

**Historic Columbia River Highway
Advisory Committee Meeting**

Meeting will be Hybrid
Hood River County Library Community Room
502 State St, Hood River, OR 97031
Online Information below
Login online: <https://tinyurl.com/AC-Mar2023>



Meeting ID: 835 7341 3976
Password: HCRHAC

Call in (does not require internet): 1 (253) 215-8782
Meeting ID: # 835 7341 3976

Thursday, March 16th, 2023

10 AM – 2:00 PM Advisory Committee Meeting

MEMBERS:

Arthur Babitz, Chair
Leti Valle Moretti
Ernie Drapela, Vice-Chair
Tricia Forsi
Judy Davis
Lisa Farquharson
Clay Courtright
Rian Windsheimer
Staj Olson
Chrissy Curran

Hood River County Representative
Hood River County Governor's Representative
Multnomah County Governor's Representative
Multnomah County Representative
Wasco County Representative
Wasco County Governor's Representative
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Oregon Department of Transportation
Travel Oregon
State Historic Preservation Office

AGENDA:

Time	Agenda Topics	Presenter
10:00 AM	Call to Order	Arthur Babitz, Chair
10:05 AM	Opportunity for the public to comment on any item not on the agenda*	
10:10 AM	Approval of Minutes	Arthur Babitz, Chair
10:15 AM	Viento to Mitchell Pt State Trail Update Funding Option Y updates	Jack Carlson, FHWA
10:35 AM	Mitchell Point Tunnel Update	Austin Armstrong, FHWA
10:55 AM	Summer 2023 Congestion Pilot	Terra/Stephen Elgart, USFS
11:15 AM	Historic Highway Mile Markers	Bob Hadlow and Dan Shanahan
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	

12:45 PM	Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance Overview	Emily Reed, Executive Director
1:05 PM	Waterfall Corridor Accessibility Audit	AJ Zelada and Kent Krumpshmidt
1:45 PM	Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ June 15, 2023 ○ September 21, 2023 ○ December 14, 2023 • Friends of the Historic Highway • OPRD • Travel Oregon • USFS • WFLHD 	Terra, Jeanette, Clay, Staj, Donna, Matt
1:55 PM	Committee Round Table	All
2:00 PM	Adjourn	

June Agenda items

- Portland Women's Forum Design updates
- Transit/Shuttle updates

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee 2023 Work Plan

1. **The Final 1.5 Miles of Engineering – in process**
2. **Mitchell Point to Hood River State Trail funding**
3. **Multnomah Falls Viaducts Railroad Coordination – in process**
4. **Columbia Gorge Express –Year 5**
5. **Eagle Creek Stairway Replacement**
6. **Waterfall Corridor Visitor Experience Management**
7. Congestion and Safety Plan Implementation Projects
8. Twin Tunnels Safety Improvements Implementation
9. Historic Guardrail Research/Analysis
10. Larch Mountain Slide – Funding

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

March 16, 2023

Hybrid – Zoom and Hood River Library

Members Attending:	Arthur Babitz, Chair Ernie Drapela, Vice Chair Judy Davis Tricia Forsi Wayne Stewart, Member Emeritus Leti Valle Moretti Lisa Farquharson William Pattison, Member Emeritus Arthur Carroll, Member Emeritus David Spangler, OPRD Marc Berry, Member Emeritus
Historic Highway AC Staff:	Terra Lingley (ODOT) Katelyn Jackson (ODOT)
Others Attending:	Jeanette Kloos, FHCRH Kevin Bracy, DEA Austin Armstrong, WFL Jack Carlson, WFL Bonnie Clark Richard Alfieri AJ Zelada Doug Henne David Duncan Matt Miller, WFL Ben DeJarnette Kristen Cianci Donna Mickley, USFS Lynn Burditt, USFS Magnus Bernhardt, ODOT Jennifer O'Donnell Dan Shanahan, ODOT Stephen Elgart, USFS Kent Krumpschmidt, Sasquatch Shuttles Kent Kalsch, ODOT Bob Hadlow, ODOT Emily Reed, CGTA Nicole Wahner, CGTA

	Kathy Fitzpatrick, MCEDD Shana Bucher Explore Troutdale Wildwood Tours David Morissey, ODOT Mike Kimlinger, ODOT
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Call to Order

Arthur called to order the meeting at 10:01.

Public Comment

No public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved.

