

BOATING GUIDE *to the* MIDDLE COLUMBIA RIVER



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Funding for this guide is provided by a grant from the Clean Vessel Act and the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program, funded through the Sport Fish Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional matching funds were provided by the Oregon State Marine Board using registration fees and marine fuel taxes paid by boaters.



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Published by:

Oregon State Marine Board

With support from:

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

Editor:

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Oregon State Marine Board

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Design:

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PREFACE

The Mighty Columbia River!

No one can provide a definitive answer as to how long the Columbia River has been flowing, but it would be reasonable to suggest that the river has been in existence for tens of thousands or maybe even millions of years. In any case, the mighty Columbia River is still flowing through where we boat and live. That is the reason for this book.

Many articles have been published about cruising on the Columbia River, but most of them stop in the vicinity of The Dalles, Oregon. But the river doesn't start there. It begins 1,240 miles from the sea, all the way up in Canada.

Why would anyone want to run a boat up through this middle part of the river? To be sure, fuel stops are infrequent and towns are few and far between. But the uncrowded country offers solitude and scenery. There is interesting geology all around you, fascinating history, and wildlife in their natural habitat. These things make the middle Columbia well worth visiting.

For a little over 300 miles of its length, the Columbia forms the boundary between Oregon and Washington. The lower part of the river, the stretch below Portland, flows through relatively flat countryside, with channels and sloughs meandering among islands and shores covered with lush vegetation.

In contrast, the middle part of the river had to cut its channel through the hard volcanic basalt that oozed up eons ago. Upstream from the mouth of the Deschutes River, which marks the eastern end of the Columbia River Gorge, the river's bank generally flattens out on the Oregon side, while the Washington shore is lined with hills almost all the way to the Tri-Cities. Even with four large hydroelectric dams backing the river up into side

canyons, there are few navigable channels off the main stem to explore. The river flows through a much drier country. The vegetation is sparse and the terrain rugged.

I grew up on the Columbia River, in Richland, Washington. I've been a recreational boater in the area for almost 60 years. I am also a 50-ton-rated, U.S. Coast Guard-licensed Master, or Captain, for inland waters. Like many area boaters, going all the way down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean was always my goal. But I needed the right boat.

Then, in 1975, along came my dreamboat. I call it the *Slo-N-Easy*. It's a 35-foot World War II-surplus diesel-powered, steel-hulled lifeboat. I converted it into a cruiser, providing it with all the necessities and amenities that would ensure a pleasant and comfortable trip on the river.

Since then I've made two round-trip cruises along the length of the river. I've taken the *Slo-N-Easy* from river mile 340, above the Tri-Cities, to river mile 0, the Pacific Ocean, and back again. I have also made several shorter ferry trips, bringing friends' boats upriver from Portland.

I am constantly amazed at the sights along this middle stretch of the Columbia River. The trip is far more enjoyable if you have read a little about the history of the region. This book will give you stories and interesting facts about the places you'll visit. You'll see and enjoy wildlife and rugged landscape. It is simply a fantastic journey to experience.

Captain H. Russ Hughes
Richland, Washington

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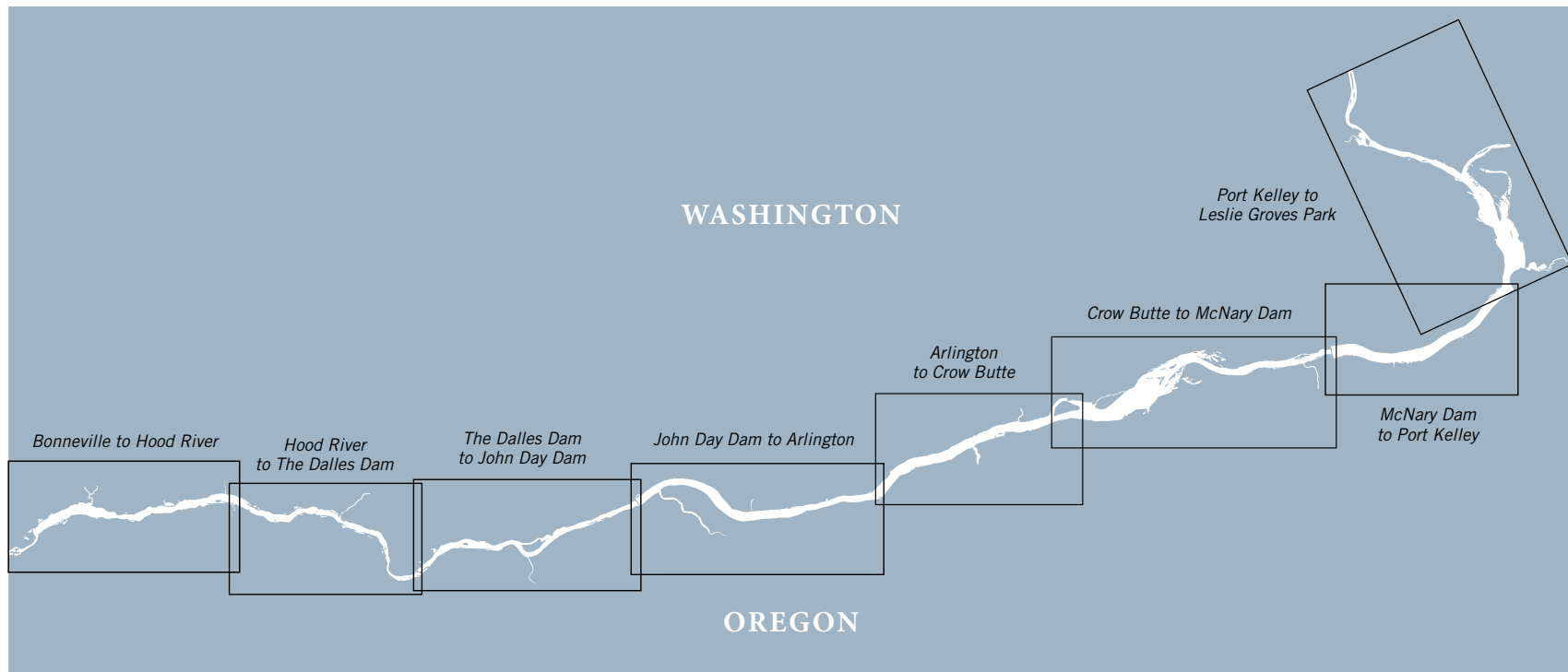
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INTRODUCTION

One of the best ways to experience the Columbia River and its splendid Gorge is from the water, as countless generations of native Americans have done, as Lewis and Clark did just over 200 years ago. You go slow, take your time, and see the landscape in a unique way, a way you can't appreciate from the highway. This book is a guide to boating on the middle Columbia River, the 175-mile stretch between Bonneville Dam and Richland, Washington. It is intended as a companion to the Oregon State Marine Board's *Boating Guide to the Lower Columbia and Willamette Rivers*.

About the Columbia River

Between 18,000 and 11,000 years ago, as the last Ice Age was ending, a series of catastrophic floods roared down from what is now northern Montana. The water traveled at speeds of up to 50 miles an hour and heights of 800 to 900 feet. These Missoula Floods, as they are called, carved the rugged canyon that bears the Columbia River and created the spectacular waterfalls that flow down its sheer walls.

The river's first inhabitants came here about 13,000 years ago. The river has supported Native American communities over the last several millennia. The native people were hunter-gatherers and fishers, living on the river's plentiful salmon and game. Cedar, camas, and many other plants provided food, clothing, and shelter.

In the late 1700s, the area's rich resources began to attract hunters and traders from the

United States and Europe. The 1805-06 expedition of Lewis and Clark helped tip the Pacific Northwest into the hands of the United States, and American settlers began to move into the country. Within 200 years, the Columbia Basin's landscape and culture were thoroughly transformed.

The Columbia has always been the lifeblood of the people who live along it, and still is. Today it is a major navigation and shipping channel, with 26 ports between Astoria and Richland, Washington. Its 31 federal dams (four on the middle section that this book covers) provide about 40% of the hydroelectric power used in the Pacific Northwest. Its waters irrigate almost three million acres of farmland, growing crops worth \$2.2 billion a year.

The shores of the Columbia are home to nearly a million people and hundreds of species of fish and wildlife. Along this middle stretch, Indians of the Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Yakama tribes fish for salmon as their ancestors have done for 10 millennia. The river draws thousands of motorists, hikers, anglers, hunters, campers, boaters, windsurfers, wildlife watchers, and plant lovers to experience its spectacular scenery and its abundant recreational opportunities.

Boating the Columbia

The Columbia offers a boating experience unique in its variety and its character. No other body of water is quite like it. It does not have the genteel manners of a reservoir lake, nor the nerve-tingling

velocity of a mountain river, nor the meditative rise and fall of a coastal estuary. It is big and it is powerful. It flows through areas of very sparse population and very dense population. Different activities predominate along different stretches.

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, perhaps the best-known part of the Columbia, stretches from the mouth of the Sandy to the mouth of the Deschutes. Above the Deschutes, the Columbia flows through rugged, remote country, some of it barely touched by human development. There are many places where, apart from commercial barges, there is hardly any river traffic at all. Along its whole length, the river is windier and rougher than many boaters realize. The Columbia may have been partly tamed by dams, towns, roads, and settlement, but it still has a wild soul.

The Columbia is the only sea-level water passage to the Cascade Mountains, and one of the few major east-west river canyons in the world. High-pressure systems off the coast bring stiff, steady easterly winds in the summer. River conditions are highly variable from one day to the next and from one stretch to the next. The water can go from calm to six-foot swells, or vice versa, very quickly. Conditions on the water depend heavily on the speed of the wind and the orientation of the channel to the wind at a given spot. Winter winds tend to be quieter, and the river generally calmer. A sunny, calm winter day can provide a memorable river experience.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

For this guide, we've divided the middle Columbia River—the 175-mile stretch between Bonneville Dam and Richland, Washington—into eight segments of between 20 and 30 miles long. Each segment is mapped across two pages. The maps are accompanied by descriptions of popular recreational uses, historical and cultural features, interesting geological formations, wildlife to see, good stopping places, and interesting activities within a short walk from docks and marinas.

Ramps, fuel stations, and other boater facilities are marked on the maps. Symbols designate facilities available at the marina or within a mile's

walk. For a full listing of boating services and facilities, refer to the *Oregon Boating Facilities Guide*, available from the Oregon State Marine Board, and the *Accessible Outdoor Recreation Guide*, available from the Washington Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation. See also the IAC's web site, www.iac.wa.gov/maps/default.asp.

Distances along the river refer to statute miles from the mouth and are taken from National Ocean Service navigational charts. These maps are **NOT** intended to be used for navigation. Navigational charts of the river may be purchased at many marine supply stores.

SYMBOLS USED ON MAPS



Camping



Fishing



Fishing Tackle



Fuel



Groceries



Hiking



Moorage



Picnic



Picnic Shelters



Pumpout or
Dump Station



Ramp



Restaurant



Restrooms



Rock Climbing



Shelters



Showers



Swimming



Visitor Center



Water



Windsurfing



BONNEVILLE TO HOOD RIVER

About 28 miles

UPSTREAM FROM BONNEVILLE DAM, the Columbia takes on the character of a long, slow-moving lake, the first of four between here and the mouth of the Snake. Near the mouth of the Wind River the Columbia widens to more than a mile across. At its narrowest point along this stretch, a couple of miles upstream at Collins Point, it is about one-fourth of a mile wide. The Washington shore through here is a succession of landslide debris flows, some of them still active. A great slide between Wind Mountain and Dog Mountain is moving up to 35 feet per year, squeezing the Columbia River against the Oregon shore about eight miles up from **Cascade Locks**.

Summer westerly winds are strong and steady and countered by the westbound current, making this part of the Columbia a world-class windsurfing area. Two- to four-foot swells are typical on a nice summer day. The river gets a fair amount of recreational use. Sturgeon anglers have their favorite holes, and salmon and steelhead anglers cluster around the

mouths of the Columbia's tributaries. On breezy days windsurfers and sailboarders descend on the river like a convention of butterflies, their colorful sails swirling and skimming over the water. Boaters should be careful navigating among these fast-moving craft.

Tribal treaty fishing sites line both banks of the river along this stretch. Avoid the white styrene foam net markers, and don't use tribal launch ramps, which are reserved for tribal members. Any ramp not located on one of these maps is probably a tribal launch site and should be avoided.

The water is shallow in many places along both banks. Much of the Washington shore is rocky. It's best to stay to the channel side of the navigation buoys while underway and watch for shallow spots and submerged rocks when you're approaching a landing site. Water weeds of two species, Eurasian watermilfoil and curly leaf pondweed, can clog jets and foul propellers.

Cross-channel swim at Hood River



Cascade Locks, 1928

The Dam to the Mouth of the Wind River

Just above the Bonneville lock is the mouth of Eagle Creek, coming in from the Oregon side. The creek is so clear that you can see the spawning salmon and steelhead swimming up on their fall and winter runs. Tribal fishing platforms protrude over the water from the Oregon bank. Just like the houses along the shore, these platforms are private property, and boaters should respect their owners by staying away from them.

Cascade Locks Marine Park is the site of the locks that once took boats around the former Cascade Falls, now inundated behind **Bonneville Dam**. This was the "Great Shute," where Lewis and Clark and their Corps of Discovery portaged their gear along a rocky, slippery path on a rainy November day.

Around the turn of the century, Cascade Locks was a busy port of call on the steamship voyage between Portland and points upriver. The Cascade Falls locks were completed in 1896, spanning the river between the south riverbank and Thunder Island. By then, however, river traffic had declined because the railroads could carry freight cheaper and faster, and so the locks did not get the heavy use their developers had envisioned. Today shad fishers line up shoulder-to-shoulder along the concrete wall next to the old locks during the spring shad run.

Cascade Locks is a good place to launch your boat for an upriver cruise. There's a picnic shelter

in the park, showers at the visitor center, and a lot to see within a short walk of the park. A historical museum in the original toll building tells stories of Cascade Locks' heyday as a river port. The first steam locomotive on the Pacific Coast, the Oregon Pony, is on display. It pulled the train that portaged goods around Cascade Falls until 1862.

The Bridge of the Gods, a mile downstream from the old locks, is named after an Indian legend about a rock bridge over the river and two brothers who loved the same woman. The story goes that Tye Sahalee, the Supreme Being, was obliged to separate his two quarreling sons, who could not agree on who should possess this beautiful land. The one son, Klickitat, he sent to the north; the other, Wyeast, to the west. Then he built Tahmahawis, the Bridge of the Gods, in the hope that his two sons might not always be separated.

But Klickitat and Wyeast both fell in love with a beautiful woman named Loowit and quarreled violently over which of them would have her. The boys' behavior so displeased their father that he destroyed the bridge and put all three lovers to death. Then, remorseful, he turned Wyeast into Mount Hood, Klickitat into Mount Adams, and Loowit into Mount St. Helens, the most symmetrical of the Cascade peaks, or so it was until it erupted in 1980.

The bridge part of the myth may be founded in fact. About 800 years ago a massive landslide from the Washington side shoved the river a mile to the south and formed a 200-foot-high dam. In a few years the dam washed away, leaving the rapids known as the Cascades of the Columbia. The legend was popularized in the 1890 novel *Bridge of the Gods*, by romantic writer and Hood River clergyman Frederick Homer Balch. On a less mystical note, the real bridge was raised 40 feet in the 1930s to accommodate the rising waters behind

Bonneville Dam. There's a story that the aviator Charles Lindbergh once flew under it.

Cascade Locks is the home port of the *Columbia Gorge*, a sternwheeler cruise ship. Also in Cascade Locks is excellent soft-serve ice cream at East Wind Drive-In, on Wa-Na-Pa street just west of the park entrance. Wa-Na-Pa, the main drag, is about a quarter-mile walk up from the river.

Two miles above Cascade Locks on the Oregon side, above mile 151, is a sheltered cove at the mouth of **Herman Creek**. You have to go in under a low railroad bridge. To avoid getting stuck in the sand, it's best to enter from the downstream side. About a mile up from Herman Creek is **Government Cove**, a popular bass-fishing spot.

Across the river, on Rock Cove, just below the city of **Stevenson**, you can see the sleek glass-and-steel façade of the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center and, up the hill to the east, the massive Skamania Lodge. It was on adjacent **Rock Creek** that Sam Sampson, an Alaska gold miner who struck it rich, built one of the area's first electricity-generating plants. Rock Cove is aptly named; navigate with extreme care around the protruding and submerged rocks. Gasoline, diesel, groceries, ice, and tackle are available in Stevenson, and there is a grassy picnic spot near the launch ramp.

Two miles above Stevenson on the Washington side are several small islands. Use caution navigating among them; much of their rocky surface lies submerged when the water is high.

