a very small spring. Several hundred feet before you come to a saddle and at the last treeless area, turn left, leaving the P.C.T.; head up the slope for a couple of hundred feet and veer right to the crest. From here you should be able to spot the plethora of hot pink tape that will guide you along the rest of the loop. After a short, steepish pitch walk along the open crest, re-enter woods and wind on a route now marked by orange tape. Come to the open end of the summit ridge and a perfect lunch spot. Tapes mark the route that doubles back into the woods and then heads down the west-facing slope to an old road. Turn right and where you come to a dirt road turn left. Be watching for where the P.C.T. crosses, turn right and retrace your route to the start of the hike.
A majestic tree living to over 600 years, the Oregon White Oak (Quercus garryana) is found from northern California to southern British Columbia. Some of the largest and most majestic trees are to be found in the Willamette Valley where rich soils and wetter conditions permit vigorous growth. Yet, traveling to the eastern end of the Columbia Gorge, one finds this same oak species growing in dry, rocky soils where only few pines can compete for moisture. From where did this native oak come and why?

Prof. Leroy Detling studied the records of ancient forests by taking samples of tree pollen laid down thousands of years ago in bogs and wetlands. He and others took core samples from the mud in depths of the bogs. Using this technique, he was able to describe the kinds of forests found in the Northwest prior to, during, and after the advance of the glaciers.

One of Detling's interesting theories, concerning the origin of the forests, is that there is a definite Mexican Connection (Madro-Tertiary Geoflora). He postulated that Oregon white oak developed as a xeric dryland species. This species gradually spread northward out of Mexico as climates became warmer and drier. Birds may have helped spread the advance northward by carrying acorns to new favorable locations. In any event, it must have taken thousands of years for oaks to reach southern British Columbia.

In western Oregon and Washington and in the conifer zone east of the Cascades, oaks are eliminated by conifers which eventually grow taller and shade out the shade-intolerant oaks. Before the arrival of white man, fire (whether started by natural causes or purposefully lit by Native Americans) helped to maintain the oak communities by eliminating the conifers. This was undoubtedly true in the Willamette Valley and in many areas on the east side of the Cascades where Native Americans burned the prairies and grasslands to maintain the oak communities for acorns and other staple food plants. Since the early 1900's, when fire suppression began to become prevalent, the oak woodland communities have steadily decreased as a result of conifer encroachment. Coupled with the conversion to agricultural land and the impact from housing, fire wood cutting and other more recent activities, the oak woodlands in most areas have suffered major setbacks. These impacts are slow but steady, and little by little the cumulative effects have taken their toll on the Oregon White Oak.

Oak woodlands are extremely important habitat for many species. Acorns, the seeds of the oaks, are a critical winter food for deer, birds, western grey squirrels, and wild turkeys especially in years of heavy snow fall. In addition, the oak tree is also home to many cavity-nesting birds such as the Western and Mountain Blue Birds and Lewis' Woodpecker, and for many animals such as the Northern Flying Squirrel. Both the Western Blue Bird and the Lewis' Woodpecker were previously abundant throughout the oak woodlands of Oregon and Washington, but as their oak woodland habitat has been destroyed, their numbers have decreased. Both species are now being carefully watched and considered for potential state listing in both Oregon and Washington.

The Lewis' Woodpecker is an interesting oak-dependent species. During the summer it feeds primarily on insects which it catches in mid-flight. However, those birds that overwinter in the Gorge and Wasco County feed almost entirely on acorns throughout the long winter months. The acorns are hidden by the birds in the fall in old oak snags. The acorn crop of the summer of 1991 failed, and no Lewis' woodpeckers were reported to be overwintering in northern Oregon or Washington last winter. Slowly they have been returning this spring to nest again in cavities in the oaks.

Although Oregon White Oaks are taken for granted by many of us, since they are such a prominent feature of the Willamette Valley and the east Gorge, their presence is much more tenuous than first appears. Especially in the drier areas of their range, Oregon White Oak trees grow very slowly, possibly only attaining a girth of 7 inches after 80 years. As more of our oak woodlands are lost to "progress", those that have been protected become even more valuable for wildlife and for ourselves.

The oak woodlands in the Gorge protected with the National Scenic Area Act are a treasure that deserves an extra moment of thought. Their shapely beauty in May as their leaves are starting to expand, their importance as habitat for so many organisms, their great age, and their important role in the lives of the Native Americans, are part of a magnificent legacy.
Maryhill Museum: Ancient Images of the Columbia River Gorge, through July 19th. The exhibition compares traditional basketry and beadwork created by the Wasco/Wishxam people of the Columbia River Gorge over the last 200 years with contemporary Native American artists. Call for more information and hours, (509) 773-3333. See Reflections of the Gorge article on page 4, by Mary Schlick guest curator of the exhibit.

