

APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM
OREGON HOUSE DELEGATION
FISCAL YEAR 2010

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 13, 2009

PLEASE NOTE: As required by the House Appropriations Committee, all requests will be made public on the requesting Member's website.

1. Project Title: Columbia River Gorge Land Acquisition

2. Organization Name and address:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge, 522 SW Fifth, Suite 720, Portland, Oregon 97204

3. Primary Contact name, phone number, mobile phone number, fax number and email: Kelley Beamer, Conservation Organizer

Phone: (503) 241-3762 ext 110 Fax: 503.241.3873 email: kelly@gorgefriends.org

4. Project Location Address: United States Forest Service, United State Department of Agriculture, 902 Wasco Street, Suite 200 Hood River, OR 97031. Project to be carried out within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

5. Please describe the requesting organization's main activities, and whether it is a public, private non-profit, or private for-profit entity:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge is a non-profit organization that works vigorously to protect the scenic, natural, cultural and recreational resources within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. We fulfill our mission by ensuring strict implementation of the National Scenic Area Act, which protects and provides for management of the National Scenic Area; by promoting responsible stewardship of Gorge lands; by encouraging public ownership of sensitive areas; by educating the public on the unique values of the Gorge; and by working with groups and individuals to accomplish mutual preservation goals.

6. Briefly describe the activity or project for which funding is requested (please keep to 500 words or less.)

The National Scenic Area Act (Act) created a unique regulatory scheme, which allows conservation in partnership with private landowners. The Act also recognized that some

lands should be in public ownership and that some landowners would prefer to sell their property rather than fall under Scenic Area regulations, or to insure its future protection. The desire to conserve key properties and to provide regulatory relief to landowners led Congress to create this special land acquisition program. The Act further specifies that if the Forest Service does not acquire land offered by sellers within three years of an offer, then the land changes to a General Management Area (GMA) designation, which is less restrictive, giving landowners more flexibility and making it more likely that these lands will be logged, mined or developed

Since 2001, over 4,000 acres of “high-priority” private land worth an estimated \$35 million have been offered for sale to the Forest Service, yet Congress has only appropriated \$14.5 million to date. The requested \$6 million would purchase the remaining properties with signed options, or go to the possible purchase of high priority properties currently offered to the Forest Service. These acquisitions are part of the overall strategy to ensure that the Gorge is a good place to live, work, and visit.

7. Has this project received federal appropriations funding in past fiscal years?
YES:

7a. If yes, please provide fiscal year, Department, Account, and funding amount of any previous funding.

FY 09 \$1.65million requested, \$0 appropriated
FY 08 \$1.95 million, \$1 million appropriated
FY 07 \$1 million requested, \$1 million appropriated
FY 06 \$2.3 million requested, \$1.5 million appropriated
FY 05 \$5 million requested, \$1 million appropriated
FY 04 \$10 million requested, \$1 million appropriated
FY 03 \$10 million requested, \$5 million appropriated

8. Federal agency and account from which funds are requested (Please be specific – e.g. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Economic Development Initiatives account): The United States Forest Service, Land and Water Conservation Fund:

9. What is the purpose of the project? Why is it a valuable use of taxpayer funds? How will the project support efforts to improve the economy and create jobs in Oregon?

Funding land acquisition in the National Scenic Area fulfills the commitment Congress made in 1986 when they passed the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area Act. The purpose of the act is to **protect** and **enhance** the natural, scenic, cultural and recreational resources of the Gorge. The land acquisition program enables the Forest Service to purchase lands with exceptional recreation and conservation value that are at risk to development.

Although The Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area enjoys national protection, preservation of its outstanding natural and scenic resources requires proactive management. Section 9(a) of the Act, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to purchase land from willing land owners to achieve the purposes of the Scenic Area Act.

Funding land acquisition in the Gorge is important for three reasons. First, these offers represent a commitment to landowners by the federal government. Second, these lands have critical scenic, natural, cultural and recreational values that need to be conserved. Finally, these acquisitions are part of the overall strategy to ensure that the Gorge is a good place to live, work, and visit.

10. Have you requested funding for this project from other Members of Congress?
We will submit this request to the entire Oregon and Washington delegation.

11. Funding Details:

a. Total project cost: \$ 6 million to acquire critical lands in the Columbia River Gorge.

b. Amount being requested for this project in Fiscal Year 2010:

\$6 million to acquire critical lands in the Columbia River Gorge.

c. What other funding sources (local, regional, state) are contributing to this project or activity? (Please provide specific dollar amount or percentage.)

d. Do you expect to request federal funding in future years for this project? YES

e. Breakdown/budget of the amount you are requesting for this project in FY 2010. The funding will support the US Forest Service request for \$3 million to acquire nine properties in the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area with high conservation values. Three properties are located within Multnomah County. The additional \$3 million represents the funding necessary to purchase a 1,830-acre parcel in the Scenic Area that will be transferred from the Washington Department of Natural Resources to Plum Creek Timber Company in a land exchange. \$3 million would allow the Forest Service to purchase this property from Plum Creek Timber to ensure continued public ownership. Please see attached document called Forest Service Priority Lands for more details on properties.

f. Please list public or private organizations that have supported/endorsed this project:

- a) Friends of the Columbia Gorge
- b) Trust for Public Land
- c) United States Forest Service

g. Is this project scalable? (i.e. if partial funding is awarded, will the organization be able to use the funds in FY 2010?): YES

Please return this form no later than February 13, 2009 (via email) to:

appropriations.blumenauer@mail.house.gov