The **Wind River** enters the Columbia at mile 155, five miles above Stevenson. Lewis and Clark first named it the New Timbered River because it was there that they first saw Oregon bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), until then unknown to science. The Wind River's mouth is a favorite spot for salmon and steelhead fishing. In a brisk season, a hundred or more boats will cluster in a patch of river the

size of a football field. Here the Columbia is at its widest point between Bonneville Dam and **Hood River**. On the east bank of the Wind River is the community of **Home Valley**.



Wind River to Hood River

At Collins Point, near mile 157, turn around and look at the east face of Wind Mountain on the Washington shore. If you squint and use your imagination, you may see the profile of a craggy old face, a formation known locally as "Indian in the Rock."

Another mile and a half takes you to Thirteen-mile Point. Here the channel hugs the Washington shore. On the shallow Oregon side are half-submerged stumps of trees, remnants of the cottonwood forest that stood on the river's bank before rising waters behind Bonneville Dam inundated them in 1937.

On the Washington side at mile 162 is the entrance to **Drano Lake**, which swells from the mouth of the **Little White Salmon River**. It is a popular spot for anglers. In the hillside above the lake you can see the remains of the Broughton Flume, built in 1923 to transport squared-off logs ("cants") from the Broughton Lumber Company's mill at Willard, up the Little White Salmon, to the finish-

ing mill at Broughton, farther up the Columbia. It took 55 minutes to flush these boards 1,000 feet downhill along the nine-mile flume. An interpretive sign at the Drano Lake launch ramp tells the story. Watch for the submerged pylons of the railway bridge as you enter the lake.

Just up from the lake's entrance is the first of five railway tunnels. The Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway route was carved from the cliff of the river's north shore in 1908; the line is now owned by the Burlington Northern Company. Across on the Oregon side, off Mitchell Point, are some of the many sturgeon holes along this stretch of the river. A few sandy beaches dot the Oregon shore up to Ruthton, just short of mile 166; here again, watch for tree stumps under the surface.

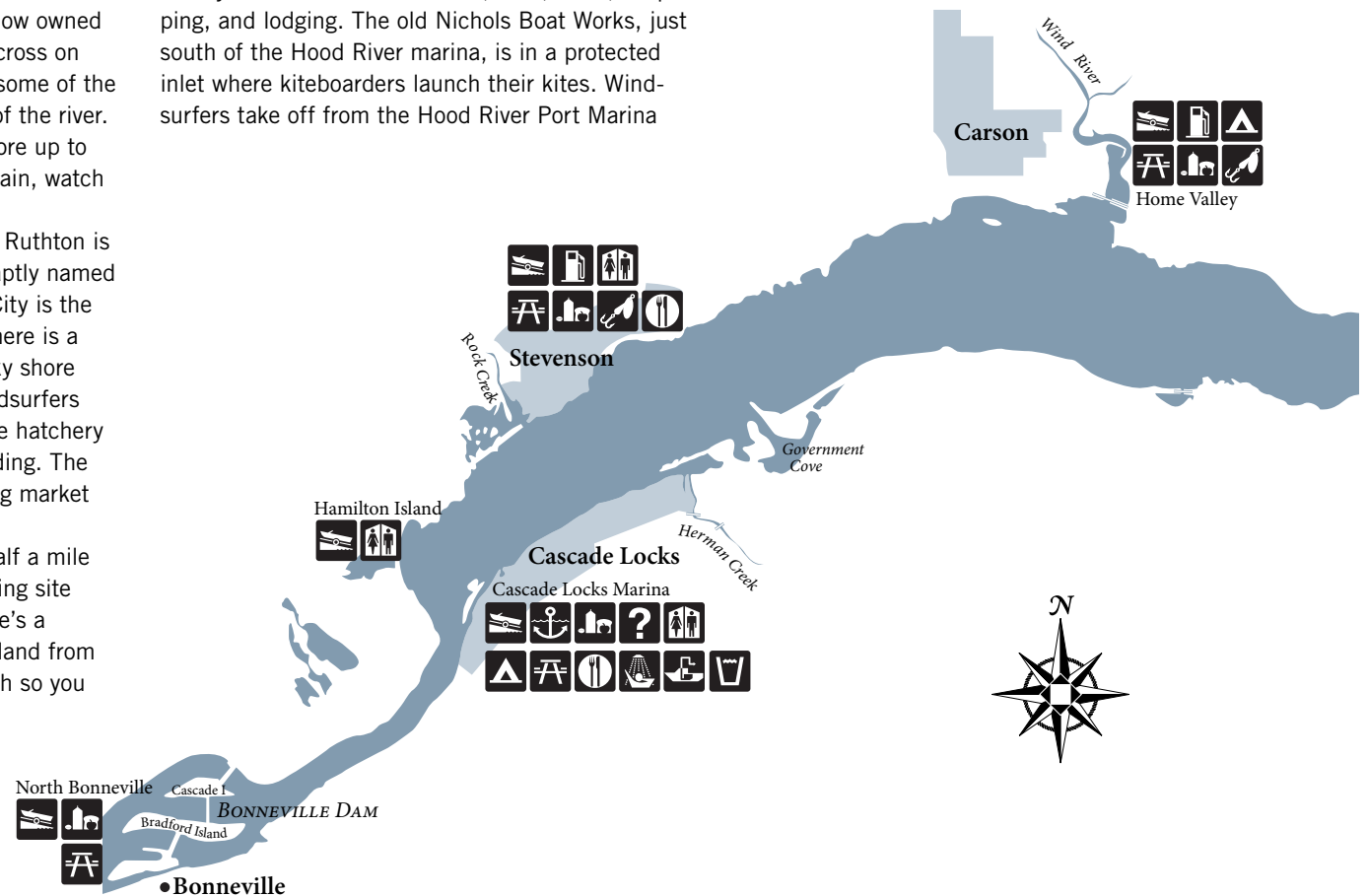
On the Washington shore across from Ruthton is **Swell City**, a popular windsurfing spot, aptly named for its large waves. A mile above Swell City is the **Spring Creek National Fish Hatchery**. There is a small gravel beach in the otherwise rocky shore of the park just below the hatchery; windsurfers cluster there on breezy days. West of the hatchery you can see the old Broughton Mill building. The mill closed in 1986, victim of a declining market for large-dimension lumber.

Wells Island hugs the Oregon shore half a mile above the hatchery. The island is a nesting site for Canada geese and blue herons. There's a little beach on the south side. You may land from March to mid-May, but stay on the beach so you

don't disturb the nesting birds. From mid-May to mid-July, for the protection of wildlife, no access to the island's south side is permitted. From Wells Island, you can look uphill to the south and see the historic Columbia Gorge Hotel. Next to it is the waterfall created by Phelps Creek as it enters the Columbia.

The city of **Hood River** is the site of a wide variety of water-based activities, food, drink, shopping, and lodging. The old Nichols Boat Works, just south of the Hood River marina, is in a protected inlet where kiteboarders launch their kites. Windsurfers take off from the Hood River Port Marina

Sailpark, just down from the river's mouth. The **Hood River Marina** is on the east bank of Hood River. A long sandbar projects from the mouth of the river. To avoid it, approach the marina by looping toward the Washington side and then following the bridge into the marina.



Community Events

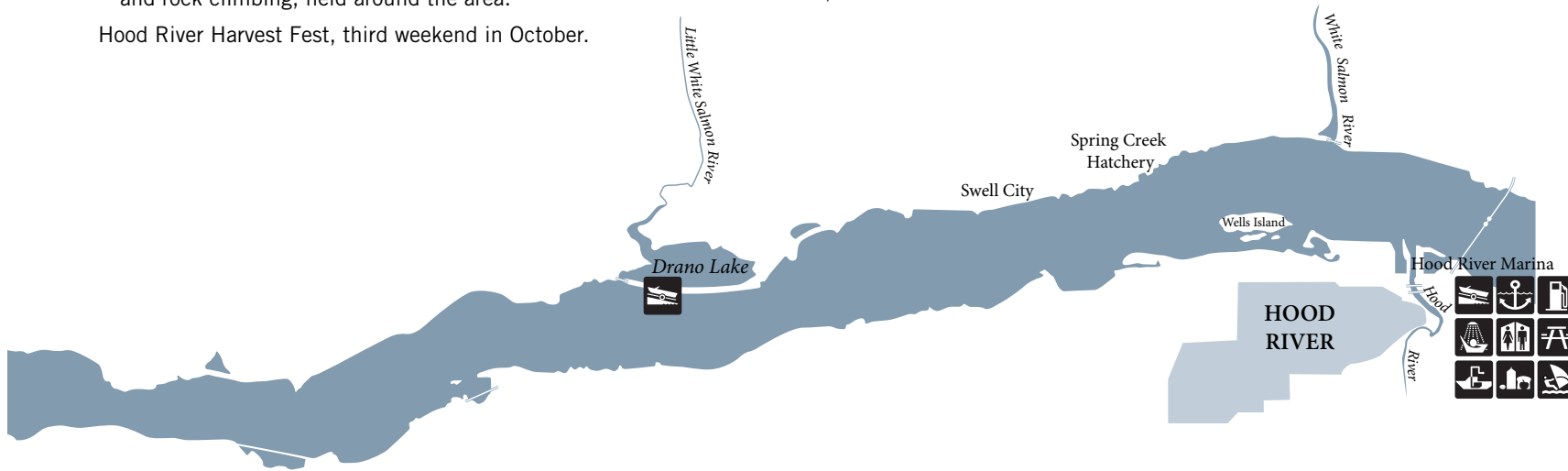
Hood River Blossom Festival, Hood River, third weekend in April.

Gorge Games, Hood River, second week in July. Competitions in windsurfing, mountain biking, kayaking, running, snowboarding, kite-sailing, and rock climbing, held around the area.

Hood River Harvest Fest, third weekend in October.

Launch Ramps

- Hamilton Island, WA
- Port of Cascade Locks, OR
- Stevenson Boat Ramp, WA
- Wind River, WA
- Drano Lake, WA
- Hood River Marina, OR



Indian Treaty Fishing

For thousands of years, Indians have harvested salmon from the Columbia River for commercial, physical, and spiritual sustenance. In 1855 the Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Yakama peoples signed a treaty with the United States that guaranteed them their right to fish in all the usual and accustomed places forever.

Indian families have been fishing their traditional sites year after year for many generations. Today they continue to practice this rich tradition along the 150-mile stretch of the Columbia between Bonneville and McNary Dams. Tribal fishers can be seen fishing from small boats and from scaffolds with

long-handled dipnets, just as their ancestors have done for many centuries.

Tribal fishing apparatus also includes gillnets up to 400 feet long, stretched out in various locations on the river. Nets are marked by white styrene foam floats. Watch out for these and avoid them. If a boat runs into a net and damages it, the operator is liable not only for repairs to the net but for any revenue lost by the owner of the net while it's out being repaired. Non-Indians are not allowed on tribal launch ramps or scaffolds. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is the enforcement authority for tribal fisheries. If you have questions, call the CRITFC at (541) 386-6363 or (800) 487-3474

(the office is open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, including most holidays), or consult their web site at www.critfc.org.

In late August and September, the public may buy fresh-caught chinook, steelhead, coho, and walleye from tribal fishers. Sometimes there is a spring chinook commercial season as well. The fish are offered for sale at several communities along the Columbia, including Cascade Locks, Lone Pine, Celilo, Rufus, and Boardman in Oregon, and Fort Rains, Wind River, Cook, Underwood, Lyle, Maryhill, Roosevelt, and Alderdale in Washington. The CRITFC has up-to-date information about days, vendors, and locations.

HOOD RIVER TO THE DALLES DAM

About 27 river miles. Columbia River Gorge

UPSTREAM FROM HOOD RIVER the Columbia dips south and winds around the Columbia Hills on the Washington shore. The river narrows at Stanley Rock, a mile above the Hood River bridge on the Oregon side, and widens between **Eighteenmile Island** and the town of **Mosier**. Past the mouth of the **Klickitat**, the Columbia River bends south; **The Dalles** is at the toe of the bend.

It is along this part of the river that western Oregon becomes eastern Oregon. Rainfall diminishes from 100 inches yearly at Wind River to 29 inches at Hood River to a spare 14 inches at The Dalles. The spongy green slopes of the Gorge give way to golden rolling hills dotted with patches of oak and pine woods, which in turn yield to the arid highlands of the Columbia Plateau.

Fishing and windsurfing are the primary recreational attractions of this stretch of the river. The mouth of the Klickitat River is a hot spot for salmon and steelhead fishing. This stretch is also a heavily used tribal fishery; watch for the white foam net markers along both sides of the river. **Doug's Beach** and **Rowena**—facing each other from the Washington and Oregon shores, respectively—are famous gathering places for windsurfers. Not surprisingly, the wind is usually blowing, somewhere between 1 and 55 miles an hour. For windsurfers, a “sailable day” means one with a three-hour window of wind speeds of 15 miles an hour or greater. Swells can go from two to three feet—common on a calm day—to six or eight feet on an adjacent stretch, depending on the direction of the wind and the lay of the river.

The water can be shallow along the shores, especially on the Oregon side. Watch for milfoil and pondweed that bloom along the shore in the summer; they can foul propellers and clog jets.

Hood River to Mayer State Park

The first landmark you see as you head east out of Hood River is Stanley Rock, looming above the Oregon shore a little above mile 171. Across the river you can see the towns of **Bingen**, spread along the river's bank. Uphill to the west is **White Salmon**, established, the story goes, when two Bingen families had a falling-out, and one moved uphill to start its own town.

The White Salmon city hall has the only glockenspiel tower west of the Mississippi. Despite its German derivation, the name Bingen is pronounced with a soft “g”, like “engine.” The Bingen marina is about a mile above the town.

Almost two miles upriver from Bingen is **Eighteenmile Island**, just off the Oregon shore. Locally known as “Chicken Charlie Island,” the rocky

protuberance, which has a house and a dock on its east shore, is reputed to have been owned once by the actor Tom Selleck. (No attempt was made to verify this.)

A mile above the island is the Oregon town of **Mosier**. There is a wide mudflat in front of the town, and just past it is **Koberg Beach State Wayside**. Small boats should watch the depth of the river as they approach, and larger boats probably shouldn't try it.

On the Washington side a little above mile 176 is **Rowland Lake**, where there's a small ramp. About a mile farther up is **Memaloose Island**, which served as a cemetery for Indians for many centuries. Because of its cultural significance, no access is permitted.



About the island, William Clark wrote in his journal of Oct. 29, 1805: “...we call this rocky Island *the Sepulchar.*” The only white person laid to rest on the island was Victor Trevitt, a pioneer of The Dalles, who lived among and respected the Indians and asked to be interred among them when he died. His funeral was held in 1883, with Masonic honors. The monument on the island’s west shore memorializes him. When the water was raised behind the dam, the remains of the people interred on the island were moved to other burial grounds.

Two miles upriver at mile 180 is the mouth of the **Klickitat River**, flowing under two arched concrete bridges. The town of **Lyle, Washington,**

sits on its east bank. At the turn of the century Lyle was a busy river port and railroad town. After the sheep market declined, it settled into a sleepy existence which ended abruptly with the windsurfing boom of the 1980s. Groceries, food, and lodging are available.

Across from Lyle on the Oregon shore is **Mayer State Park**, a sheltered place to launch or tie up. The entrance is weedy, shallow, and full of old pilings that are either submerged or just above the surface, depending on the river level. Mayer State Park is a popular place for anglers to launch for a day of fishing off the mouth of the Klickitat River.

Memaloose Island from Oregon side



Hood River boat basin



Mayer State Park to The Dalles

Rowena sits on the sandy shore just above Mayer State Park. Most of the windsurfing along this stretch takes place between Rowena and **Doug's Beach**, on the Washington side. The wind and waves are generally calmer along the north-south sweep of river just below **The Dalles**. There are a few small sandy beaches on the Oregon shore.

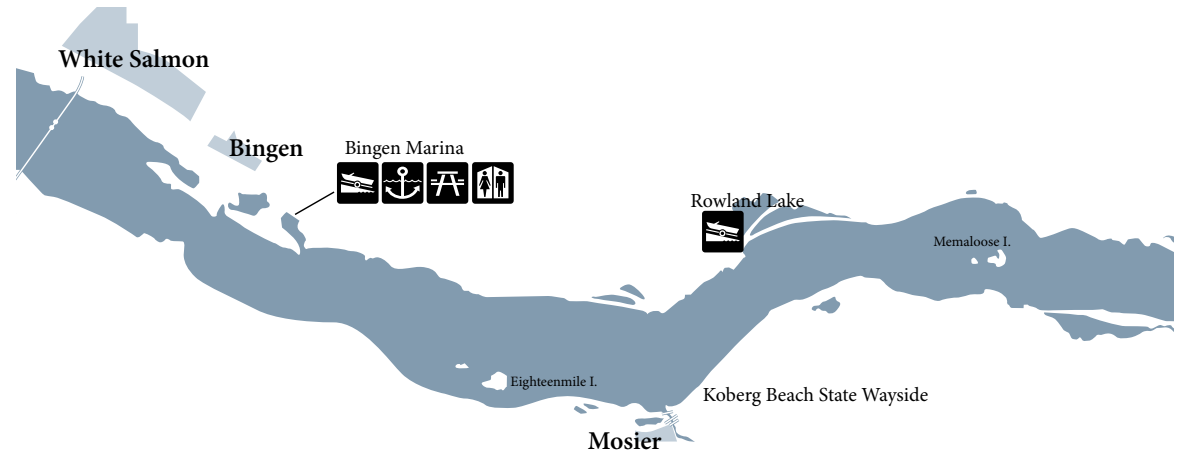
The **Port of The Dalles Marina** is at the bottom of the river's loop. It's better to swing upstream and approach it from the north because of shallow spots along the bank. The stretch of river between the city and **The Dalles Dam**, called Threemile Rapids, poses rocky hazards, especially near the Oregon end of the bridge.



