

Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area

Columbia River Gorge Commissioners

Gorham Blaine, Term: 2012-2016
Hood River County appointee

Lynn Burditt, Non-voting
Secretary of Agriculture appointee

Dan Ericksen, Term: 2012-2016
Governor of Oregon appointee

Antone Minthorn, Term: 2010-2014
Governor of Oregon appointee

Damon Webster, Term: 2011-2015
Clark County appointee

Bowen Blair, Term: 2012-2016
Governor of Oregon appointee

Keith Chamberlain, Term: 2012-2016
Skamania County appointee

Carl E. McNew, Term: 2009-2013
Klickitat County appointee

Rodger Nichols, Term: 2011-2015
Wasco County appointee

Hon. Don Bonker, Term: 2011-2015
Governor of Washington appointee

Sondra Clark, Term: 2010-2013
Governor of Washington appointee

Jim Middaugh, Term: 2009-2013
Multnomah County appointee

Janet Wainwright, Term: 2012-2016
Governor of Washington appointee

Staff

Darren Nichols, Executive Director

Michele Dailey, Senior Geoinformatics Analyst

Nancy Andring, Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Kaden, Senior Planner

Angie Brewer, Senior Planner

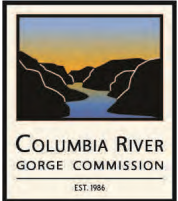
Jeff Litwak, Legal Counsel

Columbia River Gorge Commission

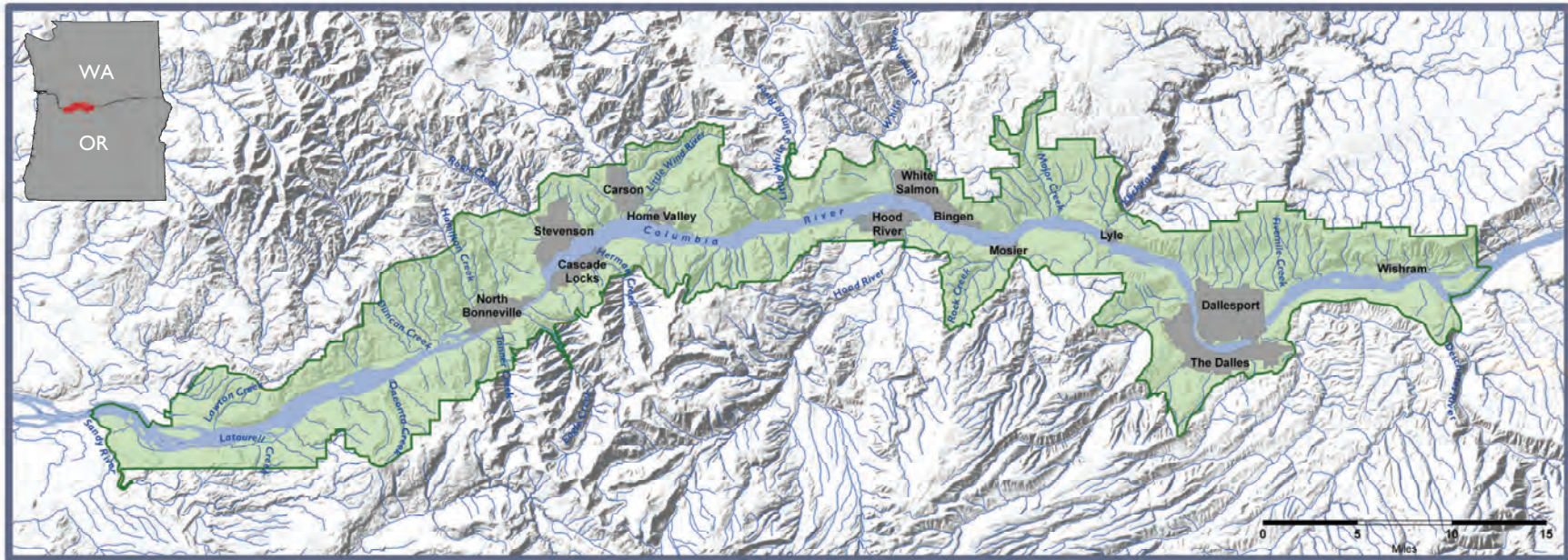
57 NE Wauna Avenue | PO Box 730 | White Salmon | WA 98672

509.493.3323 | www.gorgecommission.org

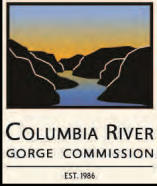
February 2013



Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area



A profoundly beautiful and special place....



Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area

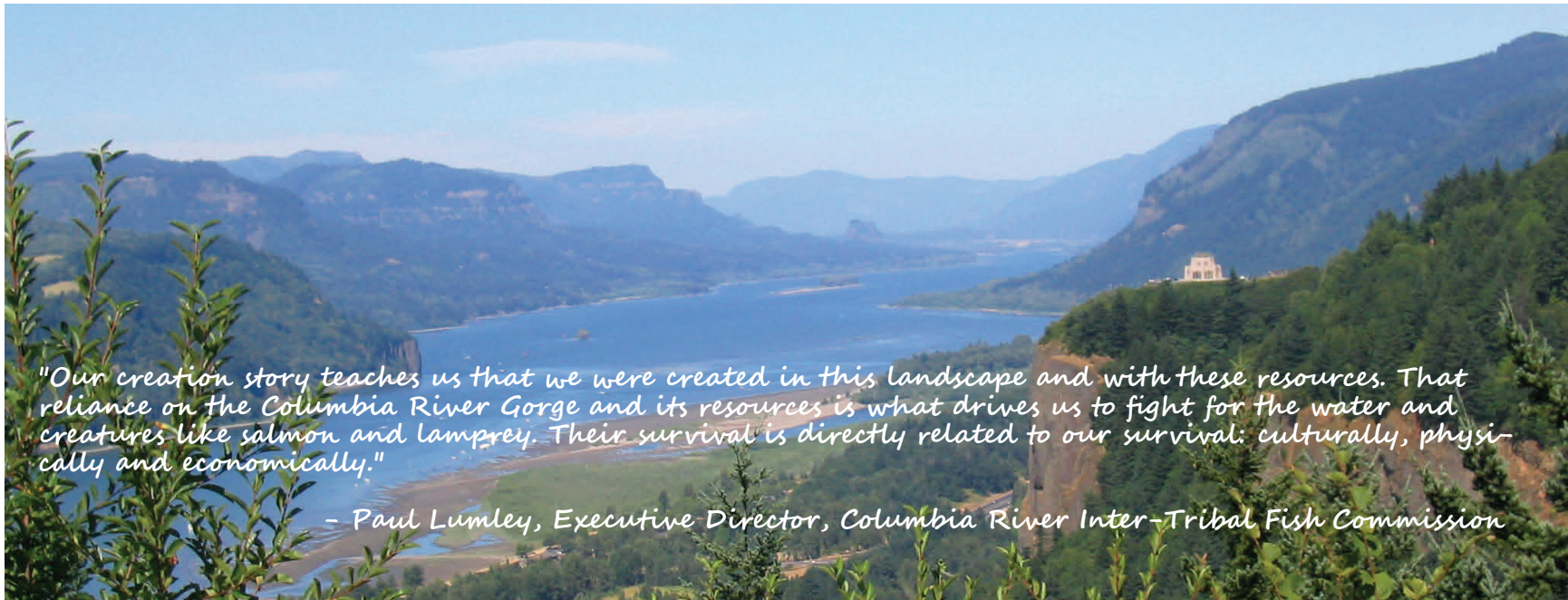
U.S. Congress
Oregon Washington
- Est. 1986 -

The Columbia River Gorge is a Unique and Magnificent National Treasure

For thousands of years people have hunted, fished, traded and explored the Columbia River Gorge. In the 21st century the Gorge is home to **thirteen diverse and thriving communities**, attracts **millions of visitors** each year, and remains a **sacred place to tribal nations**.