Mitchell Point Tunnel Update

Austin Armstrong, WFL

Since December, we’ve been doing a lot of work at both tunnel portals, including cast-in-place wall panels at the portals. Temperature must stay above 40 degrees while concrete cures, so entrances are tarped, covered and heated. The east portal has been more difficult to work with, including 80mph winds breaking the frame and ripping the tarps.

Placed one of the first arch stones. These stones are 2-4 feet wide placed at the bottom of the portals. Stones are placed then covered in plastic to protect from the concrete. They cast the wall sections first and then do the arch sections. They are casting 8-foot sections at a time. They cure for a week and then the forms and slide another eight feet to reset the forms.

On the east portal, part of the tunnel extends beyond the rock face due to trail geometry entering at an angle. It won’t be visible from the trail. It will be a pretty stout portion of the tunnel with all the rebar.

At the west portal, we started from the furthest section of steel sets in and are working out to the entrance. Again, doing 8-foot sections of the wall at a time, then returning to do the arch sections after they finish the east side.

At the east and west bench retaining walls: The rail cap is poured the entire length of the east bench wall and the stone façade is complete on the inside. When weather improves, they will use a bucket lift to do the outside (north) face, one stone at a time. The west bench retaining wall was just footings and rebar in December. We removed the existing overlook and are replacing it. Now, the blocks for the wall are installed. We’re starting to pour the cap and then will start on the stone façade.

Current contract completion date: April 16, 2024. Percent work complete and time used both at 64%.

Jeanette: How far does the concrete extend from each portal?

Austin: The east portal concrete extends approximately 40 feet. The west portal steel sets resulted in double the length – concrete extends 100 feet from the portal.

Viento to Mitchell Pt State Trail Update

Jack Carlson, WFL

Project began in early 2022, and will extend to late 2023/early 2024. This does not include Option Y, which is the final structures to Mitchell Point.

Since December, the contractor focused on the OPRD maintenance building and campground. They remodeled the existing facility and added a building addition. They put sheet rock up and added window and floor trim. The walls and ceilings are painted. On the outside, there will be a stone veneer on the bottom of the building. On the east side of the existing facility, there was wood rot that needed to be removed and replaced. We had a lot of outside utilities attached to the building that was likely built onto multiple additions over time.

We have completed the new east side with utility shed. All the underground utilities go into the shed.

Viento South Campground Restrooms. Fully brand-new restrooms (4), two with showers. The exterior will also match the maintenance building with fiber cement cedar shakes. Every restroom has two windows and one above the door. There will be a water jug filler. There are two sinks available to wash dishes.

Seat wall in the parking lot formed by masonry sub-contractor Guinnett. They had to heat the seat wall in a tent to construct it.

Reinforced soil slop (RSS) walls finished at Maintenance Facility. It will be seeded to grow plants. The pedestrian handrail will be installed in metal sleeves at the top of the wall.

The hiker biker campground is starting to have shelters placed to keep rain off. There are three in place. There are five tent campground sites. We worked with OPRD to add an ADA tent facility and picnic table.

Two campground sites are ADA accessible.

Bill: What's the source of the domestic water supply?

Jack: The existing water from the north campground.

Pouring exposed aggregate sidewalks with nice weather.

The stamped concrete walls are constructed but need the color treatments done this spring. The handrail will be installed on top.

Magnus from ODOT helped select the 28 rocks from the Corbett quarry and was present while the contractor placed them.

Art: Are the pathways ADA?

Jack: yes, the trail is ADA. 5% slope.

They placed the aggregate base at the campground and could pave as soon as next week, including starting to pave the trail.

Rockfall mitigation work is still underway. They are working on the mid slope attenuators at Stepped Cut and drilling horizontal drains to release water. They are also working on the rockfall fences in other locations.

They have had two bikers coming through the project area on the interstate this week on the back side of the barrier.

Ernie: what security measures are you taking at the offices?

Jack: We have gates. At the maintenance facility, we have gates on each side and we also have gates to be able to close both campgrounds.

Ernie: I noticed this morning there's a gabion opened up near Viento.

Terra: A car hit the gabion basket. They have to do additional mesh around it to stabilize it.

Ben (in chat) Q: Is the Starvation-Viento segment of the state trail still on track to reopen this month?

David Spangler: We will keep it closed until work is complete (likely in mid-May) and the parking lot is open at Viento. The rockslide was cleaned up by ODOT. We may need to do some paving after the large rock fall.

