

COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA PARTNER EDITION



DEAR SCENIC AREA FRIENDS, VISITORS, AND NEIGHBORS,

This Spring edition of our newsletter is all about our partners. Enclosed you will find a variety of articles written by our partners about their work with the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (CRGNSA). Without these partnerships, the CRGNSA couldn't accomplish all the amazing work in the Gorge.

On November 6, 1986, President Ronald Regan created the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area by signing the Scenic Area Act passed by Congress. Since then, we have been working to fulfill the two purposes of the act in conjunction with our partners. The 25th Anniversary of the act is just around the corner and I marvel at all that has been accomplished since then. We hope that you will join us in 2011 in celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the act at one of the planned events.

Sincerely,
DAN HARKENRIDER, AREA MANAGER



PLEASE JOIN US IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA ACT AT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS!

Columbia River Gorge-National Scenic Area Commemorative Book Signing – May 24th

Local photographer Peter Marbach and local writer Janet Cook have collaborated on a commemorative publication capturing the beauty of Gorge landscapes, rich cultural history and diverse natural and recreation resources. A book-signing event at the Columbia Center for the Arts will be held on May 24, 2011. For more information, please visit www.columbiaarts.org.

Gorge Art and Culture Initiative – May through December 2011

The 25th Anniversary Gorge Arts and Culture Initiative is a yearlong celebration of the region through its artistic, historic and cultural events to educate the public about the National Scenic Area. The Initiative will feature a series of art shows and exhibits held in galleries, public venues and museums throughout the Gorge region. For more information and a list of the yearlong events, visit www.columbiagorgeartsandculture.com.

Oregon Public Broadcasting Special – September

An Oregon Field Guide Special about the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area is underway and shooting will begin in May. The special will air in September 2011.

Gorge Community Celebration – October 8th & 9th

To celebrate with the people who love the gorge, the partner organizations have combined forces to throw one heck of an anniversary party! The free, family friendly, two-day long event will be held at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles, Oregon. The fun will include music, art, education, bike tours, local foods, local beers, wines, and more!

For more information on the 25th
Anniversary of the Scenic Act visit
www.gorge25.com

SUMMER PROJECTS IN THE GORGE

Sandy River Delta Parking Lot Paving

This summer construction will begin to pave the parking lot at Sandy River Delta. The project will be completed in two phases and at times access to the Delta will be closed. Closure times and durations will be posted on our website.

Cape Horn Trail and Over- look Construction

Construction and reconstruction of the Cape Horn Trail has been taking place all winter and will continue over the summer season. The Cape Horn Overlook will be constructed this summer and will provide amazing views of the Gorge.

Restoration Work Will Continue at Collins Slide and the Catherine Creek Area.

Forest Restoration projects will continue throughout the summer in the Collins Slide and Catherine Creek Area. Monitoring will also be conducted in the seven mile area for a prescribed burn in the fall. These projects aim to restore oak to these ecosystems.

WASHINGTON TRAILS ASSOCIATION



The Washington Trails Association (WTA) is a private non-profit organization that serves as a voice for hikers throughout the state. WTA's mission is to preserve, enhance, and promote hiking opportunities in Washington state through collaboration, education, advocacy and volunteer trail maintenance.

Last year WTA volunteers completed 871 hours working on trails on the Washington side of the Columbia River Gorge. In addition WTA staff worked collaboratively with Forest Service Staff to engage hikers in Forest Service planning processes and in developing volunteers' skills in trail maintenance.

Washington Trails Association at Cape Horn

Final approval of the Cape Horn Trail Recreation Plan cleared the way for Washington Trails Association (WTA) volunteers to begin restoring and improving sections of the Cape Horn Trail that were not originally built to Forest Service standards. The improvements will help to reduce erosion, protect sensitive wildlife like nesting peregrine falcons and increase safety for all trail users.

WTA's efforts at Cape Horn were supported this year with a generous Matching Awards Program Grant from the National Forest Foundation. In addition the American Hiking Society, Friends of the Gorge and many individual donors contributed to WTA's fundraising campaign to generate funds to supply and coordinate volunteer work on the trail.