The National Scenic Area contains 292,500 acres of **world-class landscapes** including farms and forests, wetlands and rivers, grasslands and talus slopes, and communities to form **the only National Scenic Area that contains both private and public lands**.

This unparalleled combination of scenery, geology, plants, wildlife, cultural history and economy is **preserved through careful stewardship** by the Columbia River Gorge Commission working with treaty tribes, counties, cities, state and federal agencies, residents and citizens.



"Our creation story teaches us that we were created in this landscape and with these resources. That reliance on the Columbia River Gorge and its resources is what drives us to fight for the water and creatures like salmon and lamprey. Their survival is directly related to our survival: culturally, physically and economically."

- Paul Lumley, Executive Director, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

A journey's end or traveler's ambition for many generations

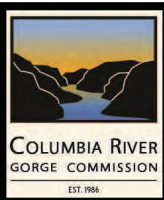
The Columbia River Gorge is one of the world's Top 10 Sustainable Destinations — National Geographic Traveler (2009) noted that the Gorge *“is in excellent shape, relatively unspoiled, and likely to remain so.....the two states have done an incredible job of managing and protecting the resources and views....some of the best land-preservation programs in the nation.”*

Help us keep up the great work!



*"The Columbia River Gorge is not just a place, it's an idea. It is an example of how conflicting visions can find common ground. **Recreation, economy, sustainability blend here to create community.**"*