AJ Zelada: Bikers have big panniers and need space in between racks and locks – more than urban bikes. Smith Rock has four ADA tent places and they fill up. This is the first one in the Gorge, right? It's very exciting. They use a very fine pumice at Smith Rock so a wheelchair doesn't sink.

Jack: During the construction process, we made the change and OPRD helped the design. We also have a hiker-biker pod with seven lockers that have a plugs in each locker. Thanks to OPRD for their help and input.

Richard Alfieri: What's the purpose of the lobby area in the building?

David: A volunteer will help staff - the goal is to have the lobby open to buy day use passes and get information.

Jack: We also put in a conduit from the maintenance facility to the trailhead for a future EV charger.

Ernie: In a few locations, we've previously put in benches for people to relax and enjoy the scenery. Did we do that on this stretch?

Jack: We have a basalt bench by the hiker-biker pod. We have a few on the trail itself.

Funding Option Y updates

Terra: We were successful in a FLAP grant application for \$7.5M to complete Option Y. The funding is not available until 2026 for a two year construction. We are working on a congressionally directed spending request (earmark) to see if we can advance some of the funding. We will find out later this

year. We're also tracking Investment Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA) [also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law] and other funding opportunities. There is a competitive Carbon Reduction Grant opportunity for both construction and engineering. All opportunities have a match requirement, so we need to identify match before we can apply.

Matt Miller, WFL: Right now, we're programmed to not start earlier than 2026. If we can bring more money, that is the best chance at accelerating construction.

Arthur: If the funding isn't advanced, we have a management problem. You can't really get from Viento to Mitchell and then you can't get to Mitchell Point.

Jack: Unfortunately, the trail is closed at the end of this segment and bikers will use I-84 to Mitchell Point. If you're coming by car, you can either stop at the Starvation or Viento trailhead parking lots, or the west side of Mitchell Point.

Arthur: You can't go west from Mitchell because there's no trail there. I'm hoping we get the money but want there to be contingency plans.

Terra: there are 25 spots with a bus turnaround at Mitchell Point. We will talk to CAT and see what the transit options are. The one wrinkle is that it is eastbound only. We have already put in no parking signs along Mitchell Point Drive. We don't want shared users in the one-lane underpass. We will include messaging on how to access it. I do anticipate similar behavior as Starvation Creek where people park lining the on- and off-ramps.

Arthur: You can bike from Viento eastbound, you will be forced off, but then can go back on through the Mitchell Point Tunnel and head east.

AJ: Surprisingly long site lines on I-84, which is good. I think we need to anticipate people coming from Hood River and trying to get to Mitchell Point. Signs and warnings would be welcome. We may have new or non-athletic cyclists using e-bikes at high speeds.

Jack: with our project, we will have the trail closed signs and users will have to make that decision to continue or turn back. However, you shouldn't take the shoulder of I-84 East when traveling west.

Jack/AJ: additional signs?

Staj (in chat): Will there be a few bullet points to share with all partner websites that promote the route? so we can update it on TravelOregon.com, Ready, Set, GOrge!, OPRD, etc.

Terra: Yes. We will need that and more.

Summer 2023 Congestion Pilot

Stephen Elgart Recreation staff officer at CRGNSA (filling Stan's position)

Terra: this is not a one entity's project, but a multi-agency collaboration.

Our project goals remain the same:

- Improve safety: ability for EMS to get to people, pedestrian access

- Reduce congestion: private shuttles and transit with CAT, spread visitation throughout the day and week.
- Improve visitor experience: reduce frustration and expand transportation options.

Timed use Permits from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. May 26 through September 4, similar to what we've had in the past. There is \$2 transaction fee per vehicle for online. No fee for picking up in person at Gateway to the Gorge Visitor Center in Troutdale and the Cascade Locks Historical Museum: 25 passes per site.

We have been working with recreation.gov and have removed the Waterfall Corridor page. The page is now named Multnomah Falls (I-84) Timed use Permit. You can stay as long as you like. Permits will be available starting at 9 a.m. with 120 permits. Available permits are decreased during peak times. There are roughly 2.6 visitors per vehicle. Parking is not guaranteed, and the parking lot will close at about 95% full. No permits needed for buses or transit riders. We've been working with a lot of different organizations to have things in place.

We have approved funding for flaggers at the Multnomah Falls crosswalk across the Historic Highway, and OPRD is also contributing funds. We also have funding for up to 4 people permit checkers and CAT will be putting out the contract to bid.