The Dalles

The Dalles has been occupied for 10,000 years, making it the oldest known continuous human settlement along the Columbia River. Its rich history extends back far into past centuries, when Indians from throughout the Columbia Basin would gather along this stretch of the river, known as the Long Narrows, for their summer trading fairs.

The Dalles got its name from the French word *dalle*, "flagstone." To the 19th-century French-Canadian voyageurs who gathered furs for the Hudson's Bay Company, the basalt boulders that



lined the Long Narrows looked like the flagstones lining the gutters of Montreal. Today the narrows, and the basalt stones, are under water backed up behind Bonneville Dam.

The Lewis and Clark expedition camped here on their voyage to the sea and again on their return, at a site they called Rock Fort, located along the river in The Dalles. Another sort of fort, Fort Dalles, was established by the Army in 1850 out of fear that the flood of American immigrants into Oregon would provoke the Indians to violence. A band of Yakama attacked Fort Dalles in March of 1856, and three soldiers and 11 civilians were killed in the ensuing battle. A young Army lieutenant named Phil Sheridan commandeered a pair of steamboats and 20 volunteers from Portland and headed up-river to rescue the fort and capture the attackers. Unfortunately for Sheridan's plans, the party

announced itself with the blare of a bugle, and the Indians fled, but the incident proved the value of steam-powered transportation on the Columbia. Within a few years, steamboats were plying the river as far up as central Idaho.

There is much to see and do in The Dalles on a leisurely walk from the marina. You can get maps for two self-guided walking tours at the visitor's bureau. Points of interest include interpreted historical murals all over downtown, the original 1859 Wasco County Courthouse, and several restored historical buildings. The Fort Dalles Museum is a couple of miles from the marina. The Columbia Gorge Discovery Center and Wasco County Historical Museum are worth a stop if you come through by car. At this writing, the Corps of Engineers' Seufert Visitor Center is open seasonally.

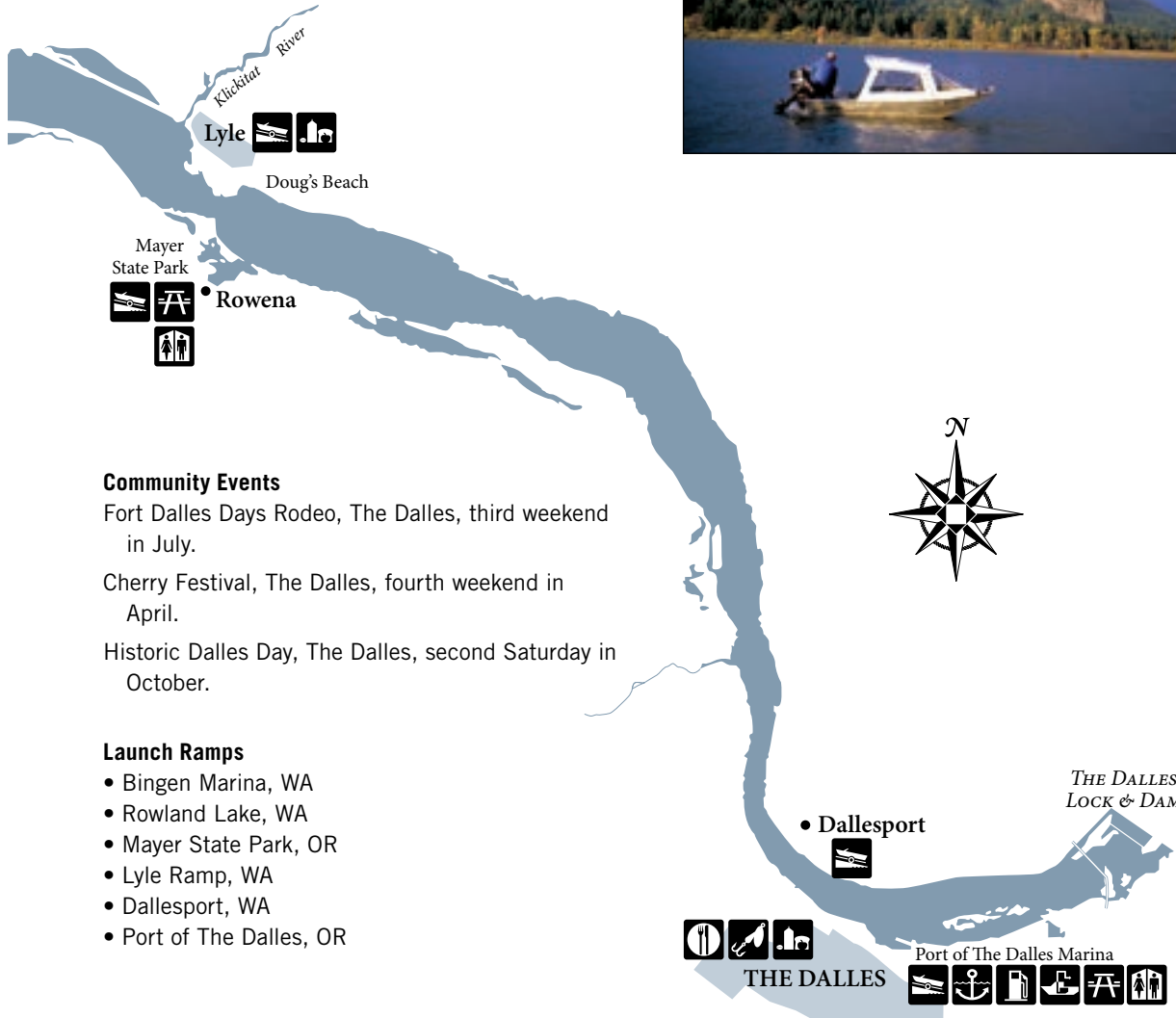


Sportfishing

Sportfishing is one of the most popular recreational uses of the Columbia River. Anglers fish for salmon (chinook, sockeye, coho, and chum), trout, sturgeon, walleye, warmwater game fish (bass, bluegill, catfish, crappie, sunfish, channel catfish), and nongame fish such as northern pikeminnow, carp, sucker, chub, sculpin, and shad.

Above Bonneville Dam, the state line generally runs in the middle of the shipping channel, although its location varies near the dams. Oregon and Washington both have general regulations for the Columbia River zone and, in addition, special regulations for specific bodies of water within the zone. Sport anglers must follow the regulations of the state in whose waters they are fishing.

Where the Columbia carries the state line, fishing licenses and tags issued by one state are valid in the other's waters except when the other's season is closed. However, regulations on possession and size limits, gear and bait, open times, and other matters vary between Oregon and Washington. In addition, regulations may change without much notice. Anglers should consult the most recent general and special regulations before they go fishing. Printed copies of the regulations are available at Oregon and Washington sporting-goods stores and other locations. You may also consult the regulations on the web at <http://www.dfw.state.or.us> (for Oregon) and <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishcorn.htm> (for Washington).



Community Events

Fort Dalles Days Rodeo, The Dalles, third weekend in July.

Cherry Festival, The Dalles, fourth weekend in April.

Historic Dalles Day, The Dalles, second Saturday in October.

Launch Ramps

- Bingen Marina, WA
- Rowland Lake, WA
- Mayer State Park, OR
- Lyle Ramp, WA
- Dallesport, WA
- Port of The Dalles, OR

THE DALLES DAM TO JOHN DAY DAM

About 25 river miles. Lake Celilo

THE STRETCH OF RIVER around The Dalles Dam was home to a large population of prehistoric people. Celilo Falls, a set of cataracts thundering over a 40-foot drop, was the most important Indian salmon fishery on the continent. It's been estimated that, before white settlement, the Indians caught 18 million pounds of chinook, coho, sockeye, and steelhead here every year.

Celilo was also a major trading center for tribes from all over the Columbia Basin. As a result, it is a repository of cultural treasures, some from as far away as Minnesota. Many prehistoric artifacts have been found in this area, and there is a large concentration of petroglyphs and pictographs. The best known is *Tsagaglalal*—"She Who Watches"—at **Horsethief Lake State Park**. Smaller petroglyphs are sometimes visible on the river's rocky islands. Boaters should remember that all Native American art and artifacts are strictly protected. It is a federal crime to disturb them in any way.

The Dalles Dam spillway



The Dalles Dam to Celilo

The lock on The Dalles Dam is on the Washington side of the river. As with all the dams along the middle Columbia, boaters should stay out of the restricted area above the spillway. Spearfish Lake, site of **Spearfish Park** and **Hess Park**, lies on the Washington side about half a mile up from the dam.

About two miles farther up on the Washington side is **Horsethief Lake State Park**, site of many prehistoric petroglyphs and pictographs, including *Tsagaglalal*. You can see it by joining a ranger-guided tour; call (509) 767-1159 for an appointment. Just up from Horsethief Lake, at about mile

196, is the downstream end of the now-inundated Celilo Canal, once the site of the lock that allowed boats around Celilo Falls before The Dalles Dam was built. The canal opened with great fanfare in 1915 and was flooded, to somewhat more sober response, in 1957. Today the canal is visible only on the navigation chart, a slender two-mile-long slot between mile 196 and **Brown's Island**.

A railroad bridge spans the river just above mile 201, and **Celilo Park**, operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, lies directly upstream on the Oregon side. The park overlooks the site of the now-inundated Celilo Falls. If you cross back and forth across this area, your depth finder will show

Fishing at Celilo Falls 1956



rapidly changing levels for the bottom contour over short distances. This is where the water once poured over the falls.

The Indian village of Celilo is adjacent to the park. Celilo is still an area of great significance for present-day Indians, who continue to practice ceremonies honoring the salmon. The Celilo Park public ramp is situated just below the point on which the park sits, sheltered by a peninsula. The ramp farther up, which enters the main stem of the river directly off the park, is a tribal site and is not open for public use.

Celilo to the John Day Dam

Miller Island, three miles up from Celilo, once held an ancient Native American village. After settlement it became a homestead and, much later, was used by a Sherman County ranch family as summer pasture. The family barged their cattle from the Oregon shore, five or six at a time, in a converted Army Duck landing craft. Once, recalls a family member, a cow, distressed that her calf had been ferried before she was, swam the channel in pursuit.

Tsagagaglala



Later the island was mined for gravel to build Interstate 84. In 1989, the 777-acre island became the property of the Forest Service, which is working with representatives of the Nez Perce, Warm Springs, Umatilla, and Yakama tribes to protect its cultural and natural resources.

The narrow channel on the Washington side of the island is called **Hell's Gate**. Winds and waves can make it choppy, but it's a shorter way around than the main channel to the south. Petroglyphs on the northeast side of the Miller Island are visible from a boat, and great blue herons nest on the south shore.

The island has a population of northern wormwood, a rare plant. A sheltered cove on the northeast side is a nice place to rest, but to protect the delicate resources on the island, visitors are not permitted to go beyond the beach or to take anything away from the island.

The **Deschutes River** enters the Columbia opposite Miller Island. Early in the 20th century, when the river's mouth was lower than it is now, a railroad trestle was built on the sandbar that protruded from the east bank. A ferry from **Wishram** brought goods from Washington to load onto the train.

Heritage Landing State Park is the take-out point for hundreds of rafts that come down the river every summer. The river mouth is often packed with boats in the summer and fall. Anglers fish for salmon, steelhead, walleye, and bass.

The lower 20 miles of the Deschutes is popular with rafters and jetboaters. The river is open to power boats every other weekend (Thursday through Sunday) from June 15 to Sept. 30; the web site www.boatorregon.com gives the schedule. You need a special boater pass for the Deschutes; a list of vendors is available at www.boaterpass.com. There is a boat ramp at **Giles French Park in Rufus**.

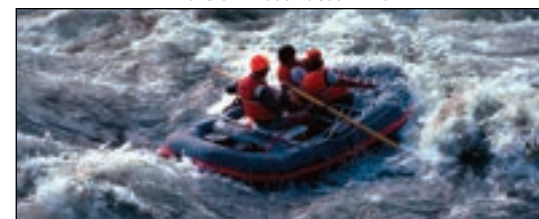


Seagulls in flight

There's still a sandbar at the mouth of the Deschutes, so watch for shallow spots as you approach. On the east bank of the Deschutes is **Deschutes River State Recreation Area**. It offers hiking and horse trails and camping; campground reservations are recommended from April through September.

A town called Grant once stood at the river's edge a mile up from **Biggs, Oregon**. A ferry crossed the river from Grant to Maryhill, then called Columbus. If you sit on the boat ramp at **Maryhill State Park** and look across the river to the southeast, you can make out the faint remnant of the ferry road coming down to the water. A flood took out the town in 1894.

Raft on Deschutes River



Maryhill State Park and adjacent **Peach Beach**, on the Washington shore opposite Biggs, offer a spacious, if windy, picnic area and a place to watch the windsurfers. The austere chateau up the hill to the west is the Maryhill Museum of Art. The 19th-century entrepreneur Sam Hill began construction on the building in 1914.

Hill was the son-in-law of railroad magnate James J. Hill, who built the Spokane, Portland & Seattle railroad line along the Columbia's north shore in 1908 (the two coincidentally shared a surname). In 1907, Sam Hill bought 6,000 acres of land on the Columbia bluffs, intending to establish a Quaker farm community.

The chateau, which he named Maryhill after his daughter, was to be his home, but he never lived there. In 1926 the building, still unfinished,



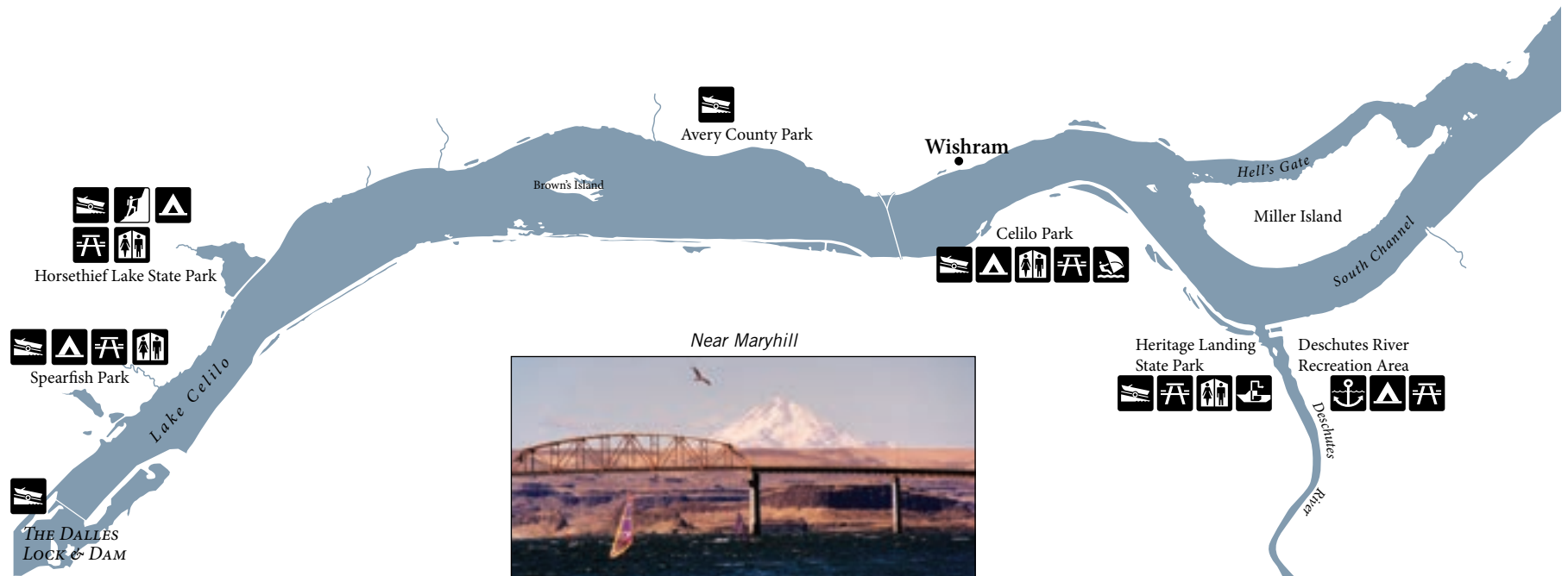
Looking westward from Maryhill Museum

was dedicated as an art museum by Queen Marie of Romania. It was finally opened to the public in 1940, nine years after Hill's death.