- Future Forum, 2007



Scenic Resources

World Renowned for Outstanding Scenic Beauty

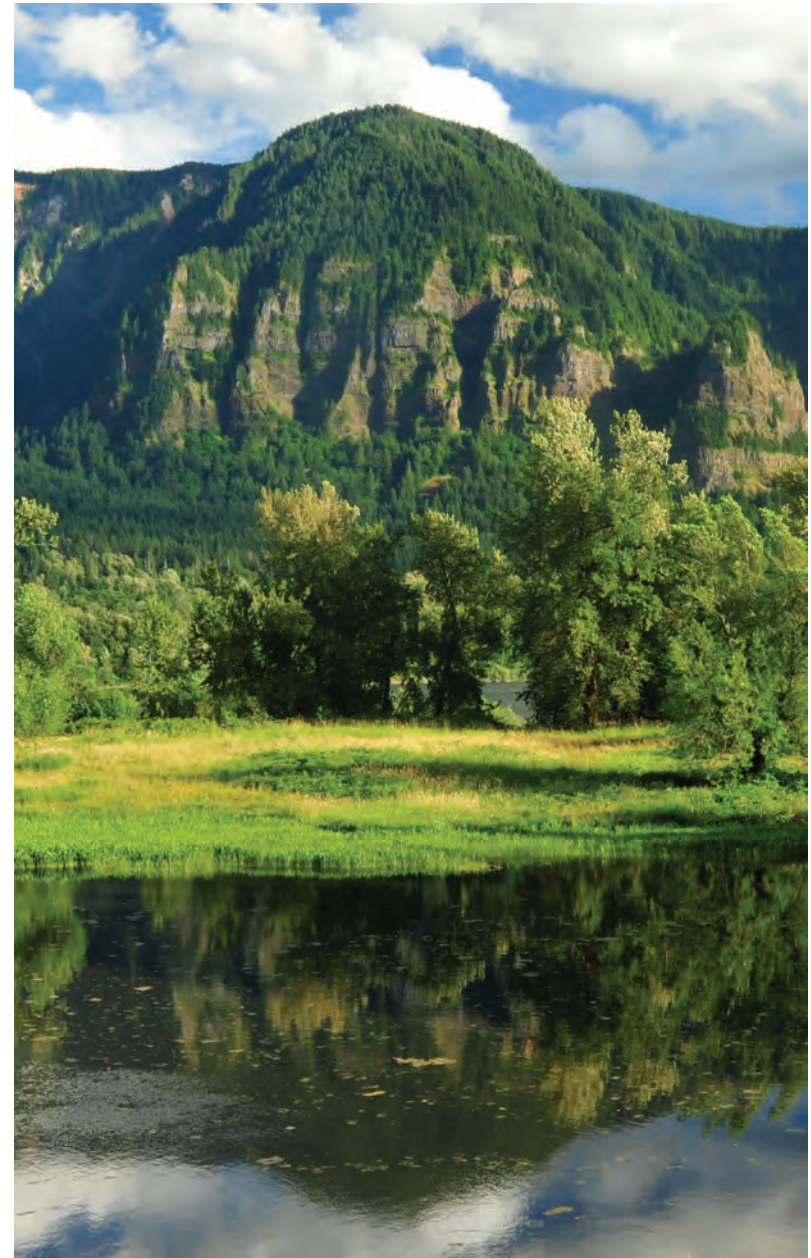
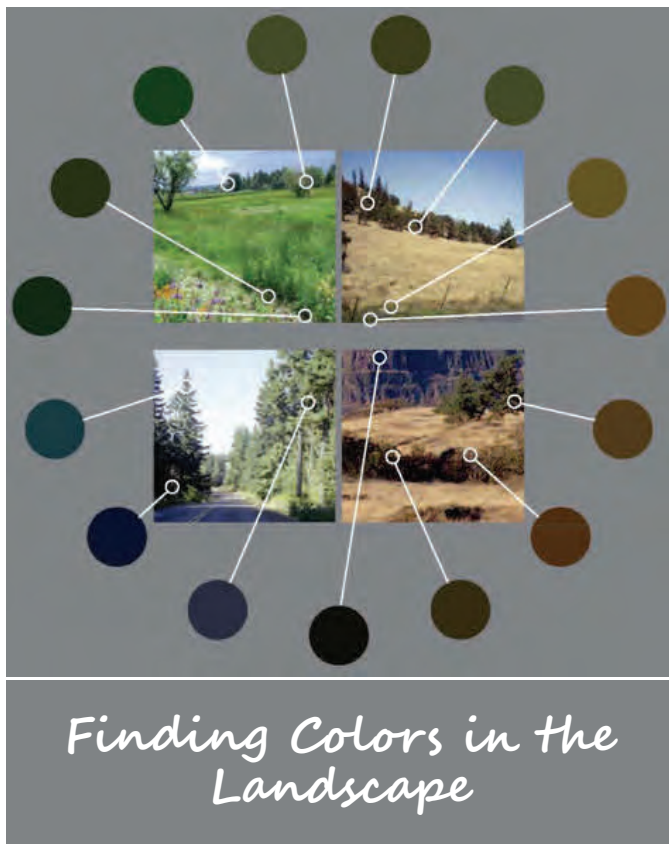
The mighty Columbia River cuts through the Cascade Mountains and the dramatic and diverse landscapes of the Gorge. The **incomparable grandeur** includes towering cliffs and waterfalls, forests and farms, orchards and vineyards, sweeping grasslands and rural townscapes.

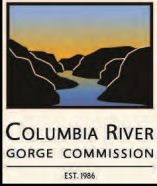
The Columbia Gorge is home to **dazzling scenic beauty and natural character**. The Gorge Commission **preserves the character** of the Scenic Area by encouraging native plantings and ensuring developments blend into their surrounding natural and working landscapes. These distinctive landscapes range from village, residential, and pastoral to gorge walls, canyons, wildlands and oak and pine woodlands.

Tourists travel to beautiful places. The beauty of the Scenic area attracts millions of visitors from around the globe who contribute significantly to the local and regional economy. Scenic Area protection is credited with the Gorge's **comparatively strong economy** during the recent global recession.



The Scenic Area contains more than 292,500 acres — and 90% of Gorge landscapes can be seen from hundreds of miles of scenic travel corridors, stunning parks & trails, and breathtaking viewpoints.





