

# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

*Protecting the Gorge Since 1980*

*Spring 2009 Newsletter*

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# Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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# Take Action Today! Stop a Mega-casino Adjacent to New Wilderness

The Gorge Face  
wilderness stretches  
to the ridgeline,  
beyond the proposed  
casino site (foreground).

Photo: Kevin Gorman



New Gorge wilderness areas are outlined in purple.

Friends celebrates President Obama's recent signing of the Omnibus Public Lands Act. This Act creates 26,000 acres of new wilderness in the Columbia Gorge, including ancient forests on Larch Mountain, the landscapes around Eagle Creek Canyon, and the spectacular ridgeline above Cascade Locks.

But a massive casino is still proposed almost adjacent to this new Gorge wilderness area. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the project finds a casino would harm fish and wildlife. Vehicle noise and pollution from three million annual visitors, plus bright 24-hour lighting, would have a significant adverse impact on this new wilderness.

The DEIS is awaiting approval from Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar. But the current DEIS, written before the Wilderness bill passed, does not consider any casino impacts to the newly designated wilderness area.

Please urge Secretary Salazar to require a supplemental EIS that considers the casino's impact on new Gorge wilderness. Comment points and an action form are on our website at [www.gorgefriends.org](http://www.gorgefriends.org). Or contact Secretary Salazar directly:

### Interior Secretary Ken Salazar

Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington DC 20240  
Phone: 202-208-3100  
E-Mail: [feedback@ios.doi.gov](mailto:feedback@ios.doi.gov)

*Active citizen support makes the difference!* Your actions for Gorge protection are crucial to our success. Contact your Senators and Representatives using the information below, or check [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) for other offices.

## Oregon

**Sen. Ron Wyden**, (202) 224-5244  
<http://wyden.senate.gov/contact/>  
**Sen. Jeff Merkley**, (202) 224-3753  
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**Sen. Patty Murray**, (202) 224-2621  
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**Sen. Maria Cantwell**, (202) 224-3441  
<http://cantwell.senate.gov/contact/>  
**Rep. Brian Baird**, (202) 225-3536  
**Rep. Doc Hastings**, (202) 225-5816  
**Rep. Norm Dicks**, (202) 225-5916  
Email your **Congressional Representative** by logging on to [www.house.gov/writerep/](http://www.house.gov/writerep/)

Cover photo: St. Peter's Dome at sunset, in the new wilderness area. Photo: David Jensen, [www.agpix.com/djensen](http://www.agpix.com/djensen)

# Director's Letter

These days, it seems almost every conversation anywhere turns to our dreary economy. A recent hike in the eastern Gorge offered me a fresh perspective on our organization as we weather these tough times. That perspective came in the form of an expansive oak tree standing tall against the Gorge's winds.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge was born during the economic "malaise" of 1980. Our founder Nancy Russell knew that in tough times we could cling to fear or cling to hope. Nancy opted for hope, building this organization one member at a time, leading hikes, giving slideshows, and cajoling everyone she knew to contribute. That same grassroots approach was successfully employed to pass the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act a few years later.

The creation of our organization and our greatest legislative achievement came in the midst of a national recession. The lesson in those accomplishments is that, even in adverse conditions, with hard work and steely resolve we can persevere. By building a deep and sturdy root system—meaning you, our members—Friends of the Columbia Gorge has grown into a resilient organization capable of withstanding hard times.

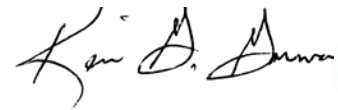
Many non-profits today thrive on the largesse of charitable foundations. Because grantwriting is less time-consuming than building a broad membership, these

nonprofits are often lauded as effectively run organizations, due to low overhead. But only a strong membership can demonstrate to elected officials that the public cares about an issue. Now, with foundation assets tumbling off an economic cliff, foundation-dependent groups find themselves without money and without a base of public support.

Friends isn't immune to the foundation free fall; nine months into our fiscal year, our revenues are some 13% below budget projections, mostly due to decreased foundation funding. But the vast majority of our members are sticking with us. Our recent annual meeting posted record attendance and our spring hikes are as popular as ever. Our membership numbers are strong,

and volunteerism and activism are at all-time highs.