Terra: We are also expecting some changes at the parking lot on the Historic Highway. Owned by UPRR, we're anticipating an agreement for a private organization to actively manage the lot this summer.

Judy: How would people get back to the falls or park?

Terra: There's shuttles in Corbett Historical Society and Exit 28 at Bridal Veil/UPRR owned lot or transit from Cascade Locks, Hood River, and Portland Metro area. We also have another provider starting up at the Exit 35 area for e-bikes (the business who operated out of Latourell). We're excited for the options available.

Terra: We're working with tourism partners and orgs to get out the information in addition to agency channels. Additional outreach, posters, press releases, social media, etc. We will likely host a media event in the first few days.

Arthur: What's the message to people who ask about the timed entry for the Waterfall Corridor?

Terra: last year was a pilot. We are aiming to learn, and we have learned where the problems begin. AJ and Wayne had called Multnomah Falls the tourniquet. Given that we do not have dedicated funding - we are learning, modifying and targeting the issues where they are. We know Multnomah Falls is really what we should be focusing on. We're continuing to look at long-term options.

Arthur: There seems to be some feeling it didn't work.

Terra: It did work. We met all of our three goals. We learned a lot. We're scaling back to hopefully meet the goals without the significant investment in money, time, staff.

Steven: USFS did have to ask for additional funding for just this year. It's a lot of money.

Richard: If I go to Troutdale to get a permit for the Waterfall Corridor...

Arthur: not this year! Permits just for Exit 31.

Richard: What if I get to Exit 31 and it's full? I only heard recommendations to take transit. What is going to be the suggestion?

Terra: keep driving. Lisa: Go to The Dalles!

Wayne: I-84 Exit 31 parking lot, the idea that you have a timed entry permit is a good thing, but the notion that there may or may not be parking is an issue. I know last year there were a number of times the gates were closed for overcrowding. Have you been using that information to tweak?

Steven: The average visitor is really only there 15-30 minutes.

Wayne: That does not match at all with the information that was generated in 2017. It was more like an hour to an hour and a quarter. It was a ways back, but that's a significant difference.

Terra: The 2017 numbers are 45 minutes for the I-84 lot.

Steven: It's my understanding it's closer to the 15–30-minute mark. Things have changed a bit. People are really just here for the picture. We did reduce the numbers this year from last year's quota.

Wayne: There are a certain number of people who will try to get there before it opens. I presume those will be the hikers who will stay for longer. That means those people are plugging up the lot. Employees plugging the lot? It needs to take this into account. Seems to need to be tweaked. Go to half hour? If the gates have to come down as many times as they did last year, we're not accomplishing the safety issue.

Terra & Steven: it does.

Arthur: What I've heard is that the planning does account for those uses and had adjusted.

Steven: We've given ourselves an additional 10 vehicles of wiggle room per hour.

Arthur: And you'll measure the amount of times the gate comes down and adjust?

Steven: correct.

Arthur: If mid-July you realize the gates coming down all the time, can you make an adjustment?

Steven: \$2 fee is not a USFS sale price, it's a rec.gov fee. We can make adjustments, but it takes two weeks.

Wayne: traffic signal at Multnomah Falls were listed as a long term?

Terra: the plan is more general than a signal.

Arthur: You can have some things other than a traffic signal that achieve the goal?

Wayne: There's been concern in the past about not having a traffic signal. That crossing point is probably the most used crossing in the entire state. There's no reason you can't get the warrants for a traffic control system which would mitigate a lot of the problems of having a flagger. To me, it's no brainer and I don't know what's holding up at least the evaluation and study.

Bob Hadlow: we have to weigh everything. It's a road that 110 years old but must meet the needs of today's travel.

Terra: people are blatantly disregarding traffic laws today, including crossing in the wrong lanes, so I'm a little worried about compliance.

AJ: The Gorge Commission in 2021 allows traffic signals in favor pedestrian safety. Opportunity for pedestrian activated crosswalks? It doesn't mitigate all the issues, but if you could get 60% crossing in gaggles? You're mitigating some of that pinch point.

Kent: I agree with your logic, but if you could get 60% of people to use that crosswalk, that's a win.

AJ: Everyone is crossing mid-block... Initiate pedestrian activated signal or signal on at all times.

Arthur: if a human flagger can't control it?

Terra: The flagger does help quite a bit.