The museum's offerings are eclectic. They include the largest collection of Rodin sculptures west of the Mississippi and a collection of baskets in the style of Columbia River tribes.

About three miles east of Maryhill Museum is a full-sized replica of Stonehenge, the famed neolithic monument on Salisbury Plain, England. Sam Hill, a Quaker and a pacifist, built it to commemorate the young men of Klickitat County who were killed in World War I. The site now includes memorials to those killed in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

Five miles up from Maryhill at mile 215, the river narrows at a spot known as **Preacher's Eddy**, a popular fishing ground for walleye, sturgeon, and salmon. The **John Day Dam** looms to the east. At this writing it is closed to visitors for security reasons. The lock is on the Washington side. Use care when exiting at the upstream end. A sign on the Washington side reads, simply, "Rocks." Believe it.

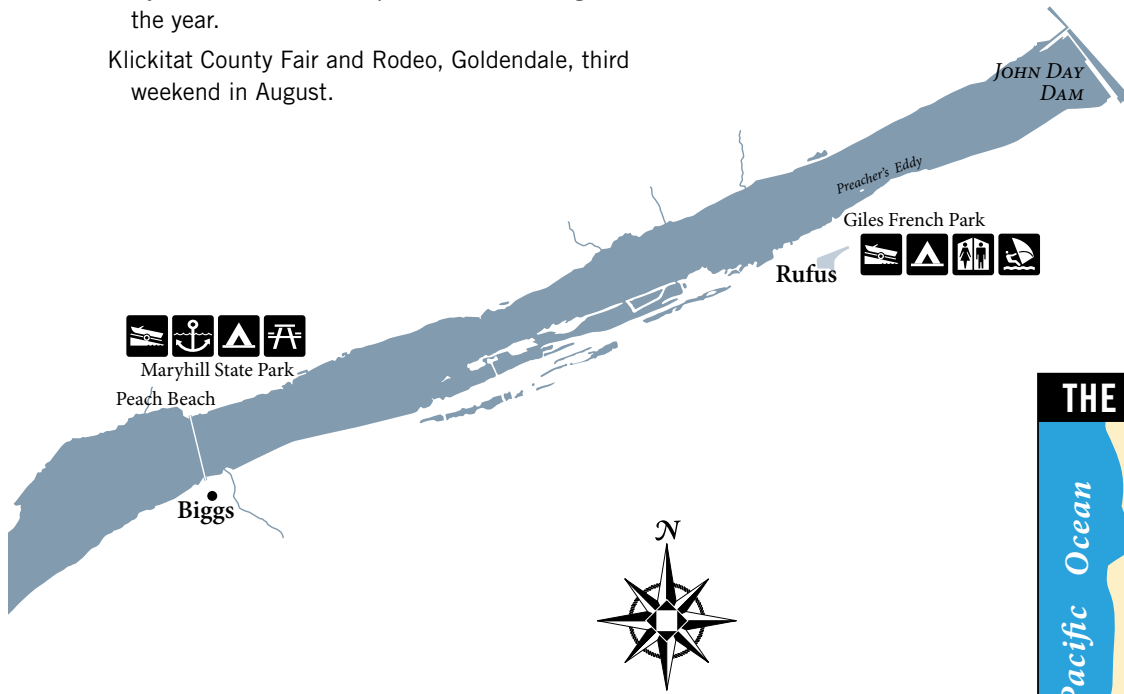


Community Events

Welcoming of the salmon, Celilo Village, first week-end in April.

Maryhill Museum of Art, special events throughout the year.

Klickitat County Fair and Rodeo, Goldendale, third weekend in August.

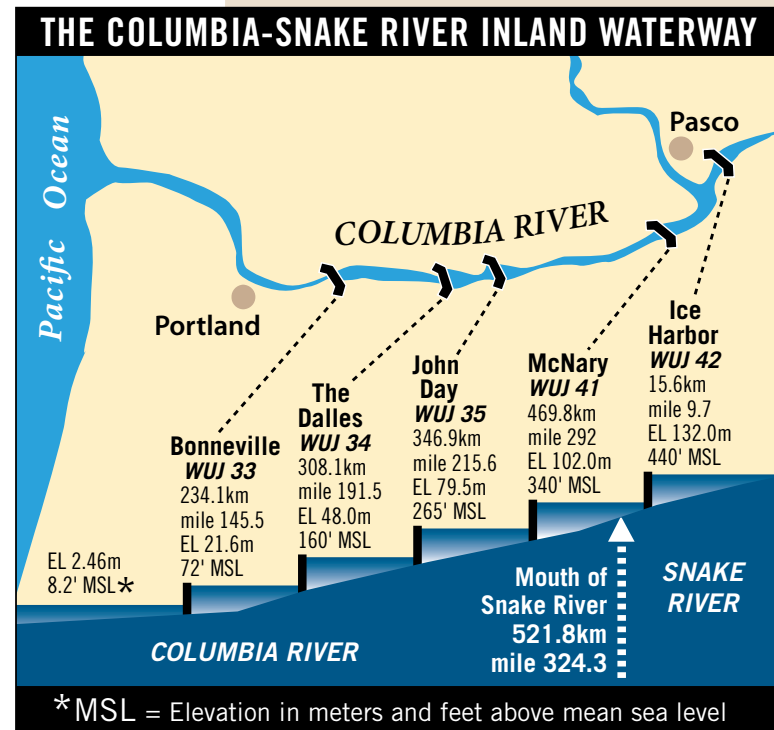


Launch Ramps

- The Dalles Lock and Dam Boat Ramp, OR
- Spearfish Park, WA
- Avery Boat Ramp, WA (subject to posted restrictions)
- Celilo Park, OR
- Heritage Landing State Park, OR
- Maryhill State Park, WA
- Giles French Park, OR

Locking Through the Dams

Locks are available to all river traffic, not just commercial vessels, although these take precedence. It takes about 40 minutes to lock through the dams along the middle Columbia. There may also be a considerable wait outside the lock so that commercial traffic may come through, or to allow the lock operator to bring the water in the lock to your level. If you want to lock through, radio the lockmaster using the appropriate frequency, or pull on the cord just outside the lock and wait for instructions. For schedule information and lock policies, consult the Corps of Engineers' web site, <http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil>.



JOHN DAY DAM TO ARLINGTON
About 25 river miles. Lake Umatilla.

ABOVE THE JOHN DAY DAM the river assumes another of its “Lake” names, Lake Umatilla. Here the Columbia takes on a wilder character. The rimrocked hills rising from both banks are brown, rugged, and treeless, and the signs of 21st-century life—bridges, towns, manicured farms—are barely in evidence. There are stretches where you could almost believe you are traveling alongside Lewis and Clark, although the ever-present highways and railroad tracks along both banks don’t let you slip completely out of the present. Services for boaters are scarce; there’s no fuel between The Dalles and Umatilla, 100 miles upstream. From here up to Boardman, boaters may have little company on the river.



John Day Dam

John Day Dam to the Mouth of the John Day River

The lock at the John Day Dam is 113 feet deep, making it the deepest single-drop lock “in the free world,” according to the dam’s web site. When the downstream gate—aptly called a “guillotine gate”—closes behind you, the climate gets suddenly chilly at the bottom of this rectangular hole in the river. Some of the chill undoubtedly comes from gazing at the massive upstream gate, with horsetails of water squeezing through the joints on either side, trying not to remember that this wedge of steel stands between you and 43 million gallons of gravity-impelled Columbia River. It is a relief when the upstream gate sinks below the water and reveals the broad river to the east, flooded in sunlight.

The **John Day River** empties into the Columbia at mile 219, two miles above the dam. The name of John Day is attached to several Oregon locations. It belonged to a decidedly minor player in Oregon’s history, although his story is dramatic. John Day was a Virginia trapper and a partner in John Jacob Astor’s fur-trading company. In 1811 he set out across the country with another partner named Wilson Price Hunt, intending to meet Astor’s ship at the mouth of the Columbia and help the company set up a fur-trading post there.

Somewhere along the Snake River, John Day got sick, was left behind, and fell in with another trapper named Ramsay Crooks. Day and Crooks set forth to cross the eastern Oregon desert, undoubtedly underestimating the rigors it posed. They were accosted by Indians and beaten and robbed of everything, including their clothes, near the mouth of the river that bears Day’s name. Eventually they were rescued and made it to Astoria, somewhat the worse for wear; John Day later went insane. Day is also commemorated in the famous fossil beds of central Oregon, about 90 miles upstream by road.

The lower John Day River is popular for fishing and waterskiing. **LePage Park**, on the John Day’s west bank, is the put-in point. Use the public launch ramp, not the tribal ramp. Three miles upstream on the east bank, **Philippi Park** is a boat-in-only park and a nice oasis in the John Day’s dry canyon.

The river is navigable in a power boat to Tumwater Falls, about 10 miles upstream, but shoals and narrows make it advisable to use your depth finder, or go up in a dinghy. Just below the falls, an iron ring is embedded into the basalt, handy for tying up to. The John Day River above Tumwater Falls is also popular among rafters, although it is not so heavily used as the Deschutes River.

Railroad Island channel



Mouth of the John Day River to Arlington

On the Oregon side, the river flows past ribbons of high rimrock with steep skirts of talus sweeping down to the highway. The Washington shore is gentler, with folds of brown hills incised with stream runnels. This is a place to watch wildlife: widgeons, bufflehead ducks, Canada geese, and the occasional bighorn sheep picking its way among the cliffs. It's not the same as cruising Puget Sound, or the lower Columbia, where there are many small towns, side channels, and sloughs to prowl through. One fan of the upper river says, "I like this stretch because of the wide-open spaces, the freedom." The main attractions here are solitude and quiet.

A series of canyons parts the cliffs on the Oregon side: Philippi Canyon (mile 229), Blalock Canyon

(mile 234), Lang Canyon (mile 238), Jones Canyon (mile 241); and finally Alkali Canyon (mile 243). At the toe of Alkali Canyon is the city of **Arlington**.

There are few places to tie up and rest along this stretch. At mile 230, Rock Creek opens into a mile-long estuary with a ramp. Just above mile 239 on the Washington side is Sundale, a small cove surrounded by orchards. It has a tribal launch ramp that is open to the public outside of tribal fishing seasons. These little inlets were blasted out of the basalt shore by the Corps of Engineers after the John Day Dam raised the level of the river in 1969. The channels are between 25 and 50 feet wide, with a vertical clearance of 25 to 30 feet; water depths are 20 feet or so. Inside these coves is a respite from the wind and waves of the river and an opportunity to enjoy the solitude of the desert.

Arlington, on the Oregon side, has a protected boat basin with good moorage. Groceries, restaurants, and a nice public park are within walking distance. The wind can sometimes make it difficult to get into and out of the port. The Washington shore is often calmer. Directly across the river from Arlington is the Roosevelt boat launch, which is a little easier to negotiate than Arlington. The grain elevators just upstream mark the community of Roosevelt. The park adjacent to the boat launch has restrooms, a picnic area, and play equipment; there's a swimming beach adjacent. The site is popular with windsurfers.

Arlington



Launch Ramps

- Railroad Island Boat Ramp, WA (subject to posted restrictions)
- LePage Park, OR
- Philippi Park (boat-in only), OR
- Rock Creek Park, WA
- Sundale Park, WA (subject to posted restrictions)
- Port of Arlington, OR
- Roosevelt Park, WA



Twin Sisters, Wallula Gap



Geology of the Columbia River

The geologic history of the Columbia River is punctuated with volcanic tumult. The oldest rock in the Columbia Gorge is found north of Stevenson, the remnant of huge volcanic eruptions between 45 and 21 million years ago. The Columbia River Plateau was created by a series of volcanic flows when, 17 million years ago, cracks in the earth's surface began spewing molten basaltic lava. Between 6 and 17 million years ago, these flows covered 50,000 square miles of northeastern Oregon, southwestern Washington, and western Idaho in depths of up to a mile, repeatedly pushing the Columbia's course northward and westward. Today, portions of these hardened flows are exposed in the cliffs and ridges flanking the river.

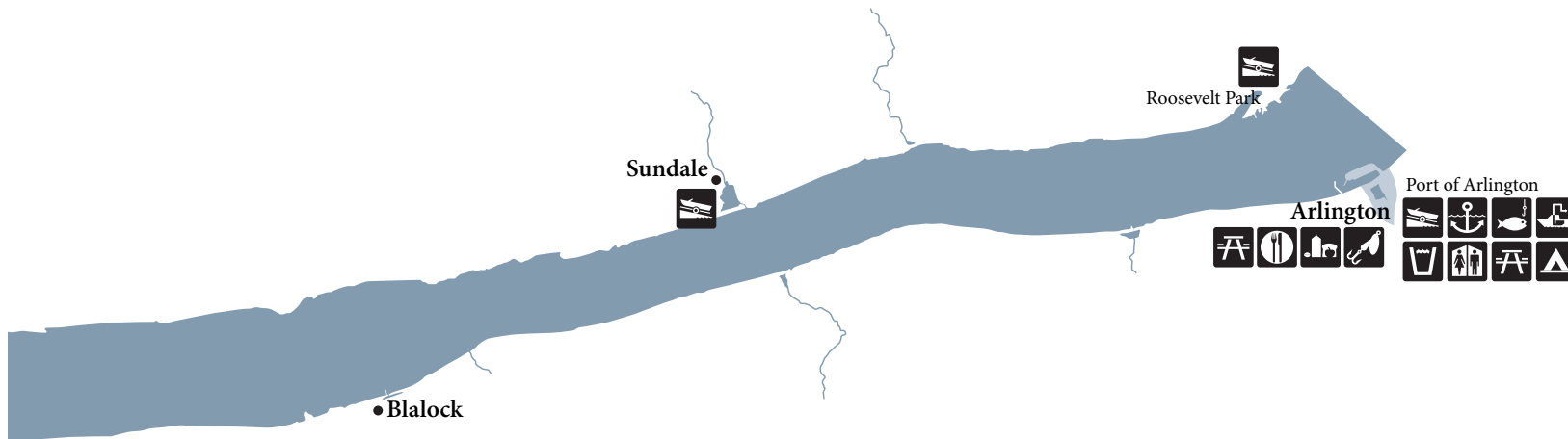
Starting seven million years ago, uplift and folding broke up the basalt layers, mingled them with

gravel pushed west by the rising of the Rockies, and formed the ridges and canyons that extend from the Columbia's north and south banks. The last four million years have been a period of high volcanic activity in the Cascade Range, creating Mounts Hood, Adams, and St. Helens, as well as many small cinder cones.

A set of recent (geologically speaking) cataclysmic events known as the Missoula Floods carved the Columbia's bed as we know it today. Between 16,000 and 14,000 years ago, at the ending of the last Ice Age, a glacial ice sheet moved south from Canada, and a large ice dam was created on the Clark Fork River. The dam stood about 3,000 feet high. As the ice behind it melted, water rose and the lake developed.

Eventually the pressure of water became too much for the crumbling ice, and the dam burst, releasing a 2,000-foot wall of water that roared through the prairies of eastern Washington and carved its rough-featured landscape. The various flood pathways converged in the Pasco Basin, where there was a narrow exit for the waters--the Wallula Gap, through which water flowed at speeds of up to 50 miles an hour. Floodwaters hurling themselves down the Columbia Gorge were still 400 feet deep when they reached Portland.

The Missoula floods are the largest known floods on earth in the last two million years. As many as 100 such floods may have occurred during the Pleistocene Age, the last one about 13,000 years ago.