Without a deep root system, the beautiful old oak tree I saw on my hike likely would have fallen long ago in the Gorge's harsh winds. As our country now faces a stiff economic headwind, I give thanks that with Friends' deep roots—our members—we are able to continue standing strong for the Gorge.



Kevin Gorman  
Executive Director

*Friends of the Columbia Gorge works to ensure that the beautiful and wild Columbia Gorge remains a place apart, an unspoiled treasure for generations to come.*



Photo: Friends of the Columbia Gorge archives

# Wilderness at Last!

**A five-year effort pays off as Congress protects wilderness including the Columbia Gorge**

Michael Lang, Conservation Director, [michael@gorgefriends.org](mailto:michael@gorgefriends.org)

**F**riends of the Columbia Gorge and wilderness lovers everywhere celebrated in March when Congress passed the 2009 Omnibus Public Lands Management Act. President Barack Obama signed the legislation into law, designating two million acres of new wilderness nationwide. In Oregon, that translates to 202,000 acres that are now forever off limits to logging, road building, and development—the first major Oregon wilderness designations in 25 years. The sweeping legislation contains nearly 26,000

acres of forests, creeks, cliffs, and canyons within the Columbia River Gorge.

The new Gorge wilderness designations include lands on Larch Mountain and along the “Gorge Face,” south of Interstate 84 from Multnomah Creek east to Viento near Hood River. Considered some of the most rugged, picturesque, and pristine Gorge landscapes, these are the forests and cliffs that inspired Sam Lancaster, John Yeon, Nancy Russell, and countless others to dedicate their lives to protecting the Columbia Gorge.

The Larch Mountain addition includes Multnomah Creek, the Oneonta Creek canyon, and Bell Creek. These watersheds encompass stands of old-growth Douglas fir and cedar that will now be permanently protected as wilderness.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge and Oregon Wild struck a compromise with mountain bike advocates to exclude the Larch Mountain loop trail from the Wilderness bill. That trail is open to mountain bikes but would have been closed to bikes if designated as Wilderness. This



*Weisendanger Falls on upper Multnomah Creek is in the newly protected wilderness.*

Photo: ©Greg Lief, [www.oregonwildflowers.org](http://www.oregonwildflowers.org)

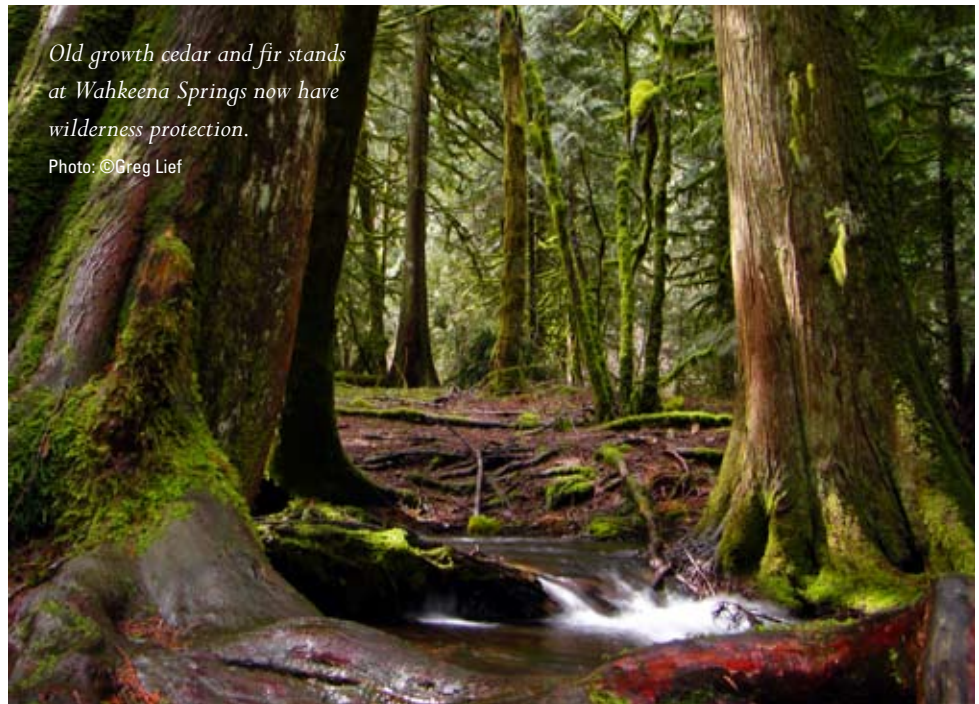
*“The Oregon Congressional delegation deserves a strong round of applause for its dedicated work to ensure protection...”*