The 2nd Annual Columbia Trail Skills College was a three day event this spring that brought together over 150 volunteers to learn trail work skills. At the event WTA staff and volunteers used the Cape Horn trail as a field class room to teach trail layout, new trail construction, and maintenance.

This summer WTA collaborated with the Mount St. Helens Hiking Club, Trailkeepers of Oregon and the Cape Horn Conservancy to complete a re-route that moves the trail away from areas that peregrine falcons use to fledge their young.

This winter WTA volunteers began construction of a new foot bridge using \$10,000 in NFF grant funds to purchase the materials. Construction of the bridge and trail re-routes to the new bridge site is due to be completed this spring with help from a group of Washington State University students from the Vancouver campus.

Looking ahead to this coming summer, WTA has worked closely with the Forest Service, Friends of the Gorge and the Cape Horn Conservancy to move forward on the other priorities identified in the trails plan. Planning is underway for another reroute on a steep section of the trail that will greatly improve the long term sustainability of the trail. In June WTA will work with Friends of the Gorge and REI volunteers to begin construction on a new ADA trail at the Nancy Russell Overlook site.



WTA volunteers clear a path through the brush in the initial stages of a reroute construction.



Cape Horn Conservancy

A vision of a premier world-class hiking destination, a jewel of the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area trail system, a legacy for the local community and Skamania County to be shared with hiking enthusiasts of the Pacific Northwest, the nation and beyond...

The dramatic appeal of the Cape Horn landscape, with its streams, waterfalls, talus slopes, cliffs, rich and varied forests, wildflowers and spectacular Gorge viewpoints inspired a small group of friends and neighbors to initiate informal gatherings in the fall of 2006. We were exploring if and how we could become involved in supporting stewardship of the Cape Horn Trail, which, at that time, was largely undeveloped, challenging and unauthorized. Fostering cooperative relationships with the USFS, Skamania County, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, Washington Trails Association and City of Washougal Council representatives, we engaged in lively and constructive discussions.

The group of neighbors evolved into a working forum and advocated for the trail and related activities, adopting the name Cape Horn Conservancy (CHC). CHC has provided considerable sweat equity in trail maintenance, GPS and map development, tree and shrub plantings, bank stabilization and control of invasive plants. Further, CHC reached out to the surrounding community, providing a safe and supportive conduit through which residents could voice their concerns and suggestions. This information assisted in identifying and remediating trail, community and environmental impacts.

The USFS, after considerable input and effort (by CHC and other cooperators), rendered a decision to officially recognize the trail. The Cape Horn Trail Area Recreation Plan became effective February 1, 2010!

With the implementation of the recreation plan, there is much work to do:

- Overlooks to be designed and built
- Bridges to be placed
- Safety improvements to be incorporated
- Trail to be cut for necessary reroutes, ingress and egress
- "Washougal to Stevenson" trail system evolution
- Development of equestrian trail linkage
- Native species plantings and weed removal
- Trail monitoring and maintenance, maintenance, maintenance!

CHC actively collaborates with USFS and other non-profits in the development of operational plans, goals, timeframes and responsibilities to ensure continued achievement of this trail's potential. CHC became an official all volunteer non-profit 501 (c) (3) in May of 2010, evolving from a casual neighborhood group to a more structured and sustainable organization that will facilitate future endeavors in the development, maintenance and stewardship of this valuable public resource.

CHC is also pleased to be working with local schools and students, incorporating the incredible resource of Cape Horn Trail into educational projects and opportunities. We trust these endeavors will lay a solid foundation for community pride and involvement to blossom for generations to come.

The Cape Horn Conservancy (CHC) mission to "preserve, enhance, promote and maintain the Cape Horn Trail and related public lands within the Washougal to Stevenson corridor as a natural, educational, recreational and economic asset to Skamania County and the surrounding community" provides great opportunity in our promised delivery of responsible stewardship. As you begin to feel the excitement in what we can create together, your participation and nurture is most welcome and enthusiastically invited!

JOIN CAPE HORN CONSERVANCY
...FUN, PRODUCTIVE and MEANINGFUL
CREATION and PROTECTION...
For a BEAUTIFUL LEGACY

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email: capehornconservancy@gmail.com
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Friends of the Sandy River Delta

When you've visited a natural area for years with only vague certainty that the land is public, and you get word of change, of course you get concerned.