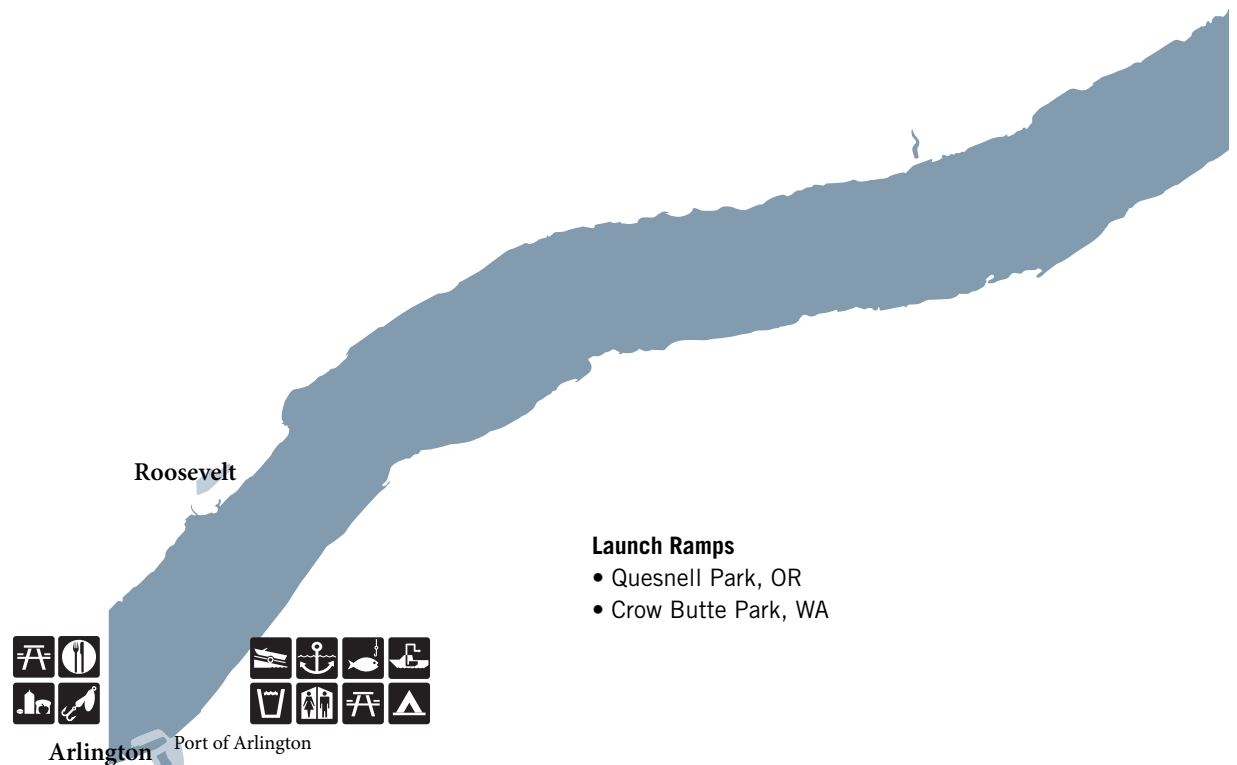
ARLINGTON TO CROW BUTTE

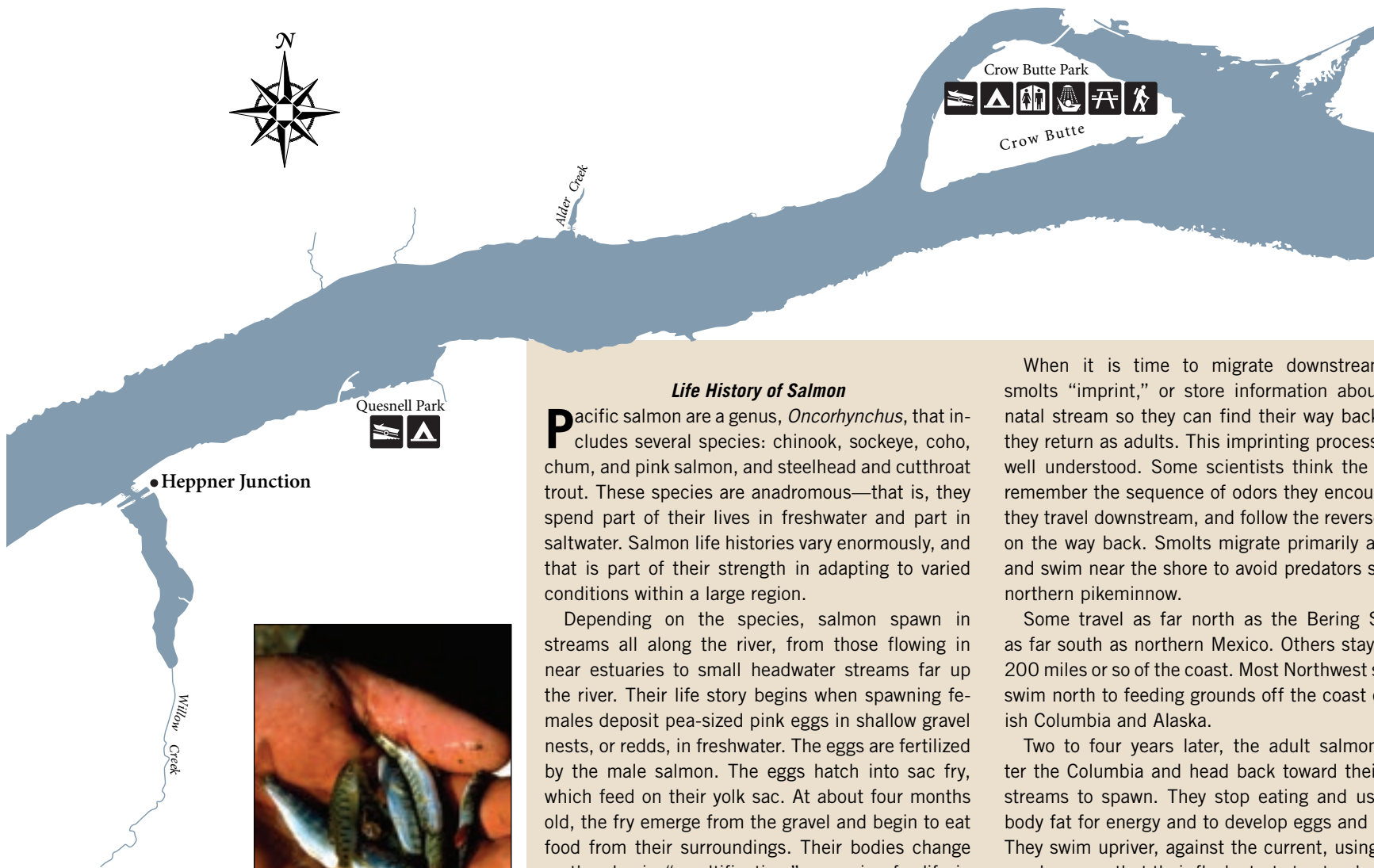
About 23 river miles. Lake Umatilla

ABOVE ARLINGTON, the river flows between still-wild shores. It's a 10-mile cruise up to Willow Creek, which enters the Columbia just above mile 253. The bridges are low here, with a clearance of about 10 feet, depending on the river's level. A larger boat may slip under the railroad bridge only to be halted by the highway bridge (but you can beach your boat on the shore). The creek's mouth creates a quiet pool about a mile into the canyon. Just above mile 256 on the Oregon side is Quesnell Park, with a launch ramp and camping facilities.

At mile 258.3 on the Washington side is a small inlet called Alder Creek. The entrance to this basin is also under a railroad and highway bridge; the vertical clearance is 24 feet. Military jets from the Whidbey Island Naval Base in Washington have been known to streak down Alder Creek canyon on their way to the bombing range near Boardman. "It is an exciting experience if you didn't see the aircraft coming," says one boater who was in the right place at the right time.

Three miles above Willow Creek, between miles 262 and 265, is Crow Butte, a summer campground popular with boaters. There's a protected boat basin with docks on the west side. The Lewis and Clark expedition camped on the Washington side of Crow Butte in October of 1805. Today there's a causeway across the north channel to provide access from the Washington side. On the northeast side of Crow Butte, near mile 265, is a sandy beach, a pleasant place to spend some time at anchor.





Life History of Salmon

Pacific salmon are a genus, *Oncorhynchus*, that includes several species: chinook, sockeye, coho, chum, and pink salmon, and steelhead and cutthroat trout. These species are anadromous—that is, they spend part of their lives in freshwater and part in saltwater. Salmon life histories vary enormously, and that is part of their strength in adapting to varied conditions within a large region.

Depending on the species, salmon spawn in streams all along the river, from those flowing in near estuaries to small headwater streams far up the river. Their life story begins when spawning females deposit pea-sized pink eggs in shallow gravel nests, or redds, in freshwater. The eggs are fertilized by the male salmon. The eggs hatch into sac fry, which feed on their yolk sac. At about four months old, the fry emerge from the gravel and begin to eat food from their surroundings. Their bodies change as they begin “smoltification,” preparing for life in salt water. Some Northwest salmon begin their migration downstream soon after emerging from the gravel, while others stay near their natal streams up to two years.

When it is time to migrate downstream, the smolts “imprint,” or store information about their natal stream so they can find their way back when they return as adults. This imprinting process is not well understood. Some scientists think the smolts remember the sequence of odors they encounter as they travel downstream, and follow the reverse order on the way back. Smolts migrate primarily at night and swim near the shore to avoid predators such as northern pikeminnow.

Some travel as far north as the Bering Sea, or as far south as northern Mexico. Others stay within 200 miles or so of the coast. Most Northwest salmon swim north to feeding grounds off the coast of British Columbia and Alaska.

Two to four years later, the adult salmon reenter the Columbia and head back toward their natal streams to spawn. They stop eating and use their body fat for energy and to develop eggs and sperm. They swim upriver, against the current, using up so much energy that their flesh starts to atrophy. When they reach their destination, the females make redds by sweeping their tails through the gravel on the bottom of the stream. There they lay their eggs, and the cycle begins again.

CROW BUTTE TO McNARY DAM

About 26 river miles. Lake Umatilla

ABOVE CROW BUTTE, the boater emerges from relative wilderness into a more developed stretch. The rolling brown hills on the Washington side are patchworked with irrigated vineyards, sheltered from the wind by long banks of poplar trees. On the Oregon shore the visible signs of industrial agriculture—irrigation pumps, grain elevators, food-processing plants—begins to appear.

In the summer the wide river is crisscrossed with power boats towing waterskiers, anglers crouched over sturgeon holes, and personal watercraft zipping in every direction. In the winter, duck hunters slip their boats through the sloughs along both shores.

There is still plenty of wildness to see. Huge flocks of Canada geese stop by for an autumn's rest at the **Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge**, a 20-mile stretch of the Columbia that includes the Blalock, Straight Six, Telegraph, Sand Dune, and Long Walk Islands and some of the uplands on both sides of the river.

The refuge sets aside waterfowl habitat to replace that lost when the John Day Dam flooded the channel in 1969. It is home to migrating waterfowl like Canada geese, mallards, and cinnamon teal, as well as white pelicans, great blue herons, egrets, sandhill cranes, bald eagles, beaver, muskrat, and otter. Long-billed curlews arrive in early March to breed and rear their young. Magnificent flights of ducks and geese swoop and soar over the river.



Tour boat at Umatilla

Crow Butte to Irrigon

Five miles above the eastern tip of Crow Butte is **Boardman**, named for a turn-of-the-century homesteader, Sam Boardman, who dug a well and planted shade trees at a spot east of town. That spot became the Oregon's first roadside rest area, and Boardman became the first superintendent of Oregon State Parks. The present-day town sits south and east of its original location, which was inundated by the waters behind John Day Dam. A hiking trail leads east from the **Boardman Marina Park** to the Port of Morrow, where a historic tugboat, the *Capt. Al James*, is on display.

Morrow County leaders have aggressively wooed agricultural businesses, and Boardman has a good-sized industrial complex along the river's edge to show for it. Among the facilities there are several potato processing plants, and sometimes you can detect the faint odor of French fries wafting across the water.

For the next 10 miles the river weaves through the **Coyote, Big and Little Blalock, Sand, and Long Walk islands**. There are many smaller islands, unnamed on the chart. All the islands are closed to all access. Boaters should watch the river's depth

as they navigate through here, and they should keep the binoculars handy for spectacular birding displays. Bass anglers tend to favor the waters on the Washington side of the islands.

Seven miles up from Boardman on the Washington side, at mile 278, is **Paterson**. There's a shallow gravel ramp at the end of a road that once led to a ferry landing. Flocks of waterfowl and other birds and river-dwelling mammals congregate at Paterson Slough, stretching to the west along the Washington shore.

The town of **Irrigon** lies six miles upriver from Paterson on the Oregon side, just above mile 282. A settlement arose here in the 1860s as a jumping-off point for the gold fields of Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. Forty years later, the intersection of an irrigation canal and a railroad siding gave birth to the town of Stokes. Stokes was renamed Irrigon in 1903—the coinage is a conflation of the words "irrigation" and "Oregon." The Irrigon Marina's ramp and picnic area are well used in the summer.

Upstream from Irrigon, the waters along the Oregon shore are very shallow, just a foot or so in some places. Stay to the Washington side of day markers 62 and 64.

Great blue heron at nest



Irrigon to McNary Dam

Seven miles up from Irrigon lies **Umatilla**. The Lewis and Clark expedition stopped near here in April of 1806, on their eastbound journey. In its boom years of the late 1800s, Umatilla was lively, even wild. A busy intersection of steamboat and stage lines, Umatilla was also a supply town serving the gold fields of eastern Oregon and Idaho.

Today it is a quieter place. Self-described as the “walleye capital of the world,” the town holds the Oregon Governor’s Cup Walleye Tournament in September. Salmon, steelhead, and bass fishing are also popular.

You can buy marine fuel at the **Umatilla Marina**, the first available above The Dalles. Groceries, fish-

ing supplies, restaurants, and motels are within a few blocks’ walk of the park. The Umatilla Museum showcases the town’s history. Across the river on the Washington shore, **Plymouth Park** has a ramp, campsites, and a picnic area.

The two-mile reach between Umatilla and **McNary Dam** is a favorite spot for sturgeon fishing. Salmon anglers gather here during the spring and fall chinook runs. McNary Dam, above mile 292, is named after Oregon Senator Charles McNary, a long-time advocate of a navigable Columbia, cheap electricity, and plentiful water for irrigation. Three 12-ton concrete tetrahedrons are on display at the Umatilla Marina; they were used to slow the river during construction of the dam.



Umatilla



Community Events

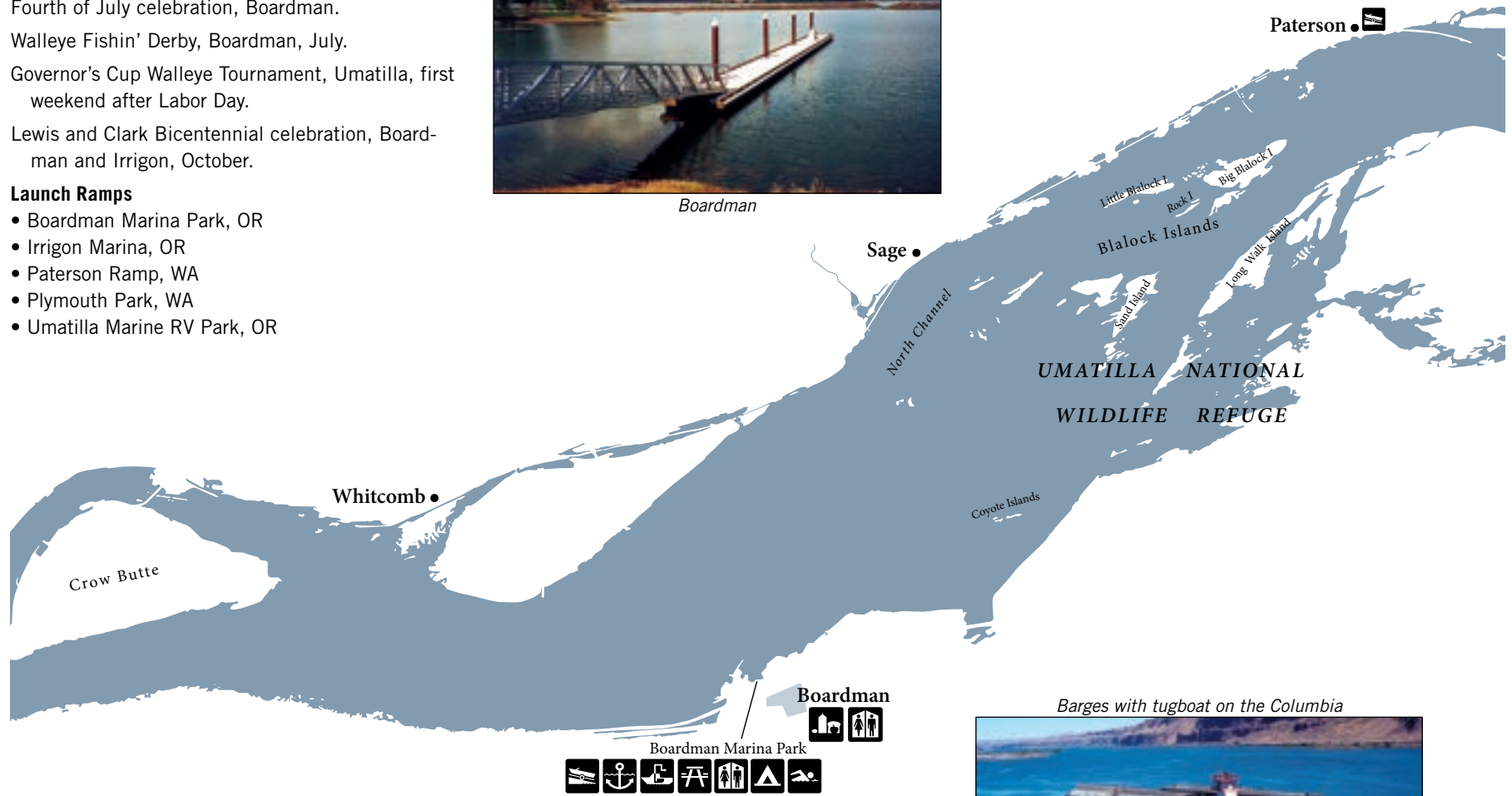
Cinco de Mayo festival, Boardman, May.
Fourth of July celebration, Boardman.
Walleye Fishin' Derby, Boardman, July.
Governor's Cup Walleye Tournament, Umatilla, first weekend after Labor Day.
Lewis and Clark Bicentennial celebration, Boardman and Irrigon, October.