compromise and other modifications to the wilderness proposal eased mountain bikers’ concerns and removed an obstacle to the passage of the bill. The 1964 Wilderness Act precludes mechanized modes of transportation in wilderness areas.

The Gorge Face addition includes the spectacular cliffs, canyons, and waterfalls from Oneonta Creek on the west end of the gorge to Viento Creek in Hood River County. The northern boundary of the new wilderness addition is within one mile of the Columbia River and in some areas as close as one-quarter mile. Much of Herman Creek and its spawning habitat for salmon and steelhead are included in the new wilderness additions. The boundary in this location is less than one-half mile from the site of the proposed off-reservation casino. Approval and construction of a massive casino resort at this site would undoubtedly harm the wilderness values that Congress sought to protect with the passage of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act.

Both Larch Mountain and the Gorge Face are included within a federally designated Special Management Area (SMA) of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. These areas are designated as “open space,” the most protective designation within the Scenic Area. Over the past five years, however, the Forest Service has attempted to allow commercial logging and vegetation management activities on open space Scenic Area lands. In response, Friends and our allies in the conservation community sought greater protection for these lands as federally designated wilderness.

Under the new legislation, other wilderness expansions in Oregon include



*Old growth cedar and fir stands at Wahkeena Springs now have wilderness protection.*

Photo: ©Greg Lief

lands around the Mount Hood Wilderness, Badger Creek Wilderness, Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness, and Bull of the Woods Wilderness. In addition, the bill created new wilderness areas including the Clackamas Wilderness, Roaring River Wilderness, Copper Salmon Wilderness in the Siskiyou National Forest, Soda Mountain Wilderness in southwestern Oregon along the California border, Spring Basin Wilderness along the John Day River, and the Badlands Wilderness east of Bend. The bill also includes ninety miles of Oregon rivers to be protected as “Wild and Scenic” under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, including the East and Middle Forks of the Hood River. Friends was able to insert a minor amendment to the National Scenic Area Act into the wilderness bill that restored protection of the mainstem of the Hood River.

The Oregon Congressional delegation deserves a strong round of applause for its dedicated work to ensure protection of Larch Mountain, the Gorge Face, and the numerous other wilderness areas in Oregon that are included in this new wilderness legislation. Special thanks go to Senator Ron Wyden and Congressman Earl Blumenauer and their staffs for their years of work leading to final passage of this bill. Friends also gives special thanks to Oregon Wild (formerly Oregon Natural Resources Council) for working with us to ensure that Larch Mountain and the Gorge Face are protected as wilderness lands within the Columbia River Gorge.

*Please see page 2 and contact Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar, asking him to oppose development of a casino resort at the doorstep of the newly designated Gorge Face addition to the Mark O. Hatfield Wilderness!*

*Catherine Creek, Major Creek, and Memaloose Island are seen from the Land Trust's new Memaloose property.* Photo: Aubrey Russell

# Land Trust Acquires Memaloose View Property

Kate McBride, Land Trust Manager, [kate@gorgefriends.org](mailto:kate@gorgefriends.org)

In February, Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust purchased a beautiful ten-acre parcel bordered by public land on three sides in the Memaloose area. Extending east from Mosier to Rowena Crest in Oregon, the Memaloose area is a priority acquisition landscape for the land trust due to its scenic beauty, abundance of wildflowers, and vulnerability to development.