Natural Resources

Brimming with Biodiversity

The Scenic Area **traverses nine ecoregions** from the oak and conifer foothills, Yakima folds, and Pleistocene lake basins in the east, through the Western Cascades lowlands and valleys, to the valley foothills and Vancouver and Portland basins in the west. These **diverse ecoregions and myriad habitats** are home to several sensitive plant and animal species:

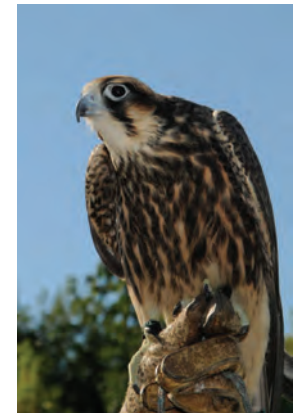
- Bald eagle
- Larch Mountain salamander
- Northern spotted owl
- Pacific pond turtle
- Western gray squirrel
- Chinook salmon
- Coho salmon
- Sockeye salmon
- Steelhead trout
- White Sturgeon
- Columbia cress
- Howell's daisy
- Northern wormwood
- Oregon sullivania
- Oregon white oak

The Gorge Commission **protects threatened, endangered, and endemic species through** open space and natural area designations and habitat restoration and enhancement. Resource protection is accomplished at both landscape and individual development scales.

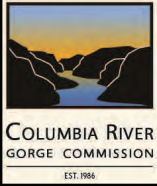
The economy of the Gorge is based in part on the **abundance of natural resources** and the **ecosystem services** they provide. **Vibrant forests and farms thrive** in high quality soils and continue to produce timber and a wide variety of crops. Protecting the **natural resources that enrich the fine scenic, recreation, and cultural qualities of the Gorge attracts visitors**, residents, and businesses that **contribute to the economy of the Gorge communities**.

Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area

- **86% forest, farmland, open space, or water**
- **29,000 acres designated as natural areas**
- **More than 600 miles of streams and rivers**
- **Millions of national and international visitors**



“We’re not just preserving our land and water for the next generation ... we’re bolstering an outdoor economy ...” President **Barack Obama**, addressing US Department of the Interior — March, 2012



Cultural Resources



More than 10,000 years ...

The Columbia River's sea-level cleaving of the Cascade Range provided a connective link between the "Intermontane West" and the "Northwest Coast" Native American cultural groups more than 10,000 years ago. The Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Nez Perce treaty **tribes still fish the river today much like they have for hundreds of generations.** The rock art and many artifacts buried beneath soil and sand don't fully encompass the cultural significance of the area which in itself is a sacred place to the tribes.

The Columbia River Gorge remains both an important historic and contemporary cultural resource to protect

Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery traveled through the Gorge in 1805 and 1806. Their impressions are recorded in history books and in the names of **iconic geologic features such as Beacon Rock.** European settlers eventually followed the explorers on their dangerous trek through the Gorge in the 1830s. Those early settlers included at first missionaries and then others attracted to homesteads in the Willamette Valley and beyond.

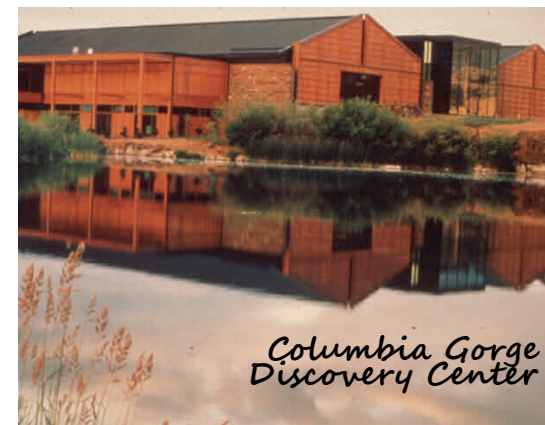
Today the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles and the Skamania Lodge Conference Center in Stevenson, in addition to being tourist attractions, serve as cultural stewards that document and preserve the history and artifacts of the region for public education and research. Both of the institutions were built using National Scenic Area Act appropriations representing a **\$10 million federal investment.**

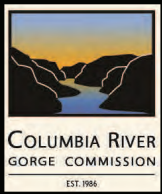
The **cultural resources of the Gorge help form the character of the region** and make the Scenic Area **an international travel destination**, contributing to the economies of the Gorge communities. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission efforts to restore fisheries and protect tribal treaty fishing rights not only protect and enhance the tribal cultural resources but also help increase salmon runs and support businesses such as the Tribal Fish Co. LLC.