Launch Ramps

- Boardman Marina Park, OR
- Irrigon Marina, OR
- Paterson Ramp, WA
- Plymouth Park, WA
- Umatilla Marine RV Park, OR



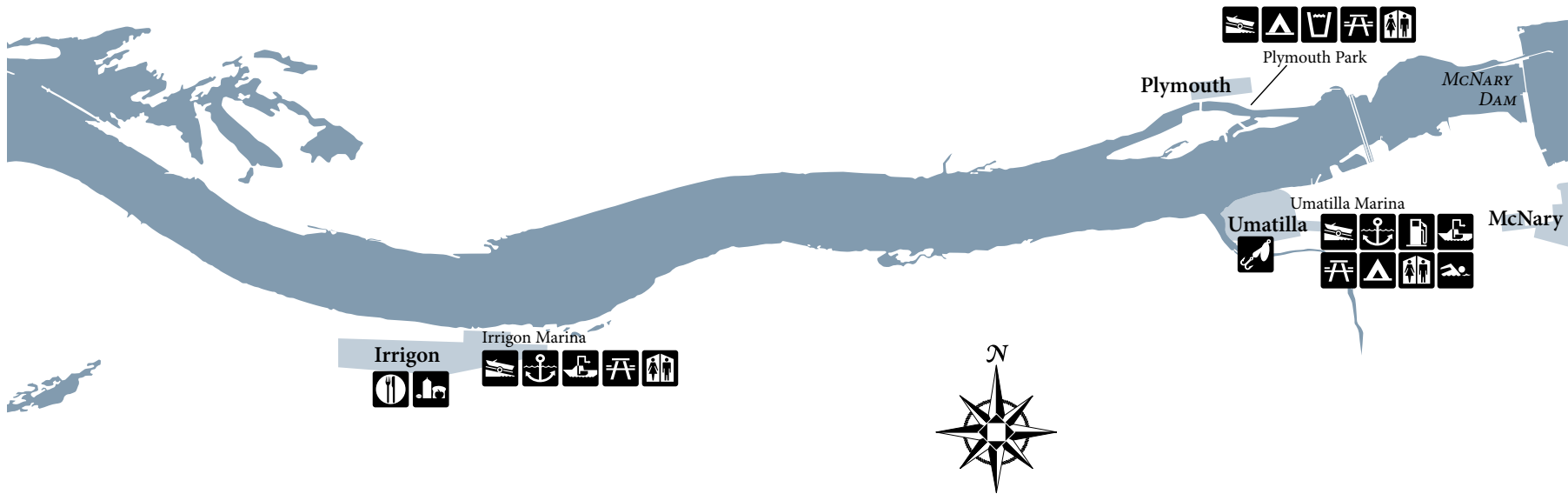
Boardman



Boardman Marina Park



Barges with tugboat on the Columbia



Commercial Shipping

The Columbia River flows through some of the most productive farmland in the world. Commercial barges carry cargoes of grain, logs, wood chips and pulp, fertilizer, peas and beans, flour, and fresh fruits and vegetables, calling at the Columbia's 26 ports between the Tri-Cities and the river's mouth. On their upriver trips they carry gasoline and other fuels for the Tri-Cities and the communities up the Snake River, and garbage from Portland and Seattle to deposit in landfills near Arlington, Oregon, and Roosevelt, Washington.

Two cruise lines operate excursion ships on the Columbia. One is based in Cascade Locks and offers day trips. The other, based in Portland, carries

passengers on 8- and 11-day voyages up the Columbia and Snake Rivers, with ports of call at Hood River, The Dalles, Umatilla, Pasco/Kennewick, and Clarkston.

Commercial tugs and ships have the right of way over other vessels in most instances. Tug-barge combinations can be upwards of 600 feet long, the size of a ship. They can weigh more than 15,000 tons and they can move surprisingly fast, 6 to 9 knots—roughly, up to 10 miles an hour. Their very mass makes them like freight trains; it can take several miles to bring one to a stop. When a recreational vessel gets in the way of a ship, the ship's pilot often can do little to avert a collision. Pilots of tugs may have a blind spot of half a mile in front of them—

more if the barges are empty and riding high. It's up to small-boat operators to stay out of their way.

Because of their size and draft, commercial vessels need to stay in the mid-river shipping channel, which is marked on these maps. Recreational boaters should avoid the middle of the river as much as possible by traveling along one edge or the other. If you're sailing, take short tacks along the edge of the channel, rather than long tacks across. When you cross, do it where there is a generous line of sight both up- and downriver. If you hear a danger signal—five blasts from a ship's horn—take action immediately to avert a collision. If you're running at night, be especially careful. Obstructing commercial traffic is both unsafe and unlawful.

MCNARY DAM TO PORT KELLEY

About 21 river miles. Lake Wallula

AS IT ROLLS DOWN from Washington, the Columbia sweeps around the Horse Heaven Hills in a wide southwesterly bend, passing through the slot of Wallula Gap just above **Port Kelley** and backing up behind McNary Dam to form Lake Wallula. Like downstream segments, the stretch of river between McNary Dam and Port Kelley can be windy and rough, especially in the summer. "It's like taking a dishpan full of water and shaking it back and forth," said a local man who spends a lot of time in his boat.

The river and the wind combine forces regularly to rip loose the "slow no wake" buoys around Hat Rock and the McNary Yacht Club, even though they're anchored with five-gallon buckets filled with concrete. The river is rougher in the afternoons, calmer in the mornings and evenings.

Anglers congregate just above the dam to fish for salmon, steelhead, walleye, and bass. Water-skiers, jet-skiers, parasailors, and party boats come to the area around Hat Rock and the sandy islands upstream. From Port Kelley to the mouth of the **Walla Walla River**, the Columbia is flanked by high cliffs with a railroad grade cut into either side.

Sturgeon anglers like the deep holes in the river above McNary Dam. Many anglers put in at the **McNary** ramp just above the dam, known as the Oregon ramp, or the **North McNary** ramp on the Washington side.

Six miles above the dam, at mile 299, is **Hat Rock State Park**, named for the hat-shaped basalt formation on the hill to the east. There's a sheltered ramp and an overnight mooring buoy, one of 30 installed by the Clover Island Yacht Club at selected locations between here and the Tri-Cities. A hiking trail goes from Hat Rock down to the dam. The McNary Yacht

Club, just above Hat Rock, is private, but nonmember boaters may refuel and use the club's ramp.

The islands above the yacht club are popular for bass fishing. **Warehouse Beach Recreation Area**, a mile above Hat Rock, has a sandy beach with dunes; it's a nice place to pull up for a summer picnic. Two mooring buoys are just offshore. The nearby **Sand Station Recreation Area** has a good swimming area and campsites a short walk from shore. A little above Sand Station is Bobby's Beach, popular with parasailors.

Refuge Island juts out of the water on the Washington side at mile 304.7. The island was separated from shore when Lake Wallula flooded an old railroad bed, creating a channel 30 to 50 feet wide and about 10 feet deep. There's an anchor buoy at the upstream end of the island. The relocated railroad track is startlingly close; this you learn abruptly when a train goes by.

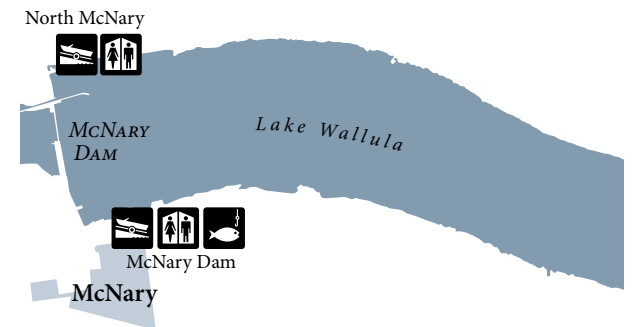
The state line bisects the river near mile 310. The grain elevator of Port Kelley looms two miles to the north. The Walla Walla Yacht Club is at Port Kelley. Fuel is available, and two of the Clover Island mooring buoys are nearby.



Wallula Gap

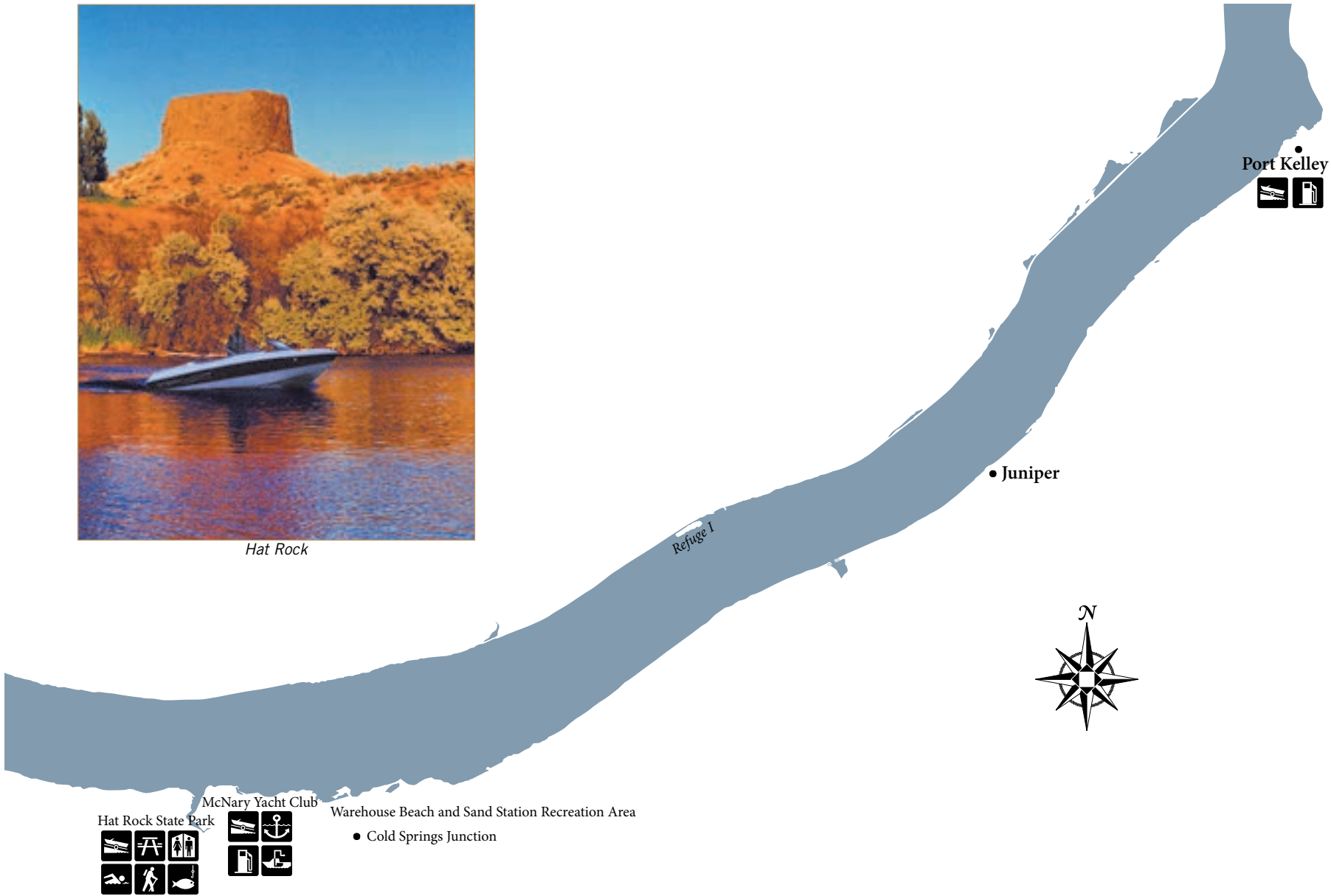
Launch Ramps

- McNary Dam, OR
- North McNary, WA
- Hat Rock State Park, OR
- Walla Walla Yacht Club, WA





Hat Rock



Hat Rock State Park



McNary Yacht Club



Warehouse Beach and Sand Station Recreation Area

• Cold Springs Junction

Refuge I

• Juniper

Port Kelley



PORT KELLEY TO LESLIE GROVES PARK, RICHLAND

About 28 river miles. Lake Wallula

HERE BEGINS THE MOST urbanized stretch of the Columbia above Portland. The river flows past **Richland, Pasco, and Kennewick**, known collectively as the Tri-Cities.

The heat of summer on this sun-baked plain makes the river a popular playground for residents and a destination spot for boaters from all over eastern Washington and Oregon and western Idaho. It's not hard to find moorage, fuel, a picnic spot, a restaurant meal, and a bed for the night.

Up until World War II, Richland, Pasco, and Kennewick were small, sleepy river towns. That changed in 1943, when the U.S. War Department embarked on a huge, top-secret project to manufacture plutonium for a devastating new weapon, the atomic bomb.

The Hanford Project drew 50,000 scientists, engineers, and other workers into the Tri-Cities. The Italian physicist Enrico Fermi worked at Hanford under an assumed name. Only a few of the Hanford work force knew what they were there to do. Two years later the whole world knew.



Port Kelley to the Port of Kennewick

Up from **Port Kelley**, the rocky shores afford little hospitality but provide good shore fishing along the south shore. The river narrows at mile 313 to form the notch of Wallula Gap. In October of 1805, William Clark reported seeing, from the cliffs on the Washington side, "a mountain bearing S.W. conical form Covered with Snow." He recognized it as Mount Hood, having read descriptions from Captain Vancouver's 1792 expedition. From its sighting the party knew they were approaching their intended destination.

Today the walls of the Gap remain unmarked by any signs of development except railroad tracks on either shore, and, on the Washington side, small intermittent waterfalls that did not exist before the dams on the Columbia made irrigated farming possible on the desert bluffs.

Three miles above Port Kelley, the **Walla Walla River** flows in from the east. Four miles upstream is **Two Rivers County Park**, just short of the confluence of the Snake and the Columbia. The park stretches for almost a mile along the Columbia's western shore.

The marshy island just across from the Two Rivers boat ramp is known locally as the Mudflat. The backwater between the Mudflat and the east shore offers a respite from wind and current, which are strong enough to surprise many boaters. However, shoals are everywhere outside the main channel, so boaters are advised to watch their depth carefully. Along this segment of river are more of the mooring buoys installed by the Clover Island Yacht Club.

Here the river passes through the 3,000-acre **McNary National Wildlife Refuge**, a necklace of grasslands, marshes, farm fields, and open water along the Pacific Flyway. Look for Canada geese, mallards, widgeons, and canvasback ducks, pelicans, blue herons, curlews, and golden eagles.