The view from our new property looks directly over Memaloose Island to the Catherine Creek and Major Creek areas across the river, as well as up and down the Columbia. The property is in a relatively natural state, boasting abundant wildlife and wildflowers.

In the early 1980s, even before passage of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, former owner Clarence Jenkinson built an unobtrusive dark-colored cedar home. Mr. Jenkinson's daughter, Carol Cole, said recently, "My father knew immediately when he saw the views from the property that this was

the place he wanted to retire and build his house." Carol recalled seeing many deer and wild turkey on the property when she visited her parents.



*Volunteers from Columbia Gorge Community College help with stewardship at Friends' Dancing Rock property.* Photo: Kate McBride

The U.S. Forest Service has long considered creating a recreation plan for the Memaloose area, which features breathtaking viewpoints and wildflower meadows that are exceptional even for the Gorge. The new land trust property may eventually become a part of that plan. The house is currently being rented out to defray costs while we work with public agencies to develop long-term plans for the area.

## Dancing Rock Update

Removal of invasive plants is going strong on the Land Trust's property at Dancing Rock, near Dalles Mountain Road in Klickitat County. Since early winter, three different volunteer parties have logged more than 150 hours removing blackberry thickets in the riparian area on the land. Over the next two years, we plan to re-establish a native plant regime in this beautiful oak woodland. To volunteer, contact our stewardship coordinator Merrit Hoeh at 503-242-3762 x103 or at [merrit@gorgefriends.org](mailto:merrit@gorgefriends.org).



Photo: Michael O'Connor

## Kids Outdoors in the Gorge

Come and help sixth graders from Washougal, WA enjoy outdoor education at Steigerwald Wildlife Refuge and Lewis and Clark Park on Wednesday, May 27.

School funding for outdoor education has been cut, so donors and volunteers with Friends' Vic Clausen Youth Fund are reaching out to educate the upcoming generation of environmental stewards.

You can help make our Youth Fund program enriching and inspiring for kids. **To help on May 27**, contact Renee at [renee@gorgefriends.org](mailto:renee@gorgefriends.org) or 503-241-3762 x103.

## Lend a Hand to the Land

Merrit Hoeh, Stewardship Coordinator  
[merrit@gorgefriends.org](mailto:merrit@gorgefriends.org)

Spring is in full swing and Friends' stewardship volunteers are out in the Gorge cutting back brambles, pulling invasive weeds, recontouring eroding slopes, and seeding open areas with native grasses.

Friends will coordinate fourteen "Lend a Hand to the Land" stewardship projects at six different Gorge locations in the coming months. Volunteers will visit new landscapes, learn about native plants, help preserve wildlife habitat, and make new friends. All ages and skill levels are welcome. Drinks, snacks, gloves, and tools are provided.

**Come out and Lend a Hand to the Land!**

To volunteer, contact Merrit at 503-241-3762 x106 or [merrit@gorgefriends.org](mailto:merrit@gorgefriends.org), or check [www.gorgefriends.org/stewardship/](http://www.gorgefriends.org/stewardship/) for the schedule.

## Solstice Wood Fire Café

Peter Cornelison, Field Representative  
[peter@gorgefriends.org](mailto:peter@gorgefriends.org)

The Solstice Wood Fire Café is a warm and welcoming gathering place in Bingen, on the Washington side of the river. The rich earth-tone interior, a huge colorful chalkboard wall, and a wood-fired pizza oven give the restaurant a comfortable, homey feel—exactly what owners Aaron and Suzanne Baumhackl intended.

Aaron came to the Gorge in 2005 on an exploratory road trip. He was working as a river guide in California and fell in love with the area. He and Suzanne moved to Bingen the following year. Aaron had previously worked as a cook and Suzanne as a nutritional expert, so they decided to open a very special pizza restaurant.

They love the Gorge and have opened up the Solstice Café to Friends of the Columbia Gorge, The Headwaters Institute, and Gorge Grown Food Network for community events.

Next time you're in Bingen and feeling hungry after a day of hiking, stop in at Solstice Wood Fire Café. We know you'll be glad you did.



