



2025 Reconnection Report



Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail

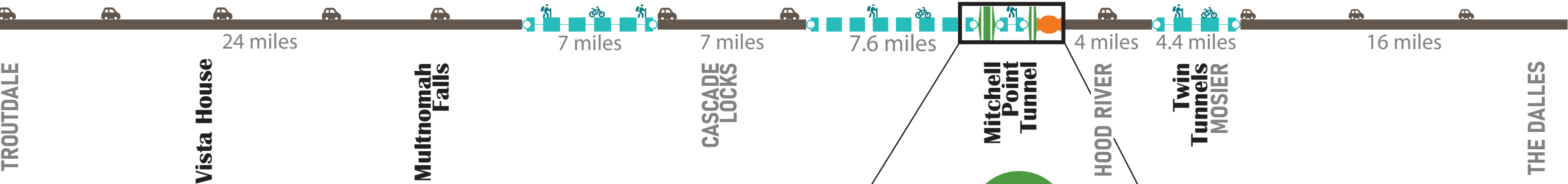


Completing the Reconnection

Constructed between 1913 and 1922, the Historic Columbia River Highway overcame all odds to lay lightly on the land and take its users to beautiful spots and breathtaking vistas of the Columbia River Gorge. During the construction of I-84, 22 miles of the highway were left abandoned or destroyed. We are reconnecting the Historic Highway between Troutdale and The Dalles by transforming abandoned sections into the State Trail.



Mitchell Point Tunnel's west tunnel entrance through the years



A snapshot of all 73 miles

51 miles of shared roadway using Historic Columbia River Highway and frontage roads

20 miles of car-free trail complete

1 mile of car-free trail funded and scheduled for construction

1.2 miles of car-free trail 50% designed and awaiting funding



Opening in 2026: Two new bridges will cross Perham and Mitchell Creeks along the 0.7 mile gap between the Viento State Park segment and the Mitchell Point Tunnel. The two bridges are consistent with historic design aesthetics (see renderings).

A new, trail-only undercrossing will allow users to cross under I-84 after traveling through the Mitchell Point Tunnel and along Mitchell Point Drive.

The trail will continue east along the north side of I-84, overlooking orchards and the Columbia River. Fill slopes and viaducts will support the trail. As part of this segment, we will restore a historic viaduct at Ruthton Point (shown above).

This segment will connect the trail into Hood River with a new trailhead on Westcliff Drive featuring a circular bus loop, limited parking, restroom and picnic area.

Remember. Restore. Reconnect.

www.HistoricHighway.org



G-7 Columbia River Gorge, near Mitchell Point - Columbia River Highway, Oregon

1915



2024

Above: The west side of Mitchell Point Tunnel has a plaza for taking in scenic vistas.

Front: Nov. 16, 2024 dedication of the Mitchell Point Tunnel.

The Historic Columbia River Highway was the first modern highway constructed in the Pacific Northwest and the first scenic highway in the United States. It was the only paved road linking Portland and Gorge communities until the 1950s when ODOT constructed a new water level route (now I-84). I-84 construction severed the Historic Columbia River Highway and in 1986 when President Ronald Reagan signed the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, 22 miles of the old highway lay abandoned.

The Historic Highway State Trail transforms the severed and abandoned sections of old highway into a trail for car-free use. Much of the reconnected trail -- 20 of 22 miles -- has been completed. When the final segment is complete, it will be possible to travel from Troutdale to The Dalles by foot or on bike without using the shoulder of I-84, increasing safety for all users.

The State Trail provides access to recreation and a safe route for long-distance biking trips with overnights spent in local communities a reality. Communities along the State Trail continue to benefit economically from the related influx of recreational visitors. Bike rental businesses, bike repair shops, hiker/biker amenities, coffee shops, breweries and restaurants are flourishing as ODOT and its partners reconnect the State Trail.

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