White pelican



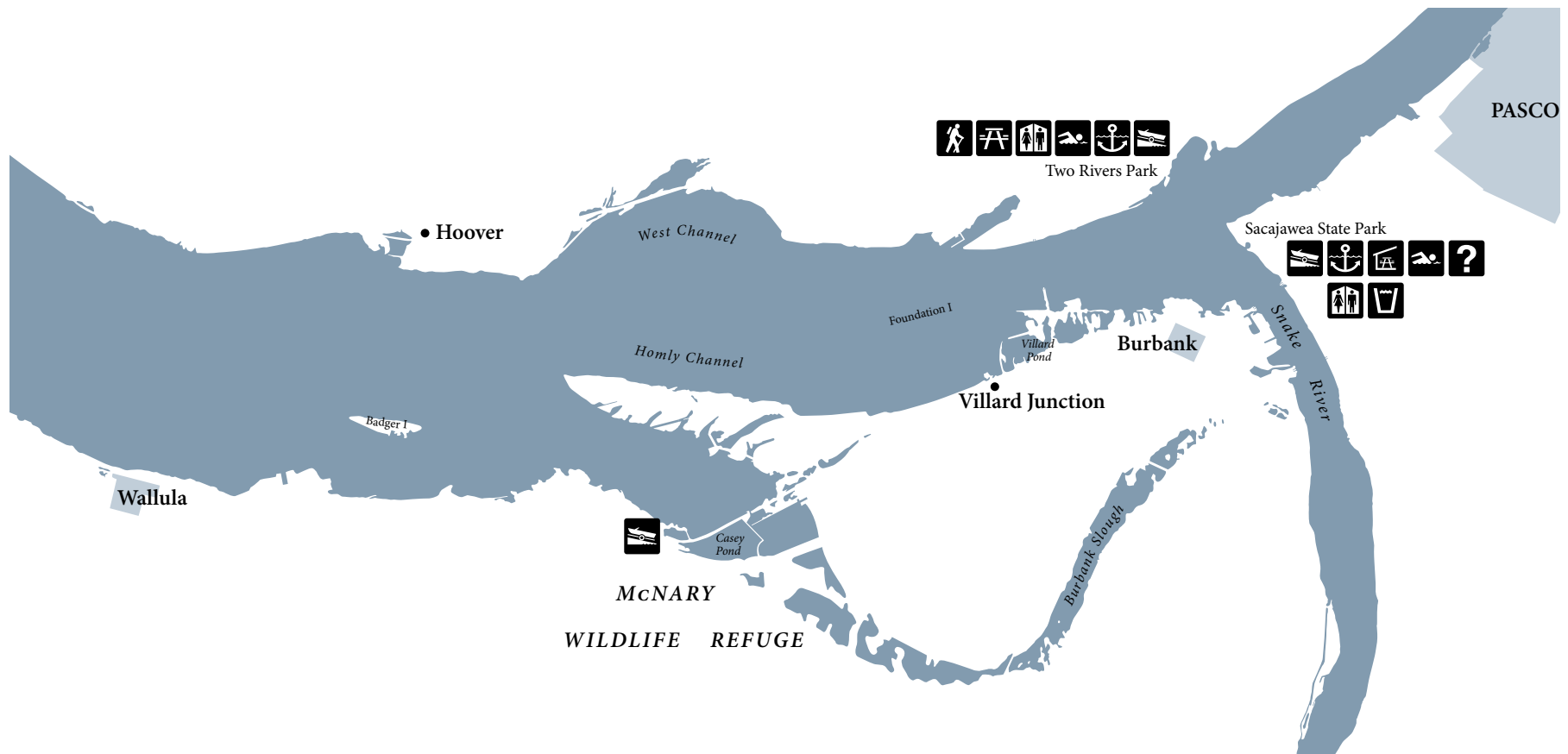
The refuge includes the Walla Walla River delta, the shores of Burbank Slough, and the midriver islands up to the mouth of the Snake. Some of these lands are closed to all access.

On the north side of the mouth of the Snake is Sacajawea State Park. A visitor's center tells the story of the teen-aged Shoshone mother whose presence in the Lewis and Clark party assured the inhabitants of the country that the Corps came in peace. William Clark reported in his journal,

"...the sight of This Indian woman, wife to one of our interprs. confirmed those people of our friendly intentions, as no woman ever accompanies a war party of Indians in this quarter." Recent historical research has altered the spelling of the name to "Sacagawea," but the park's name retains the old spelling.

Upstream from the park, facilities for boaters become more numerous. Three miles up, next to the railroad bridge at mile 332, is the **Pasco Boat**

Basin. The **Port of Kennewick** and **Metz Marina** are less than a mile upstream on Clover Island, just past the Highway 397 (10th Avenue) bridge, known as the Cable Bridge, on the south (Kennewick) side. The name is appropriate, especially when the bridge is viewed from the water. Food, lodging, and other amenities are within walking distance. The private Clover Island Yacht Club adjoins the Port of Kennewick's public launch.



Port of Kennewick to Leslie Groves Park

A mile past Clover Island, beginning at the Highway 395 overpass (the Blue Bridge, another fitting local name), **Columbia Park** stretches for five miles along the Kennewick side, to **Bateman Island**. It has two ramps: **Columbia Park**, near the Blue Bridge, and **Columbia Park West**, opposite the easternmost lobe of **Bateman Island** at Columbia Park Marina. Upstream from the Columbia Park West ramp is **Wye Park**. Groceries, food, and lodging are close by.

Columbia Park is the site of the discovery of the controversial “Kennewick Man,” a 9,200-year-old skeleton thought to be that of an ancient ancestor of the native peoples. Scientists regard its discovery as a unique opportunity to learn about prehistoric peoples in the region, but many modern-day Indians, who refer to the skeleton as “The Ancient One,” would prefer that the remains be reburied with appropriate dignity.

On the north (Pasco) side about 1½ miles up from the Blue Bridge, just above mile 331, is Road 54 Park, and just short of mile 334 is **Chiawana Park**. The name “Chiawana” is one variant on the Anglicized spelling for “N’chi’wana,” meaning “big



river,” the Sahaptin name for the Columbia River.

The area around the mouth of the **Yakima River** is popular with salmon and bass anglers. Boaters should watch their depth; shoals and sandbars are common. **Columbia Point Marina** is near the Interstate 182 overpass; food and lodging are a short walk away.

Above the Yakima’s mouth is the city of Richland. There are two more long parks on the west side of the river: **Howard Amon Park**, two miles above Columbia Point, and **Leslie Groves Park**. Groceries, restaurants, and motels are within a mile’s walk of both parks. Several visitor attractions are also close by, including the Allied Arts Gallery; the Hanford Science Center; the Columbia River Exhibition of History, Science, and Technology; and the Three Rivers Children’s Museum.

Upstream from Richland is the 50-mile sweep of river known as the Hanford Reach, the Columbia’s last free-flowing stretch. Because it flows through the restricted Hanford Site, this stretch of river is mostly undeveloped. The Reach and surrounding desert are home to many kinds of wildlife, including mule deer, elk, coyotes, eagles, and hawks. The river is open to boaters, but most shore access is prohibited on the Hanford Reservation. There are no channel markers, navigation aids, or facilities of any kind. The Hanford Reach was designated a National Monument in 2000. It is the last place along the Columbia that looks much the way it did when Lewis and Clark entered the river just downstream.

Aquatic-nuisance Species

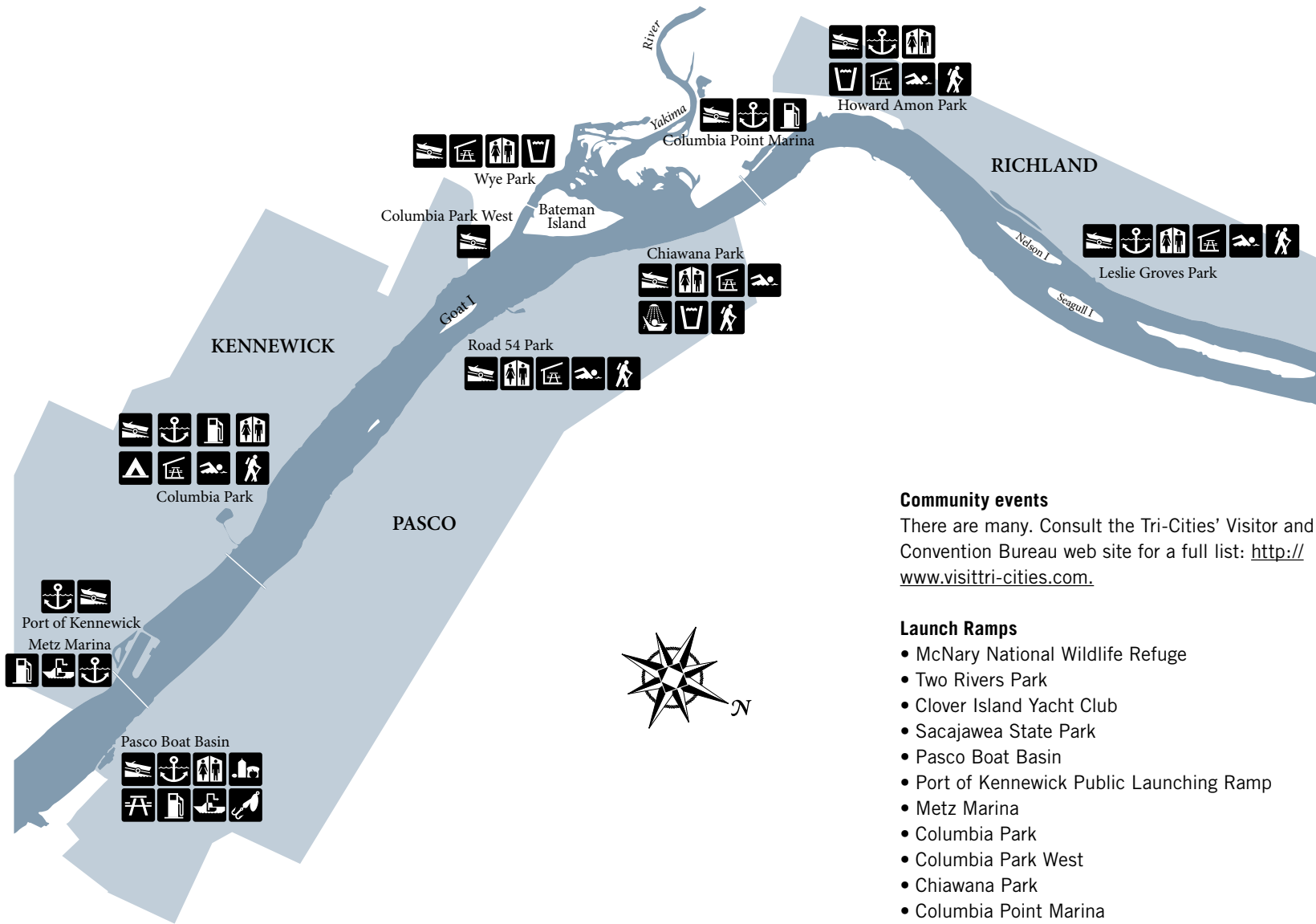
Non-native plant and animal species can damage marine ecosystems. The aquatic weed hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*), the mitten crab (*Eriocheir sinensis*), and the zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*) have been extremely troublesome elsewhere. If transported here, they could be highly damaging to our waters.

These species and dozens of others can be very invasive because they lack natural predators in their adopted environment. They can proliferate rapidly, displacing native species and damaging the river resource.

Fortunately, they haven’t been found in Oregon’s waters so far, and we’d like to keep it that way. Here’s what you can do to prevent the spread of aquatic-nuisance species:

- Inspect your boat and trailer and remove any plants or animals you see before leaving a water body.
- Drain your motor, live well, and bilge while on land.
- Empty your bait bucket on land. Never release live bait or transport aquatic animals from one water body to another. (Live bait is illegal in most Oregon waters—see Oregon Fishing Regulations.)
- Rinse your boat, trailer, and equipment to kill harmful species. Use high-pressure hot water if you can. If not, use a garden hose and rinse thoroughly.
- Air-dry your boat and equipment for as long as possible before launching again. Five days is best.

Please be extra-careful if you’ve been boating outside Oregon or are trailering in from other parts of the country.



Community events

There are many. Consult the Tri-Cities' Visitor and Convention Bureau web site for a full list: <http://www.visittri-cities.com>.

Launch Ramps

- McNary National Wildlife Refuge
- Two Rivers Park
- Clover Island Yacht Club
- Sacajawea State Park
- Pasco Boat Basin
- Port of Kennewick Public Launching Ramp
- Metz Marina
- Columbia Park
- Columbia Park West
- Chiawana Park
- Columbia Point Marina
- Howard Amon Park
- Leslie Groves Park

RIVER CONDITIONS

Currents

Speed of the current in any given cross-section of the Columbia River makes a great difference in the shape of the riverbed, and these two factors affect the condition of waves at the river's surface. The current's speed can vary considerably across a single stretch of river. The current is faster in the deeper main channel, slower along the shallower shoreline. Natural river channels tend to follow the outside curve of a river bend, because the faster water has scoured out a natural outward "bow." Obstructions in the river, both natural and human-made, speed the current in some places and slow it in others.

Faster-moving water carries more suspended sediment. When the water slows, the sediment drops and accumulates on the bottom, making the river shallower at that point. When the river's flow encounters the upstream end of an island, it tends to take up sediments. The current slows as it makes its way around the island, and the slower-moving water drops sediment at the toe of the island. Because of this action, many islands in the Columbia have long V-shaped sediment bars extending under the water from their downstream ends.

Where the river is deeper, the current is generally faster, and the wave action is more pronounced. An area of larger waves indicates an area of deeper water and faster currents.

Wind

The river's wave patterns also depend heavily on the speed of the wind and its orientation to the channel. Strong winds blowing directly in line with the river tend to whip up larger waves than winds blowing at an angle. The Columbia's prevailing winds blow east, while the current flows west; this opposition increases the effect of the wind on the waves. The roughest places on the river are those that are most closely aligned east and west, and the roughest days in those places occur when the wind is blowing hard.

High and Low Water

Water levels on the middle Columbia are determined mostly by the four dams between Bonneville and the Tri-Cities. The dams superimpose a planned regimen of water-level control over the natural seasonal fluctuations caused by summer dry seasons, winter rainfall, and spring snowmelt. They make it possible for federal and state authorities to anticipate the Columbia's natural water levels and adjust them to provide water as needed for power generation, irrigation, navigation, and fish migration.

In general, water levels are lower in the summer and higher in the winter, but it is difficult to predict how high or low the water will be on a given day in a given place, because the flow of water over the dams fluctuates according to daily and even hourly demands for electricity. It's best to carry a depth finder and be careful of shallow areas along both banks and out from the mouths of rivers.



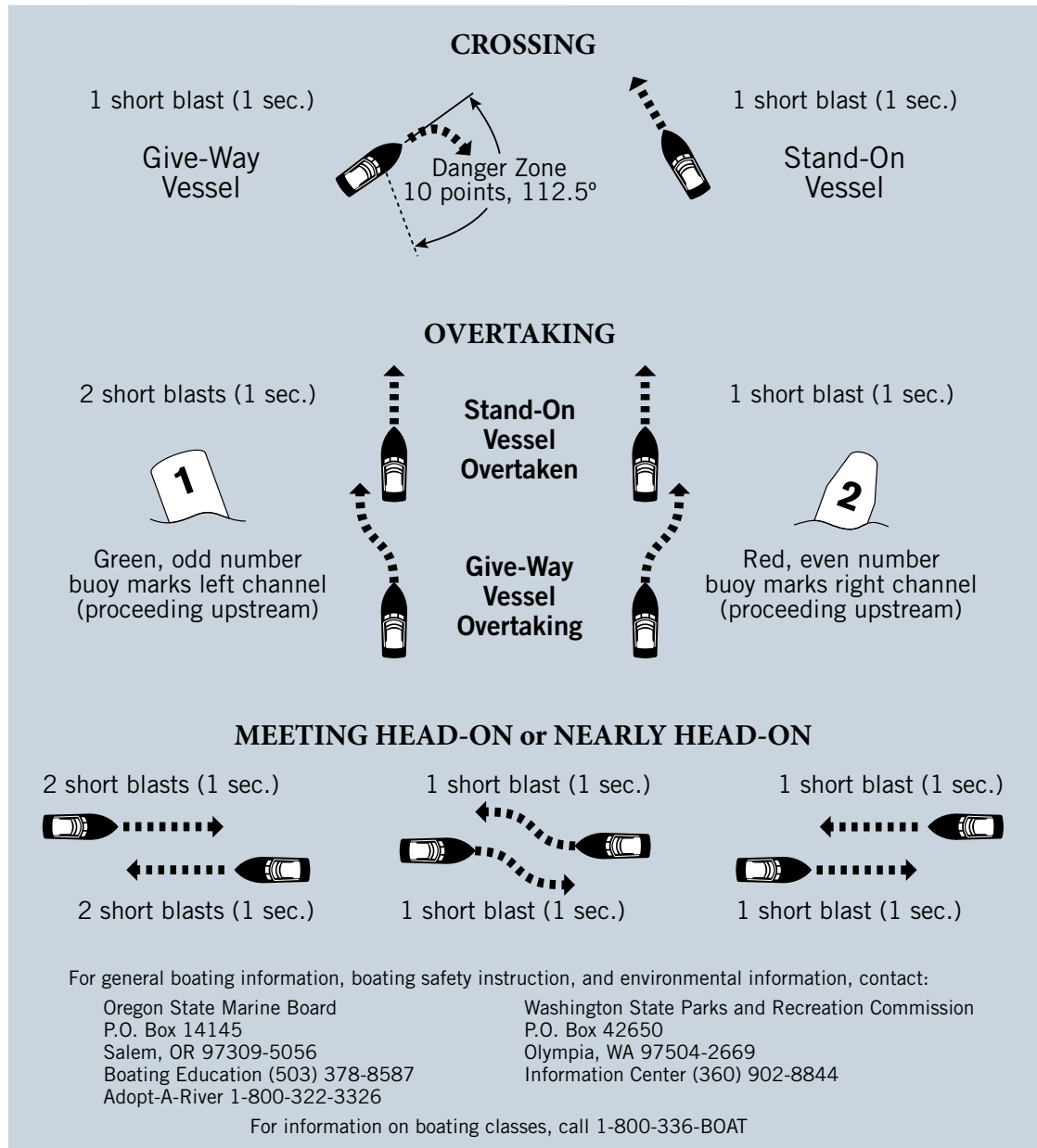
How to Have a Safe and Enjoyable Cruise

- Boat sober, wear your life jacket, understand hypothermia, and carry a fire extinguisher.
- Respect the river's power. Be aware of wind and water conditions and weather forecasts, and plan accordingly.
- Tell someone where you're going and when you'll be back.
- Know the rules of the road.
- Stay out of the way of commercial shipping.
- Respect other users of the river, especially in crowded areas. Go slow in no-wake areas.
- Stay out of the restricted areas above and below dams.