*Solstice Wood Fire Café in Bingen is a popular community gathering place.*

*Left: Solstice Café owners Aaron and Suzanne Baumhackl. Photos: Peter Cornelison*



*The tiny few-flowered blue-eyed Mary, or Collinsia sparsiflora, at Catherine Creek could be threatened by horse use in the area.*



*Friends' Conservation and Legal staff (from left) Rick Till, Michael Lang, and Nathan Baker visited Catherine Creek to evaluate likely impacts of horse use to wildflower communities in the area. Photos: Angie Moore*

# Catherine Creek Rare Wildflowers at Risk

Rick Till, Land Use Law Clerk, [rick@gorgefriends.org](mailto:rick@gorgefriends.org)

The U.S. Forest Service recently issued its final decision for the Burdoin Mountain, Coyote Wall, and Catherine Creek Recreation Plan. Unfortunately, among other problems, the Recreation Plan fails to protect the rare, highly sensitive plant communities found in the lower elevations of the Catherine Creek Open Space area.

In recent years, the area between Burdoin Mountain and Major Creek has seen an explosion in recreational use: mountain biking, horseback riding, and wildflower viewing. With no formal trail system, user-made trails have evolved, leading to harmful erosion, damage to sensitive plant species, disruption of wildlife, and conflicts between user groups. The Recreation Plan will establish a formal trail system that addresses these concerns, while allowing recreational uses to continue.

Lower-elevation lands at Catherine Creek were scoured by the Ice Age Floods and today hold a few thin inches of nutrient-poor soils. Gorge wildflower expert

Barbara Robinson explains the characteristics of this ecosystem:

“The thin, relatively infertile soils allow a community of small, delicate annuals and perennials to survive and thrive, which in deeper or more



*Naturalist Barbara Robinson has educated Gorge lovers of all ages about protection of native wildflowers in the eastern Gorge. Photo: Friends Archives*

fertile soil would be crowded out by bigger plants and lush grass. It is habitat for extensive stands of Washington sensitive species such as few-flowered blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia sparsiflora*), poet's shooting star (*Dodecatheon poeticum*), and the Gorge endemic narrow-leaf onion (*Allium amplexans*)...

In a particularly sensitive portion of the Catherine Creek area, the Forest Service initially proposed only pedestrian use, but at the last minute decided to allow horses from April 1 through November 30 each year. Equestrian use in this area, especially in spring, would likely lead to excessive trampling of vegetation and erosion of fragile soils. In addition, horse manure could fertilize the soil and create favorable conditions for higher-growing plant communities that could crowd out sensitive wildflowers.

Friends, along with Oregon Wild and other partners, plans to appeal the Forest Service's decision in order to ensure protection of Catherine Creek's unique natural heritage.



# Conservation Groups Prevail in Skamania County Zoning Appeal

Nathan Baker, Staff Attorney, [nathan@gorgefriends.org](mailto:nathan@gorgefriends.org)

On February 19, 2009, a hearing examiner concluded that Skamania County must review the environmental impacts of its plans to open up hundreds of thousands of acres of land to large-scale energy development, increased residential growth, and other uses. The hearing examiner found that the county's proposal is likely to result in "significant adverse environmental impacts" and directed the county planning department to prepare an environmental impact statement before moving forward with the changes.

The decision was made in response to administrative appeals filed by Friends of the Columbia Gorge, Gifford Pinchot Task Force, Columbia Riverkeeper, and Save Our Scenic Area.

In May 2008, Skamania County Commissioners voted to pursue a number of changes to the county zoning ordinance, including authorizing large-scale wind energy facilities, natural gas systems, and bioenergy facilities such as hog fuel boilers. The County proposed to authorize these and other industrial uses on 878,959 acres of land, or approximately 81.9% of the County's total land base. Further, the County proposed to authorize increased residential development along Northwestern Lake and near the Swift Reservoir.