Kent: The approach would be a tunnel (separating vehicles and pedestrians at the crossing), but there's water 50% of the year.

Ben at Wildwood (in chat): Will parking permits be required for the parking area directly off the Historic Highway? *at Multnomah Falls

Terra: No permits will be required for accessing federal lands along the Historic Highway.

Terra: What is the problem we're trying to solve? The people trying to turn left into the lot, despite the lack of spaces, is more the issue than pedestrians. As we move forward, if that lot is actively managed, perhaps the issue goes away. I don't think it's the pedestrians crossing that's the issue.

[Historic Highway Mile Markers](#)

Bob Hadlow, ODOT

Primer on Adverse Effects, surrounding section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

What makes the Historic Highway historic?

National Register 1983. We listed all segments and bits and pieces. One of 95,000+

- Criterion A: Broad patterns of history, including first scenic highway and Sam Lancaster's design philosophy.
- Criterion C: advanced engineering standards.

National Historic Landmark Designated as landmark in 2000. Focused on drivable sections and the restored trail sections, and from Oak in Hood River to Mosier Twin Tunnels in The Dalles. One of 2,600+

- Criterion 1: associated with broad patterns of US history. Our highway is an outstanding example of modern highway development in 20th century America

- Criterion 4: embodying the distinguishing characteristic that are exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style, or method of construction: Sam Lancaster’s work and also first scenic highway.

Contributing features:

- Engineered sections, including the looped sections, 5% grade. Some buildings, such as Vista House.
- Tunnels, bridges and viaducts.
- Roadway alignment to beauty spots (falls, outcroppings and points)
- Small scale features (at least one original milepost marker, guard rocks)
- Materials (Warrenite pavement, etc.)
- Old world craftsmanship with latest technology (masons and reinforced concrete construction)

Seven aspects of integrity: Location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association.

What constitutes adverse effect? Any action that adversely alters the integrity of contributing features. If Mitchell Point had been proposed to be destroyed after landmark or register listing, much different process.

Examples: physical destruction or damage, alterations, removal from historic location, change in character or physical features, introduction of visual or audio change and neglect.

If you have an adverse effect, you have to mitigate for it if there’s no way out. We can’t have an adverse effect in the scenic area. We can do some conditional no adverse effect determinations.

An example: The Chenoweth Creek Bridge. At some time, the rails were replaced with standard crash guard rail. We listed this as a contributing feature, but we couldn’t put the railings back. It was time to replace the bridge, but we can’t have an adverse effect. We decided to build a new bridge but did it the right way and maintained the centerline. Folks wanted a wide bridge, but the original was narrow. We compromised on width and were able to get a rail that is compatible but has crash tested features.

Dan Shanahan, The Dalles District Manager, ODOT. My district starts when you leave Exit 64 in Hood River and head east.

What came up repeatedly for The Dalles crew is the mile markers. We can’t locate issues when they happen. EMS’ best bet is to travel along the entire corridor until they find people. It’s an issue of prominence. People do not always know where they are. For a recent crash, we were right there, but it took 20 minutes to geolocate and in that time, there would have been no aid.

I like the concrete markers and am not trying to make the highway look cluttered, but we need markers everyone can see. We also need to make an effort to mitigate risk.

Terra: Dan summarized the issue. When there’s an incident, it’s hard to figure out where to send EMS. In addition, the mileposts are different on the historic markers than what EMS uses.

We can’t change the numbers and we can’t remove the concrete posts.

We could add the smallest appropriate green paddles every mile.

Jeanette Kloos, Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway: Going back to the 90s, the advisory committee decided at the time, the only mileposts would be the concrete ones. When I started, there were 5 different highway names for the Historic Highway, each with its own straight-line chart. At that time, the Advisory Committee said at that time we would put the mileposts back to match the 1924 log. The highway long at that point started at the Willamette River, so the first milepost I believe you see is 17. The 1924 log came over the Stark Street Bridge, so there are no MPs the first few miles. I am advocating for the concrete to be the only mile marker.

Tricia: I'm an architectural historian and work on updating buildings. I support the new mile markers. I think there are ways to mitigate the impacts of them on the Historic Highway. Crashes are not happening at the same speeds and response rates as they were in 1920s. From research... we can meet the needs with markers every mile. We can mitigate the impact of reflective surfaces with dark paint on the metal. Is it possible to put the green paddles at spacing offset from the concrete columns. As we replace the concrete ones, is it possible to update to accurate numbers? Life safety issue is more pressing in the grand scheme.