“The Gorge Commission has a critical role in protecting the Columbia River Gorge, a treasured landmark and sacred site to many in the Northwest...”

—Board of Trustees, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation





Recreation Resources

Live, Work, Play!

The Gorge is a year-round mecca for recreation. Favorable winds lure kite-boarders and windsurfers from around the world. Other recreation enthusiasts enjoy the water while kayaking, white water rafting, paddle boarding, boating and fishing. Visitors seeking fun on land enjoy rock climbing, camping, hiking, biking, golf, wildlife watching, vineyard tours, and much more. **The recreation possibilities are endless!**

The resources protected by the Scenic Area Act are interdependent — and recreation is no exception. **The Gorge's scenic, natural, and cultural resources enhance a world-class recreation experience.** Recreation is carefully managed to protect the resources it depends on to provide the highest quality of experience.

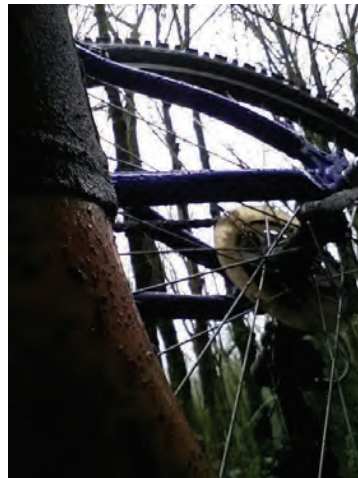
The **link between tourism dollars and the recreation assets** of the Scenic Area is hard to ignore. The **outstanding quality of life** in the Scenic Area **attracts high-tech businesses and entrepreneurs.** People move to the gorge to windsurf at lunch or climb Dog Mountain after dinner. **The businesses they start create jobs, stimulate the economy, and attract a highly skilled workforce.**



Increasing recreation and tourism have added to the highly desirable “live, work, play” culture and economy of the Gorge and its communities.

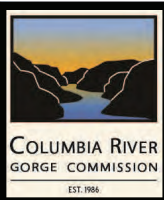


New York Times declares
White Salmon River 1 of 46
'must-see' travel destinations
in the world for 2013...



“The Gorge is my gym.”

– Temira Lital



A Magnificent Place . . . for Generations

Investing in a National Treasure—the Columbia River Gorge

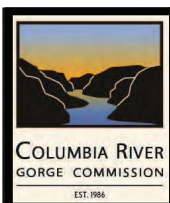
The successful protection and support for a vibrant National Scenic Area relies on investments from Oregon and Washington and on the partnership of dozens of agencies and organizations. To that end, the Commission is actively building successful working **partnerships with communities** in Washington and Oregon **and with stakeholders throughout the region. Specifically, the Commission is working to . . .**

- Help Gorge communities develop a cost-saving inter-municipal agreement for shared wastewater and emergency services;
- Convene regional roundtable discussions to **strengthen community relations** and maximize support for regional priorities; and
- Build regional and national recognition for **innovative, collaborative solutions** in the National Scenic Area.

Oregon and Washington's agreement to protect and enhance the National Scenic Area as a **world-class asset is known for its successful landscape protection and innovative economic development**. The Commission continues to build partnerships that protect resources and support a strong regional economy. These efforts demand the skills and dedication of a committed staff and the resources to pull the region together as a functional, coordinated community.

The Commission is asking the states of Oregon and Washington to renew their commitment to the Columbia River Gorge, our communities, and our world-class resources by investing in a fully-functioning, healthy Gorge Commission. Commissioners and staff are committed to ensure that the National Scenic Area and its resources are well-protected and that the region functions as an efficient, collaborative community. The states' renewed commitment to work together to invest in the future of the National Scenic Area will enable the Commission to continue to build partnerships and find solutions that protect Gorge resources and support a strong regional economy.

Thank you for supporting the National Scenic Area . . . and investing in the future of the Columbia River Gorge!