The County also proposed to allow a wide range of uses "outright"—that is, with no formal review for compliance with zoning standards, no review for compatibility with the surrounding area, and no opportunity for meaningful public participation. The uses proposed to be allowed outright include natural gas systems; the storage of explosives, fuels, and chemicals; extraction of gravel

and rock for road construction; operation of portable rock crushers; forest sawmills; overnight lodging and convention facilities; and facilities for treating and storing on-site hazardous waste.

The hearing examiner's decision concludes that "development with significant adverse environmental impacts is probable after adoption of the proposed zoning amendments." The decision requires the County to determine the consequences of the proposed zoning amendments and to fully inform the public. This is a victory for hundreds of Skamania County citizens concerned that their rural quality of life might be negatively affected by the sweeping proposed changes.

The hearing examiner expressly found "most compelling" the potential for significant adverse impacts of large-scale wind energy facilities on scenic and wildlife resources. The decision cites SDS Lumber Company's proposal to construct a massive wind energy project near Underwood as an example of a project with significant impacts that are likely to flow from the proposed amendments.

After the hearing examiner's ruling, SDS Lumber decided to bypass the county process by formally applying for a state permit from the Washington State Energy Siting and Evaluation Council.

For additional information on this project, visit [www.efsec.wa.gov](http://www.efsec.wa.gov); click the "Whistling Ridge" link in the right column.



*Skamania County's proposed zoning amendments would have authorized extensive energy development and industrial activity on nearly 82% of the land in the county, including these forests as viewed from Silver Star Mountain.* Photo: Angie Moore

# EarthShare of Oregon

Friends of the Columbia Gorge is a long-standing member of EarthShare of Oregon.

EarthShare is to environmental groups what the United Way is to social service organizations: a workplace fundraising program to generate awareness and member support, without the hassle of grant writing, direct mail campaigns, or elaborate special events.

If your company participates in an EarthShare workplace giving campaign, you can designate Friends for your annual gift. If your company doesn't currently have an EarthShare of Oregon campaign, learn more at [www.earthshare-oregon.org](http://www.earthshare-oregon.org).



Friends of the Columbia Gorge would like to thank **Whole Foods Market of Tanasbourne** and **Patagonia** for providing generous donations for our 2009 volunteer recognition party. We appreciate your support!

# Upcoming Party for SW Washington Members and Friends

Jane Harris, Development Director, [jane@gorgefriends.org](mailto:jane@gorgefriends.org)

Friends is hosting a party on Wednesday, May 20 for our southwest Washington members and supporters and we're looking forward to a great event.

The charming Camas eatery, "Around the Table," is co-sponsoring the event with us, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. We'll enjoy

hors d'oeuvres and wine tasting hosted by Jacob Williams winery in Lyle, and a new presentation about the Gorge.

Invitations have been sent to all our members and supporters in southwest Washington. For more details, call 503-241-3762 x102.



*The popular Camas restaurant, Around the Table, will be the site of Friends' May 20 gathering in SW Washington* Photo: Courtesy of Around the Table

Photographed by Fireworks Photography

# Congressman Wu Honored

In March, more than 200 members and supporters gathered for Friends' Annual Meeting at Skamania Lodge in Stevenson. Featured speaker John Soennichsen, author of *Bretz's Flood*, related the story of the maverick geologist Harlan Bretz, whose radical theory about the origins of the Columbia Gorge waited decades to be accepted by the scientific community.

At the meeting, Friends honored Congressman David Wu of Portland with our first Nancy Russell Courage Award, in recognition of his tenacious opposition to the Gorge casino. He fondly remembered Nancy as both a determined and savvy Gorge advocate.

In his remarks, Congressman Wu recounted one of his many meetings with Nancy on Gorge issues. Rather than sitting in an office discussing facts and figures, Nancy prepared an "old school" picnic at a beautiful viewpoint above the river. They enjoyed lunch and light conversation, and policy talk barely came up. As she had done so often for more than two decades, Nancy let the beauty of the Gorge make its own powerful case that day.