Bob: We have two different sets of mileposts. The straight-line chart for the Stark Street Bridge starts there at 0.0. They are 14.2 miles different. The chances are the spacing might end up with green paddles and concrete mile markers ending up right next to each other.

Jeanette: The Master Plan has the original and the modern mileposts. The concern 30 years ago was that it would increase confusion if there were two different numbers.

Tricia: but we just discussed that people aren't looking at the concrete ones or recognize that they're mile markers. Couldn't first responders ask what they're looking at?

Kent: I understand both sides completely... for the western segment, half of them are missing. They're hard to make. You never know how the report is going to come in for the accident. I have a cheat sheet. Sometimes, you can be 20 miles off. I'm on the fence. The amount of response for events has increased tenfold.

AJ: Are there role models out there? DC – there's a path from Lincoln's house to the White House. It has road markers along with streets and other mileage markers. The C&O Canal has a path – stone markers for the waterway, and then other markers along the path. Two signages can exist (The original historic system, and the other for emergency services).

Arthur: But does it work? Having examples of two system doesn't mean that it reduces confusion?

AJ: If folks are calling in on a cell phone, could the geolocate the position?

Lisa: Not possible in Wasco County.

Kent: When people call, they're in panic mode. Half of the calls are the historic marker since that's the only marker available out there. Then Maintenance then converts that with the cheat sheet.

Lisa: As we see increases in traffic and cyclists. As more emergency calls come in, this is concerning that folks don't know where they are. I don't have a great solution, but I had no idea that the concrete markers indicate miles. Most folks aren't going to pay attention to the historic markers and are more likely to pay attention to the green paddles. Let's make it easier for our emergency service responders.

Bob: Not sure if the green paddles would be an adverse effect. Our bridge crew adds green paddles with bridge numbers on all the drivable bridges that ODOT owns.

Terra: And signage is temporary – they can be removed...

Bob: These are Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) compliant. I don't see that these two conflict with each other.

Lisa: Part of the path is only walkable/bikeable. How do we identify segments of State Trail for EMS services? Is it consistent with the Highway numbers?

AJ: When someone broke their hip on an organized ride. Took an image of the location and provided that to Cascade Locks responders.

Wayne: There is one existing marker (mile 58) on the State Trail. There are 3 or 4 other places where we could reinstall the original markers at the original location. Marker 60, 61, and 63, maybe. We have 3 sections of State Trail. First: John B. Yeon State Park. Mile marker there since this was the original alignment. That would match in to the existing markers. Put the original back, and then start at each of the three, and then mark every ½ mile with a more modern system – wood post with a marker, etc. Then the next section at Wyeth. The original bridge there could be the starting point. Then at Hatfield.

Judy: I live off the Historic Highway between Mosier and The Dalles – I drive that every time I go anywhere. I think the green markers would be unobtrusive, no objections from drivers. There are very obtrusive signage along the Highway with weight limit restrictions – obvious signs along the Historic Highway.

Kent Krumpschmidt: Pictures, not all 911 receivers can receive photos. The information is only as good as the operator that receives the call. Could add alphanumeric option to the paddles to help specifically identify the region and then the milepost. That would really help – with limited access points to the Historic Highway, usually responders are driving along anyways.

Arthur: At some point 911 will be updated that could use cell phone GPS locator. In the Gorge with geolocation is spotty.

Donna Mickley, USFS. People start to understand if they see something every mile. I'm an advocate for a more natural look – it can become a signature. We can find something that works and is identifiable.

Arthur: We need to focus on the following questions: Is it acceptable and will it work?

Lunch break

Judy: Should there be modern mile markers on the drivable sections? On the State Trail? I see those as different questions.

Arthur: Let's put trail markers aside for now.

Ernie: To me, it's function and beauty. Beauty means keeping as much authenticity as we have intended to do. From personal experience, needs to be visible. Green paddles fit that criterion.

Wayne: Started out thinking only having concrete, but after thinking about how often I would recognize the concrete markers while driving, and the answer is I don't. I think small green paddles.

Tricia: Concerned about having to use a key to convey the correct location. Donna made a comment about seeing them so consistently, but sometimes they disappear into the background when regular. I don't think it's a good idea to make them unique as it could create a false sense of history and create an adverse effect.

David: The issue of having some consistency is key from aesthetic, but also for incident response. Driving that section, I think it would blend.