RULES OF THE ROAD

Rivers, like highways, have rules that govern right of way. These are laws, just like highway right-of-way rules, and boaters can be penalized for not observing them.

- When two boats are on intersecting courses, the boat to the right (the starboard side) has the right of way. That boat is called the stand-on boat. The stand-on boat should maintain its course. The other boat, the give-way boat, must alter its course or speed to avert a collision.
- A boat being overtaken by another boat has the right of way. The boat being passed should hold its course and speed. The overtaking boat must pass far enough away to avert a collision and not endanger the other boat with its wake.
- When two boats meet head-on, each should alter its course to the right to avert collision.
- Less maneuverable boats, such as sailboats, rowboats, and canoes, usually have right-of-way over power boats.
- It is against the law to obstruct traffic in a channel used by other boats.
- It is against the law to go faster than 5 miles per hour within 200 feet of a launch ramp, marina, houseboat, or moorage. You should slow down enough to produce no wake—even if it means going slower than 5 miles per hour.



FISHING THE COLUMBIA RIVER

By Bill Monroe

Oregon has one of the most remarkable, diverse sportfisheries in the nation, perhaps the world. On any day of the year, under most weather conditions, there is something to fish for here—usually multiple somethings. And nowhere is diversity more apparent than on the Columbia River between Portland and Umatilla, roughly 200 miles of river easily accessible from—mostly adjacent to—an interstate highway.

The mighty Columbia also is a thoroughfare for a fleet of fish. White sturgeon prowl the river bottom like vacuum cleaners. They're older than most land animals, larger than any other fish in North America, and bigger than many boats, and they date back to the age of the dinosaurs.

Walleye, introduced from the upper Midwest, grow so large in the warm, productive water that Oregon and Washington state records approach 20 pounds, and it's not uncommon to catch eight- to twelve-pounders. Fish that make the newspaper in the Midwest make lunch for Oregon boaters.

Three major reservoirs create a bass bonanza, with smallmouth lurking among rocky shorelines and largemouth prowling shallow sloughs and flats. Shad are so numerous in mid- to late-spring they sometimes plug fish ladders. And nowhere else in the world will a boater find state and federal agencies paying anglers a bounty to catch a fish like the northern pikeminnow, an easily caught muncher of baby salmon worth \$4 to \$6 apiece at a check station. The more you catch, the more you get.

But even after all that good fishing from a boat, it's the river's signature runs of salmon and steelhead that attract the most trailer sailors. From March through November, fish fresh from the

ocean arrive at Bonneville Dam to climb hydro-system ladders leading to dozens of tributaries and hatcheries. For some, the trip measures hundreds of miles, but they all pass beneath boats along the way.

Some caveats before you hit the road:

Watch the weather. The Columbia River cuts deeply through the Cascade Mountains, often funneling stiff winds east and west. It's common to see the breeze coming, instantly changing a glassy surface to a frothing maelstrom. This is no place for a cartopper. Even those in large, well-equipped boats usually wear life jackets 24-7, especially the newer, convenient inflatables.

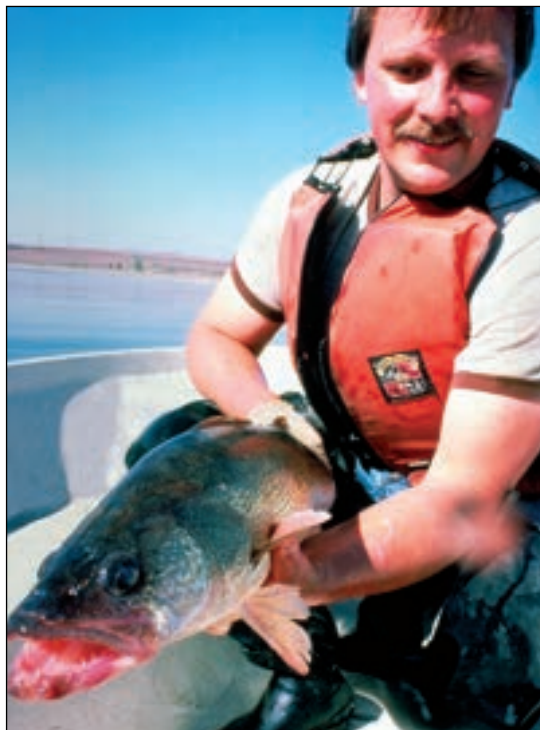
Oregon and Washington generally share fishing rules on both sides of the river. A license and tag from either state is valid no matter where you fish, as long as it's on the Columbia. It's up to you to know and follow rules, which sometimes change with the season.

The Columbia is a river of commerce, with tugs pushing barges in all three reservoirs on any given day. **THEY HAVE THE RIGHT OF WAY!**

The federal government and Bonneville Power Administration frown on boats getting too close to their dams. This is downright dangerous downriver, where propeller-eating rocks may or may not be visible near the boiling surface. Both states impose no-fishing zones above and below dams.

Sporting goods stores are located in every community along the river and are by far the best sources of local information.





Here are a few fishing areas by pool, starting with the one closest to Portland:

Bonneville

Salmon and Steelhead. Most fishing in this impoundment is off the mouths of Washington rivers such as the Wind, Klickitat, and White Salmon. Fish tend to also hold well in fast water below The Dalles Dam.

Sturgeon. Look east from Hood River for deep water on the downriver side of a small island at about milepost 67 on the freeway. The island is private, but it can shield anchored boats from an east wind. Sturgeon fishing is also popular in deep holes below The Dalles.

Walleye. There is limited fishing in shallower areas off the Washington shore and below The Dalles Dam. The Bonneville pool isn't as popular for walleye as Lake Celilo, above The Dalles Dam, or Lake Umatilla, above the John Day dam.

Bass. Lagoons and inlets east of Cascade Locks hold both smallmouth and largemouth bass. The Oregon side of the river at and east of Mayer State Park is the best for both.

The Dalles (Lake Celilo)

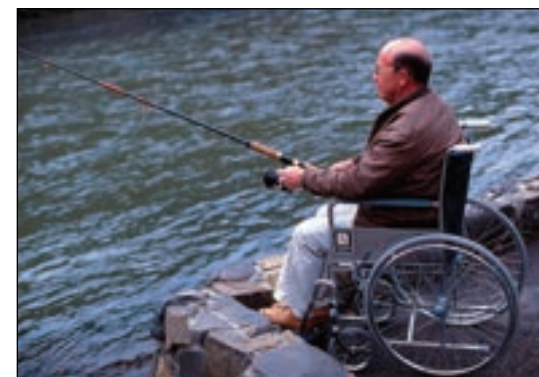
Salmon and Steelhead. Trollers work the upriver side of The Dalles Dam off the Washington shoreline. The Deschutes River enters the Columbia at about milepost 100 on the freeway. It is an excellent place for both summer steelhead and fall chinook, which are drawn to the cooler water that erupts from beneath freeway bridges. Spring and summer chinook fishing can be good for boats anchored on the Oregon side of an island below John Day Dam.



Sturgeon. Fishing is best from boats anchored between Biggs and Rufus.

Walleye. If the wind is down, launch at Celilo and motor downriver below the railroad bridge to a small island close to the Washington shoreline off approximately milepost 93 on the freeway. Fish rest in shallows on the island's upriver end. A walleye-rich shelf extends the length of Miller Island, opposite the Deschutes's mouth. Closer to Biggs, move to the Oregon shoreline, although there is some good fishing on the Washington side downhill from Maryhill Museum. State records have been broken off the Washington shoreline along Maryhill State Park. Walleye love to forage in the current below John Day Dam.

Bass. Anglers find the best fishing in the shallow water facing a series of gravel islands between Biggs and Rufus. Smaller boats can be launched from the shoreline. The water at the upriver end of the island below Celilo also holds bass, as do the rocky areas in the channel behind Miller Island.



FISHING THE COLUMBIA RIVER

John Day (Lake Umatilla)

Salmon and Steelhead. The best fishing is for trollers above John Day Dam on both sides of the river and below McNary Dam at Umatilla. Boats launched at LePage Park, at the John Day River mouth at milepost 114, can troll either the Columbia a couple of miles down to John Day Dam or, if the wind is up, the John Day River itself (Oregon license required), snaking a few miles south. An important caution: The John Day rises and falls unexpectedly as water is drawn down to feed the region's power grid. Its numerous shallows have left boaters stranded overnight. Salmon fishing can be good for most runs in the current below McNary Dam. The Umatilla River hosts a spring chinook run, and it is accessible by boat.

Sturgeon. There is some good fishing in deeper holes above John Day Dam, but the best is in lighter currents from Boardman to Umatilla, mostly off Irrigon.

Walleye. Boardman fetes itself as the world's walleye capital, rivaling Brainerd, Minnesota. Look for fish atop submerged mounts between Boardman and Irrigon and around islands of the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge. Large fish also forage in the current from Umatilla downriver. Beware of large, snaggy rocks on the bottom inside the bay at Three Mile Island. There's a boat ramp (Quesnell Park) at milepost 151.

Bass. Lake Umatilla is the Columbia system's best bass fishery, especially for boats out of Arlington, Three Mile Island, shorelines around the refuge east of Boardman, and the John Day River arm. Quesnell Park launchers can fish in Willow Creek, only a few miles west and easily reached beneath freeway bridges. Arlington boaters are

especially cautious of the wind, which often swirls between here and the John Day Dam. Take care when motoring downriver from Arlington—this is a 20-mile stretch of river without ramps or services. Boardman, Irrigon, and Umatilla host numerous tournaments.

Special note: While most of the Columbia River Gorge is closed to waterfowl hunting, the shoreline is open on most public lands from Arlington upriver. Duck and goose hunting can be good from November through the end of the season. Hunting is by permit only on the federal wildlife refuge east of Boardman and is easier from the shoreline from Umatilla to Irrigon. Beware of unexpected winds or dense fog in the winter.



McNary (Lake Wallula)

The Columbia above McNary Dam extends nearly 20 miles to the Washington border and offers productive fishing for salmon and steelhead trollers as well as bass fishing along the shorelines. Anglers can follow the salmon clear up the river to the Hanford Reach. Fishing picks up with the cooler temperatures and higher water flows of fall.

Most of the boating access and fishing is in the Columbia from above Richland to below the mouth of the Snake River, the lower Snake, and the Yakima River arm at Richland. The reach from Wallula to Umatilla is long, with deep water and few, if any, services. Wind isn't as often a problem here as in the lower river, but does rise unexpectedly.

Salmon and Steelhead. Tri-cities, Washington (Pasco, Kennewick, and Richland) is the heart of the Northwest's salmon and steelhead country, with fish returning from journeys of thousands of miles to make a decision a short distance downriver whether to continue traveling into Idaho up the Snake River or head into the Columbia's Hanford Reach, the last free-flowing section of the Co-



lumbia and host to tens of thousands of wild fall chinook. Most hatchery summer steelhead choose Idaho and northeastern Oregon. The Yakima River at Richland has good runs of salmon and steelhead. Seasonal restrictions apply.

Sturgeon. There are fewer sturgeon in this area, but there are still fishable numbers, especially where the Snake enters the Columbia. Catch-and-release rules are in effect, with a limited season for keeping legal-sized fish.

Walleye. Walleye first moved into the lower Columbia through these portals and fishing is good.

Bass. Smallmouth bass are so plentiful the area hosts tournaments. Fishing can be excellent in the Snake River and upriver through Tri-Cities to the lower Yakima.

Catfish. Look for a few in the Walla Walla River entrance to the Columbia at Wallula.

Northern Pikeminnow. The entire area around Tri-Cities consistently yields the highest annual catches in this unique bounty fishery.

General Tips

Salmon and Steelhead

Tackle—Trolled flatfish, wobbling plugs, some spinners.

Seasons—Limited spring and summer fishing for chinook; longer season for fall chinook from late August into October. The summer steelhead run arrives by late June and can last into November, especially in upriver areas like the John Day arm and above and below McNary Dam.

Sturgeon

Tackle—Cloth leaders; heavy weights; baits such as chicken liver, sand shrimp, eel, smelt, shad, and nightcrawlers.



Season—Catch-and-release fishing is allowed all year in most areas, with quotas controlling whether anglers are allowed to keep legal-sized fish. Check before fishing.

Walleye

Tackle—Trolled spinner/worm combinations; small plugs resembling baitfish; drifted jig/nightcrawler combos. Fish on the bottom.

Season—Fishing all year, although walleye are less active in cold winter water. Hot summer days can be good.

Bass

Tackle—Plugs, bobber, and crappie jigs, plastic baits such as worms and grubs, and nightcrawlers.

Season—Spring and fall are best, especially May, when bass aggressively guard nests.

Northern Pikeminnow

Pikeminnows lurk in areas where it is easy for them to catch and eat passing food such as concentrated or dazed baby salmon. That means above and below dams and along rocky shorelines; these are good areas to fish for money.

Tackle—Spinners, small trout-like plugs, colored plastic grubs, and twisting-tailed jigs; some bait such as nightcrawlers and chicken liver.

Season—The paid bounty season generally lasts from May through September. Special rules apply in each of several check stations along the Columbia and Snake rivers. Check regulations.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following people to the creation of this book:

Brian Allen, Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge
Chuck Bartlett, Photographer, Lynnwood, WA
Janine Belleque, Oregon State Marine Board
Phil Benge, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jim Eychaner, Washington Interagency Committee on Outdoor Recreation
Eric Gustavson and Brad Lort, Multnomah County Sheriff's Department
Randy Henry, Oregon State Marine Board
H. Russ Hughes, Richland, WA
Cliff Jett, Sherman County Sheriff's Department
Chuck Jones, Benton County (WA) Sheriff's Department
Mark Jubitz, Hood River County Sheriff's Department
Walter Justus, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Sherry Kaseberg, Wasco, OR

Cathy Lame Bull, Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission
Tom McCann, Umatilla County Sheriff's Department
Neil Mikkalo, Arlington, OR
Phil Morris, Morrow County Sheriff's Department
Jim O'Connor, U.S. Geological Survey
Roger Pearce, Wasco County Sheriff's Department
David Perez, Hooked on Fishing Guide Service, Vancouver, WA
Gordie Reeves, USDA Forest Service
Wayne Shuyler, Oregon State Marine Board
Cal Sprague, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mike Walker, Foss Maritime
Patti Williams, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Linda Yoes, Walla Walla, WA

PLEASE, KEEP IT CLEAN!

Boaters have a unique responsibility to help protect Oregon's and Washington's waterways. It's as easy as cleaning your boat away from the water, never throwing anything overboard, and following a few other basic procedures:

- Make sure your boat and trailer are free of grease, oil, weeds, and aquatic organisms before launching. Also, clean your boat's bilge and flush well, but do so away from a waterbody and dispose of fluids appropriately.
- Please help keep human waste from the Northwest's waters. Human waste threatens fish and wildlife and transmits human illnesses such as hepatitis. Encourage everyone to use the shoreside facilities before casting off. Please don't release sewage into inland lakes, rivers, or coastal waters. Use one of the many pumpout and dump stations available. Consider purchasing a portable toilet, and dispose of fluid at dump stations.
- Use fish cleaning stations instead of dumping fish remains back into the water. Avoid releasing bait either dead or alive into the water; it can introduce foreign species to freshwater lakes.
- Bring a container aboard to collect your garbage. Explain to your passengers that nothing goes overboard, including cigarette butts. Pick up trash in the water or along the shore if you can reach it safely.
- Always fill up carefully to avoid spillage. Install a fuel/air separator in the air vent line from the tank to prevent vent spills. Avoid overfilling tanks; remember, fuel expands as it warms.

If you see oil in the water, quickly identify the source, stop the leak if possible, and contain the spill with absorbent pads. Notify the Coast Guard at 1-800-424-8802 AND the Oregon Emergency Response System at 1-800-OILS-911.



Come Play On Oregon Waterways.