8th. Columbia Gorge Audubon Society Membership Meeting. Program: David Bean will speak on the Salmon Nation, art, salmon, spiritual ecology and the Columbia River. All interested people welcome. Care Corner, Hood River, 6:30 p.m. Contact Daniel Dancer for more information, (509) 493-1757.

25th. Historic Columbia River Scenic Highway Hike. Sponsored by Friends of the Columbia Gorge. Meet 9:00 a.m. at O.D.O.T. at N.E. 60th and Glisan. Second meeting place is 10:00 a.m., at south parking lot of the Waucoma Center, Wasco Ave., Hood River. Please see article on page 2.

2nd. Friends of the Gorge Annual Summer Picnic at Major Creek Ranch. Please see insert for details.

12th. Columbia Gorge Audubon Annual Potluck Picnic. All interested people welcome. Contact Daniel Dancer for more information, (509) 493-1757.

9th. Columbia Gorge Audubon Society Membership Meeting. All interested people welcome. Care Corner, Hood River, 6:30 p.m. Contact Daniel Dancer for more information, (509) 493-1757.

If you know of upcoming events to be included, send a note with a brief description and the date: c/o FOGC, Tamara Lisy, 319 S.W. Washington, #301, Portland, Oregon 97204. Deadline for Fall Newsletter is September 9th.

Are you interested in the Friends' setting up a computer Bulletin Board System (BBS) to exchange information about the latest Gorge developments? If so, please contact new FOGC Board Member Jim Olmsted, (503) 241-3762. Jim recently acquired a new BBS program and is willing to donate this to the Friends. If sufficient interest in a FOGC BBS exists, the next step will be acquiring a modem and an IBM personal computer.

With a BBS in operation, members with a computer and a modem could access the system by telephone and exchange messages and files with each other and with the Friends. In addition to speeding up the exchange of vital information on Gorge issues, a BBS would also help in streamlining the letter writing process. For example, a bank of sample letters responding to current Gorge issues could be stored on the BBS. Users could then download and edit these letters using their own word processing software.

Even if a BBS is not set up, it would still be very helpful to acquire an inexpensive fax-modem. The fax feature of the modem would allow letters to be faxed directly off the computer screen to avoid having to pay for faxing a hard copy as is currently being done. If you would like to contribute a modem for the office, or have any other ideas about how to use computer technology to help FOGC preserve the Gorge, please give Jim a call!
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 Joseph Sill III:
Marie Hall-Steinberg

In memory of Gerald S. McCarthy:
Kate Mills
Lorene W. Hein

In Memory of Barbara Pooley Wilson:
Ann C. Andersen
David J. Benjamin, III
Bowen Blair, Jr.
Adrienne Brockman
Maurie and Mary Clark
James W. Gamwell
Marjorie and Andrew Kerr
Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Noyes, Jr.
Doreen Strong
Harvey Welch
Robert Wilson

Gaillardia aristata. Photo: Jan Collins
"we passed 3 encampments and came too in the mouth of a small creek on the N. Side immediately below a village and opposit the Sepulchar rock. this village consists of about 60 fighting men of several tribes from the plains to the north collected here waiting for the Salmon". -Lewis & Clark, April 18, 1806.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Invite You

to

Our 12th Annual Picnic

at

Major Creek Ranch

Sunday, August 2, 1992
11 AM to 4 PM

Visions of Opportunity:
Interpreting the Columbia River Gorge

with

Stephen Dow Beckham, Ph.D., Professor of History, Lewis & Clark College
Lewis & Clark Historian

at
1:30 PM
What To Bring:

Picnic lunch * Suntan lotion * Insect repellant * Blanket * Kite * Swim suit
Walking shoes * Binoculars * Folding chairs * and Bring a friend!

At The Ranch You'll Find:

A pool for swimming * Space for sunbathing * Plenty of parking
Meadows to wander in and toss a ball * Peaches to pick
Views of the Columbia River, the Mosier Cherry Orchards, Mount Hood, and Memaloose Island

Directions

From the West- Cross Hood River Bridge (Exit 64 on I-84). Turn right (east) onto Hwy. 14 for 5.8 miles to Rowland Lake and County Rd. 1230. Turn left onto Co. Rd 1230 and drive east for 2.7 miles (you will cross Catherine Creek & Major Creek). The driveway is .2 mile east of Major Creek on your right.

From the East- Drive west on Hwy. 14 to the Klickitat River west of Lyle. On the west side of the Klickitat River turn right onto Lyle-Appleton Rd.; drive north for 1.2 miles. Turn left (west) on County Rd. 1230 toward White Salmon; this is Old Hwy. 14, heading west. Drive west for 2.7 miles to driveway, on left, at Major Creek Ranch.