Leti: I am for supporting safety and eliminating any communication barriers.

Art: I'd advocate there's two separate identification systems. The old markers, they're intermittent and not enough to be effective. We need an effective emergency response identification system on the whole Highway from the Sandy River to the east end. The need is only going to get more acute. E-bikes are only speeding the need up. It's time. Fix the areas that don't have any identification. Compatibility?

Jeanette: Bob was suggesting if we're thinking about putting in a new system, as part of that we should make sure that the concrete mileposts are all back in place and visible as a historic feature. They were all put in again in 1990, should have been maintaining this whole time.

Donna: even a brown paddle seems more natural than the green.

Arthur: I don't see a clear answer coming out of our discussion. Donna brought up mitigating the intrusiveness of the paddles with design elements. I'd like to know if that's an option. Tricia had expressed concern.

Tricia: Not concerned about small size and color on modern signs.

Tricia [in chat]: Document I referenced: http://fitchfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/FITCH_Paul-Marriott_final_web.pdf,
<http://npshistory.com/publications/transportation/historic-roads.pdf>

Arthur: What I'd suggest is we ask staff to go back and tell us what those options would be. Make it a little more definite for what it would look like. We may each be imagining a different design in our heads.

Kent: I would add, a yellow school bus sign will always be a yellow sign. We can paint the back. We're kind of limited by sign standards – it is still a State Highway.

Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance Overview

Emily Reed – CGTA Network Director

Many of you are involved already! Both of my families go way back from Wasco County, lived in The Dalles.

Mission: optimize the positive impact of the visitor economy to enhance communities and protect the region. Created out of a Tourism Studio from Travel Oregon in 2016. We really switched to a sustainability.

We've created a model for what people would like to see in other destinations. We have traditional members and nontraditional members. Together, we created a 15-year vision.

We're a flat structure. People come together to do some work and then drift back out in impact areas. We get together once a year to talk about issues and ideas.

We have six action areas: car-free visitor transportation, culinary and agritourism, culture, outdoor recreation, welcomability, and visitor dispersal. Each action group brainstorms projects to work together on over the next year.

We're trying to break down silos. When big things happen, we already know each other.

Similar organizations, like tour groups, museums, etc., can work together to support each other. The East Gorge Food Trail highlights local food. It requires 25% local ingredients for restaurants. Same on the west side.

As you know, congestion is an issue. We are huge advocates for the permit system and want to spread the information around and look at all the tools to mitigate congestion. Spreading congestion also spreads the economic love.

Ready, Set, GOrge! was one of the very first programs created by the organization. It teaches people how to be in the woods responsibly. We added an interactive map that shares what's open and what's not.

Helped coordinate the messaging about opening during COVID. The same issues were cropping up across the Gorge, like messaging on opening phasing and trash.

The car free access area has had amazing progress. Counties have taken their dial-a-ride services and transitioned to fixed routes. Routes and frequency are increasing. They created the Gorge Pass to create a seamless experience. We had a slow start to the Gorge Pass with the pandemic, but we're back to pre-pandemic levels. We're already at triple the sales three months in. A dollar of every pass goes into a Gorge Equity Fund to get people out who don't usually have the opportunity.

Project took a look at locations with an ADA lens, looking at paths to waterfalls, restrooms. Signs for waterfall locations. Created Waterfall Corridor guide for visitors with disabilities. We're taking the same idea to the restaurants, hotels, museum. Accessible Gorge website will gather the info. We're hoping to

release this at the end of May. People with disabilities spend over \$17B a year on travel, so there's an economic development element as well.

We also champion big projects in the Gorge as well. We're also looking at preparing for when the trail is complete.

Tourism is really unique as we neither make or sell the goods. No one person has control. We have to work together.

Waterfall Corridor Accessibility Audit

Link to the accessibility video: <https://youtu.be/50zihNL3wUk>

AJ: it was really a magic scenario. The discussion came out of a car free group that meets monthly. Kathy Fitzpatrick helped us connect with people using mobility devices. Kent Krumpschmidt and I have different silos of experience – divergent background.

Kent Krumpschmidt of Sasquatch Shuttles. Background as sheriff's deputy. I had people asking accessibility questions I couldn't answer. Our buses can accept people with mobility limitations, but I don't know what your experience is going to be like once I drop you off.

AJ: most of you know me as a cyclist, but part of my world is my partner who is a developmental pediatrician. She sees people with disabilities at the younger end. My experience is in vision care for elders.