The Sandy River Delta was such a place of concern. Visited regularly but otherwise relatively unknown, the Delta, or "1000 Acres" was a gem. Easily overlooked at the West end of the Columbia Gorge with its floodplain-flat geography, the Delta offered solitude, easy hiking, grassy meadows, open views, forested groves, clean water, and abundant wildlife from fish, songbirds, raptors, deer, and coyote, all within a short drive from Portland.

Articles in the press foretold of changes; parking lots, art installations, restrictions on current visitors. Dog owners in particular feared the loss of one of the last remaining recreational venues. Other users had their concerns too, equestrians, hunters, birdwatchers all had misgivings as to what the changes might bring.

This scenario set the stage for the partnership that began to play out 5 years ago among a few regular users of the Delta and the Forest Service.

In October of 2005, knowing that the Delta was part of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, we arranged our first contact. Despite early skepticism, it quickly became clear that the Forest Service was a potential partner, not an adversary, in our goal to preserve recreational access.

A public meeting in November of 2005 gave us the opportunity to explain to Forest Service staff the deep concerns among regular recreational users of the Delta. Soon after, at an on-site meeting, members of Oregon Equestrian Trails and a core group of dog owners approached each other realizing that joining together on behalf of all users was our best approach. Together, we continued to develop our dialog with the Forest Service, and found a staff willing and ready to work with us.

At the behest of the Forest Service, we began to organize into the non-profit organization we are today, the Friends of the Sandy River Delta, initiating a productive relationship now in its 5th year.

As we began regular meetings, we were introduced to the Confluence Project, the organization behind the Bird Blind installation at the Delta. We quickly came up to speed on the plans for limited development, (the parking lot, bird blind, and ADA compatible Confluence Trail), habitat restoration, and plans for the trail system.

Our collaboration grew, and so did our ability to help craft what the Delta has become. We initiated regular work parties removing barbed wire, clearing trailside brush, rehabilitating existing trails, establishing new trails, and doing trash sweeps. Behind the scenes we worked closely with both the Forest Service and the Confluence Project to establish policies for managing the tremendous increase in popularity, and to minimize conflicts between the diverse user groups.

Dog waste was clearly one of our first challenges. The "pack-it-in pack-it-out" policy appropriate in most Forest Service venues would probably not be successful with the multitude of dog walkers. After considering various options, we offered to place and manage a series of trailside trashcans. We assembled a dedicated team of volunteers to manage the cans, and the Forest Service provides dog-i-pot bags and assists with the final disposal.

Establishing the Boundary Trail was pivotal in demonstrating our working relationship. Designated as on-leash, the Confluence Trail at first defined the restricted wetlands and nesting area in the eastern section of the Delta. Constructed on one of the most popular trail loops, management of dogs would have proven difficult. We proposed an alternate route paralleling the Confluence trail along existing paths with minimal new trail construction. After input from Forest Service hydrologists, the trail was soon constructed and adopted. Continuing our effort to draw dog users from the Confluence Trail to the Boundary Trail, we recently rerouted the trailhead and laid stone to help mitigate the excess of standing water from this winter. Thanks to user donations, as well as material supplied by the Forest Service we were able to complete this work in February.

Of course, the Delta is still a work in progress. There will be lots of parking lot construction this summer, and we will continually be working on how best to manage the multiple users to prevent conflicts. However, with the continuing partnership we've established with both the Forest Service, and the Confluence Project, we expect continued success in keeping the Delta a great place for a visit for all users.



Left: Trailwork on the Boundary Trail

Right: Friends of Sandy River Delta at the Horse Corral.





Pacific Crest Trail Association



Trailwork on the PCT

The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) crosses the Columbia River at the Bridge of the Gods and this is the lowest point on its entire 2,650 mile length. Volunteers of the Mt. Hood Chapter, Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA), take care of the PCT from Mt. Jefferson to Mt. Adams under a Memorandum of Understanding with the USDA Forest Service. The National Scenic Area section comes down off the Benson Plateau on the Oregon side to Cascade Locks and then continues north past Table Mountain.