*Congressman David Wu (l) received Friends' Nancy Russell Courage Award from Conservation Director Michael Lang at the Annual Meeting.*

Photo: Ken Denis

# Special Gifts

January 22 – April 23, 2009

IN MEMORY OF BARBARA DARKE  
DR. GEORGE J. DARKE

IN MEMORY OF AUNT GAIL DARBY  
SHERRI IRISH AND LARRY KEISTER

IN MEMORY OF DON GONTHIER  
MARIKA GAULT  
JOHN MARCZEWSKI  
HERMAN ZIMMERMAN

IN MEMORY OF ELIZABETH HANDLER KING  
GRETAS EDER  
MARILYN JACKSON  
GLORIA LADUM  
ROSEMARY AND RICHARD PENNELL  
MARILYN AND JAMES STARK  
JANE STOLLE  
MARCIA YEATER

IN MEMORY OF NANCY RUSSELL  
CAROL HERMAN  
SHERRI IRISH AND LARRY KEISTER  
PETER JOHNSON  
WILLIAM AND HELEN NEIGHBOR  
NORMA REICH  
AUBREY RUSSELL AND PEYTON CHAPMAN  
CAROL AND DICK SHOEMAKER

IN HONOR OF NATHAN BAKER  
JEREMY EMMI

IN HONOR OF ANNE HUTCHINSON  
PATRICIA HUTCHINSON

IN HONOR OF C. WILLIAM SAVERY  
MICHELLE WATTS

## Featured Hike: Indian Point and Gorton Creek Trail

Photo: Friends of the Columbia Gorge Oliver Dalton Collection

### Strenuous: 8 miles, 2720-ft. elevation gain

Open meadows filled with wildflowers, breathtaking views, and rugged rock formations are all part of this wonderful mid-Gorge trail just east of Cascade Locks.

The trail from the Herman Creek Campground (Trail No. 406) passes through one of the largest stands of old-growth forest in the Columbia Gorge. After 1.4 miles, the Herman Creek trail intersects on the left with Gorton Creek Trail (No. 408). Gorton Creek Trail leads up to the panoramic views at Indian Point.

As you hike, you'll catch occasional glimpses of Mount St. Helens to the north. Just past the junction with Ridge Cut-off Trail at 2.6 miles, another unmarked trail comes in on the left. This unmaintained trail leads down to Indian Point. (Contrary to our

photo above, Friends does not recommend scrambling to the peak.)

For an overnight outing, camping is available at the Herman Creek trailhead. For opportunities to explore this area on June 6 and 7, check our spring hiking brochure or see the schedule online at [www.gorgefriends.org/hikes](http://www.gorgefriends.org/hikes).

**Directions:** From Portland, take I-84 east to Exit 44 Cascade Locks, and continue east through Cascade Locks on Cascade Locks Highway (Hwy 30). Stay on Hwy 30 as it curves to the right and passes under I-84. At the stop sign, turn left on the frontage road toward Oxbow Fish Hatchery. Continue past Oxbow and look for the Herman Creek Campground on your right. The trailhead is in the campground. NW Forest Pass required.



Photo: Diana Karabut



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## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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Portland, Oregon 97240-0820

# Know Your Gorge *Ice Age Floods Back in the Spotlight*

**G**orge lovers got even more out of the 2009 Omnibus Public Lands Management Act than 26,000 acres of new wilderness. The legislation also created a 600-mile Ice Age Floods Trail and is funding up to \$12 million to interpret the cataclysmic floods that carved out much of the geography of the Columbia Gorge. Funding will support signage and interpretation along major thoroughfares and will also support interpretive centers such as the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, which currently hosts an Ice Age Floods exhibit.

The floods occurred 12,000 to 18,000 years ago, racing through the Gorge at speeds approaching 60 miles per hour. High water would have topped Crown Point, where the Vista House sits today. By tearing away the sloping hillsides of the Columbia and leaving tributaries literally hanging, the floods gave this landscape its unique, stunning beauty.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge hosts hikes in the spring and fall with experts from the Ice Age Floods Institute interpreting the Ice Age Floods. Watch for our fall hiking schedule in the August newsletter for details.

*The rippled landscape caused by massive floods below the area that is now Friends' Dancing Rock property helps tell the story of the Ice Age Floods.* Photo: Kevin Gorman