When a person with disability travels, the average number of people that travels with them is 2.5. There is an integration of abilities and disabilities. Must recognize that there are visible and invisible disabilities. The umbrella of people with disabilities is big.

At the end of the day, the key piece was information about restrooms – could a QR code provide information? Pre-ADA standard restroom design was common. Another issue: port-a-potties are often set on the ground resulting in a lip or erosion issues.

Maintenance issues. The climate can erode the grass, etc. around the picnic tables, making it difficult to get all wheels of a mobility device on the concrete surface. Potholes in trails.

Jurisdictions: examples of a trail ended just before a viewpoint because the viewpoint land is owned by UPRR.

Some examples of ADA transit: there's an ADA spot, but it's not a van spot so a car can park next to it. We had to block the lane to load. Shuttle only temporary loading spots don't allow for ADA access. Without space, buses block lanes or parking spaces when loading and unloading, which takes time and can frustrate travelers.

When crossing the highway, there are areas without curb breaks directly across from each other. This exposes them to additional traffic as they have to take a longer, non-direct path. The Gorge is a patchwork of ownership and responsibility, such as the road is owned by ODOT, the park is the USFS. Engineering code does require ramps opposite of each other, but facilities predate requirements.

AJ: We've taken the presentation to Gorge Commission, OPRD, etc. OPRD responded by placing pea gravel around picnic tables. We've asked Multnomah County Comm. Stegmann to take to Gorge Forum and discuss future possibilities for budget and improvements.

Updates:

ODOT:

Public open house April 25 at Hood River Fire Station about the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. It's construction season. A hard barrier closure is in place eastbound at Viento. Lane closures Sunday night through Thursday nights all spring.

Katelyn [in chat]: Gorge work website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Regions/Pages/ColumbiaGorgeProjects.aspx>

Direct link to mailer: https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Regions/Documents/I84-Gorge-2023_Mailer_FINAL_remediated.pdf

Kent: Spring at Dabney causing issues. People stop to fill water, dumping debris, lining up, causing issues on the Historic Highway. We're trying to determine what to do with the water. It's not chlorinated, potable or tested. Causes ice on the Highway – looking at solutions to reduce issues.

When the State Trail was created, we agreed that OPRD would do light maintenance and ODOT would do major maintenance. Some of the older sections are requiring a lot of maintenance, lot of rockfall, etc. Anytime a piece of historic rail is hit, it's \$1,000 a foot. There's not enough maintenance funds to pay for old infrastructure. Have we thought about Adopt a Trail?

Jeanette: some are.

Kent: We need to look at funding for "Extraordinary maintenance." State agency funding is declining, and I can't continue to spend more while keeping the infrastructure up.

Friends of the Historic Highway

Jeanette: Working on State Trail Enhancements and Consistency Program. Used to be the State Trail Inventory. DEA is helping get that done to create a document to use into the future.

Jeanette and AJ will be going to the National Bike Summit in DC.

June 24 Gorge Ride.

July 8 Antique Car Tour. 17 cars signed up, without any invitations sent.

Friends of the Historic Highway has adopted trail segments and have work parties scheduled but need more volunteers.

Four Rooster Rock star parties are scheduled. Need volunteers.

Also seeking additional board members.

Travel Oregon, Staj:

Planning a story with ADA influencer along Waterfall Corridor. Updated stories on TravelOregon.com, including car free and Multnomah Falls. We're working on a large, consumer advertising campaign; focused on guided services, caring about environment, responsible recreation/travel. Funding a trail ambassador program with effort focused on Gorge and Mt. Hood through Trail Keepers of Oregon. Medium Grant (\$20k-150k) opening in May for marketing and infrastructure.

<https://columbiagorgetourismalliance.org/gorge-tourism-summit-2023/>

<https://www.oregontrailscoalition.org/signature-trails>

OPRD

David: We're keeping the trail closed at Eagle Creek due to rockfall. Repairing Vista House wall after a car went through. We're working at the interpretive program at West Hatfield inside the visitor's center.

Committee Roundtable

Arthur: Thank Wayne for his 22 years of service. We missed the transition from member to emeritus.

Lisa: April 21-23 Cherry Festival. Hoping ODOT could hold off doing bridge work during the cherry festival.

Wayne: we sent in a letter to the OTC. Hear anything?

Terra: no.

Wayne: I talked to Clay about getting on OPRD's board. Is there a time?

David: will follow up.