Columbia River Gorge Commission

Two-State Planning Agency Authorized by Congress

The Columbia River Gorge Commission is an *innovative two-state planning agency formed by agreement between Washington and Oregon* – and authorized by Congress – to:

- **Protect and enhance** stunning scenic, natural, cultural and recreation **resources**; and
 - **Support and enhance** the **economy** of the Gorge.
-

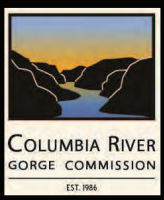
The Gorge Commission itself is comprised of **thirteen members**:

- Six appointed by **local governments** (one member from each of the six Gorge counties),
 - Six appointed by the states of **Washington and Oregon** (three members appointed by each Governor), and
 - One ex officio member appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture – **US Forest Service**.
-

The Gorge Commission and its **wide range of partners is nationally recognized for innovative planning policy, strong community partnerships, and world-class resource protection**.

The Commission relies on equal investment from Washington and Oregon to fulfill the **two states' innovative agreement** to:

- Administer the National Scenic Area Act for state, local and private lands in the Gorge;
- Review and update a National Scenic Area Management Plan at least once every ten years;
- Review new development proposals for any county that has not adopted the Management Plan;
- Monitor county activities for consistency with the Act;
- Hear appeals for actions or court orders relating to implementation of the Act; and
- Respond to certain civil actions brought to compel compliance with the Act.



Recent Accomplishments and Continuing Work

2012—2013 National Scenic Area Collaborative Engagement Assessment – The Commission is working with Oregon Consensus and the William D. Ruckelshaus Center to assess regional priorities and willingness to work collaboratively toward the successful future of the National Scenic Area.

2010—2013 Sustainable Recreation Strategy This multi-agency and stakeholder partnership is working to create a **common vision for recreation** in the Columbia River Gorge, work collaboratively toward a **sustainable recreation economy**, and **increase citizen stewardship** through education and outreach.

2008—2012 Government to Government Tribal Consultation The Gorge Commission is committed to building strong positive relationships with the four Columbia River Treaty Tribes—Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Nez Perce—and the Columbia River InterTribal Fish Commission. Since 2008, the Commission has Consulted with the tribal councils and key staff from the four tribes in an annual government to government summit.

2007 and continuing Vital Signs Indicators Project (VSI) – The VSI is a long-range monitoring effort that provides a comprehensive regional assessment of the condition of scenic, natural, economic, cultural and recreation resources in the Gorge. An unprecedented level of community and agency commitment to scientifically sound monitoring provides objective data to inform management policies. The VSI received a **2009 National Center for Civic Innovation “Trailblazer” Award** in recognition of the Commission’s public performance measurement and reporting efforts.

2007—2008 Columbia Gorge Future Forum – This regional public engagement project to develop a vision for the future of the Columbia Gorge was selected for a **2009 Professional Achievement in Planning Award** by the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association.

The **Gorge Commission** works closely with **two states, four Indian Treaty Tribes, six counties, thirteen communities, local, state, and federal agencies, residents, citizen organizations, and an engaged public.**



**The Gorge Commission sincerely thanks the artists and staff
whose photography appears in this publication.**

Front Cover: Michael Hatten

Page 2: Peter Marbach

Page 3: Balsam root—US Forest Service

Postcard—Jeff Litwak private collection

Page 4: Michael Hatten

Page 5: Peter Marbach

Page 6: Michael Hatten

Page 7: Vineyard—Peter Marbach

Balsam root—US Forest Service

Bachelor buttons—Gorge Commission staff

Northern spotted owl, Pacific pond turtle, peregrine, and Chinook salmon—US Fish and Wildlife Service

Page 8: Gorge Commission staff

Page 9: Chief Johnny Jackson, Discovery Center—Gorge Commission staff

Fishing net—Oregon Historical Society

Bailey Gatzert postcard and National Airmail Week envelope—Jeff Litwak private collection

Page 10: Peter Marbach

Page 11: White Salmon River, Ann Stephenson

Kite boarders, hikers, boaters, and cyclist—Gorge Commission staff

Back cover—John Hardham

“The protections under the Act help keep our water clean, our fish safe, our air healthy, and our environment sustainable.”

-Board of Trustees, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