Since this is the lowest section of the PCT elevation wise, crew leader Steve Queen (Mt. Hood Chapter President) has been able to get crews in here earlier in the Spring to cut out the fallen trees, do the needed drain work and brushing. Other sections cannot be worked until Summer, due to lingering snow. Of course one of the challenges in the Gorge is the poison oak along parts of the trail and especially in the new clear cut areas on the Washington side.

The PCTA crew leaders have for years gotten their chainsaw and crosscut saw certification via Forest Service staff and now the Forest Service has allowed some of our highly trained volunteers to do our own re-certification and training. This has evolved with an annual 3-day Trails Skills College in Cascade Locks in cooperation with the Forest Service, Washington Trails Association and other trail groups. Cooperation between Forest Service and the PCTA has increased over the years benefiting all trail users whether day hikers, equestrians or thru-hikers traveling from the Mexico border to Canada.

The PCTA also works on some of the other trails as needs arise. We have about 400 people on the Mt. Hood Chapter volunteer list who answer the call when needed. Just this winter a 12' section of the paved Wahkeena Trail washed out just before the falls. Within two weeks a four day project led by Forest Service Trail Tech Mark Hansen and PCTA Crew Leader Bill Hawley had the trail re-opened. We have done many projects in the winters on the Eagle Creek Trail as it is the most popular scenic alternate for thru-hikers coming into the Gorge. There have been many special projects such as replacing a log bridge in Washington and a re-route on the Angels Rest Trail. To support or join the local efforts of the PCTA, please see our website:



www.longtrails.com/mthood

Friends of Multnomah Falls

The group that laid the groundwork for the creation of the Friends of Multnomah Falls began meeting in 1989 after receiving a call from Doris Tai, the on-site manager at Multnomah Falls, who is now the Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor for Willamette National Forest. Doris asked if there was someone who could help with information at Multnomah Falls. I remember being asked to attend one of the first meetings as I'd recently been a part of the founding of the Friends of Vista House.

FOMF Interpretive Volunteers began by using the small Nature Center that was located behind the Lodge. We began printing some trail maps and providing information at the viewing platform at the lower falls.

This evolved into a full partnership with the US Forest Service (Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area) in 1994. When the interior of the Lodge was remodeled a Visitor Center was added and was staffed by both USFS Rangers and Volunteers from the Friends of Multnomah Falls. Pat Sims became the Volunteer Coordinator and for ten years was responsible for the scheduling the volunteers to provide staffing in the Visitor Center seven days a week year-round.

The organization has grown to the point where the volunteers greet approximately 300,000 people in the Visitor Center, with over 3 million visitors to the Falls annually. This results in a total of over 3,800 hours of volunteer time in the Visitor Center with about 60 volunteers who in addition, put in another 3,700 hours doing scheduling, garden work, committee work, interpretive volunteer training and other projects to help keep Multnomah Falls the number one most visited natural attraction in Oregon.

We have a very dedicated Board of Directors which meets monthly throughout the year. They plan the activities and make decisions on the funding of different projects to enhance the Visitor Center and the experiences of those who visit the Falls. One of the great qualities of our Board is long-term commitment and stewardship such as with Ron & Katie Goodwin, Maxine Wilkins, and others.

FOMF has a website with information for the volunteers and also the visitors who utilize the site for researching their visit. "Focus on the Falls", our newsletter, is published 3 times a year for Volunteers, FOMF members and interested parties. It is distributed by hard copy and is also available on the website for access worldwide. Teresa Kasner is the webmaster and editor of the newsletter.

FOMF has received grants totaling \$103,000 and combined with donations has made possible the installation of new displays throughout the Visitor Center since 2008. We also provide interpretive programs in the summer on the Plaza. Several other projects are in progress such as a complete upgrade of the lighting in the Visitor Center and a installation of Native American art in the plaza.

The Friends of Multnomah Falls are proud to be a partner with the USFS and to help make the Falls a rewarding and interesting place for visitors that arrive from all corners of the world.

Our Mission Statement: "The Friends of Multnomah Falls are dedicated to preserving and enhancing the unique natural, scenic and historic qualities of Multnomah Falls while providing a memorable experience for our visitors."



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