

THE SCENE



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA

MAY 22, 2019

www.fs.usda.gov/crgnsa

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2



Volunteers spot a celebrity bear during the EcoBlitz
Photo Courtesy of Sandy River Watershed Basin Council

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

RECREATION UPDATES

Saturday we helped out our partners at **Sandy River Watershed Basin Council** with their Sandy River Delta **EcoBlitz** event. Part of a series to record wildlife in the Portland-Vancouver area, it brought together volunteers to collect data using the **iNaturalist** app.

This week brought welcome rains and a reprieve from the dry days of early May, when we helped state partners contain three small fires. Just remember that heavy rains can be a trigger for landslides, so **don't hike through recently burned areas when it's pouring buckets!**

Most Forest Service seasonal employees are now onboard for the summer, and are going through their orientation this week. We have a talented group experienced in fighting fires, building trails, public outreach, and outdoor skills such as river and mountain guiding! Say hi if you see us in uniform next time you're in the Gorge.

PRO TIP

Don't forget to check for **ticks** after your hikes, paying special attention to children and pets!

TRAIL MILES REOPENED
SINCE EAGLE CREEK FIRE

106 Reopened

152 Closed in 2017

DID YOU KNOW?

When a tick bites the western fence lizard, it takes away the ticks ability to spread Lyme disease! They also help out by gobbling down insects.



Western Fence Lizard seen at Lyle Cherry Orchard by USFS employee

trail tales

UPDATES & ANECDOTES

Our trail crew spent the week constructing a 15-foot tall, four-foot wide **dry-laid stone retaining wall** on the paved switchbacks behind the closure on **Larch Mountain Trail**. The new wall fills a void formed by the partial collapse of a mortared wall originally constructed by the **Civilian Conservation Corps** in the 1930s.

Dry-laid stone masonry -- a method of stacking stones without the use of mortar -- is an ancient, practical, and resilient craft. Unlike the monolithic, static nature of a mortared wall, a dry-laid wall shifts and settles against the retained slope. The open joints will "weep" water, relieving hydrostatic pressure.

All the stones were gathered locally from nearby slopes and lowered into place by manual winch. They were chiseled by hand to fit snugly into the seams of the still-standing old wall.



VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

MULTNOMAH FALLS CLEANUP & PRACTICE | 5/18

Don't try this at home! Extreme sports are illegal at Multnomah Falls, but our **Search and Rescue (SAR) partners practice rappelling** every year to keep their skills sharp. Special thanks to:

- Mt. Hood SAR Council
- Multnomah County Sheriff's SAR Team
- Mountain Wave SAR Team
- Portland Mountain SAR Team
- Pacific NW SAR Team



ENJOY THE SCENERY AND LET SOMEONE ELSE DO THE DRIVING

TRANSIT OPTIONS TO OUR BUSIEST SITES

On the **Oregon** side of the Gorge, the **Columbia Gorge Express** runs daily with stops at **Portland's Gateway Transit Center**, **Multnomah Falls**, **Cascade Locks**, and **Hood River**. On **weekends**, a shuttle runs between Multnomah Falls and **Rooster Rock State Park** to manage overflow parking. Shuttle service will increase to daily service on **June 15**.

We recommend hopping on at Gateway so you can enjoy our scenery stress-free! Check the schedule online before coming: columbiagorgeexpress.com

In **Washington**, you can avoid the crowds at **Dog Mountain** each weekend until **June 16** by taking the **Dog Mountain Shuttle** from **Stevenson** to the trailhead. The **\$2 roundtrip** tickets include a permit for the Dog Mountain hike, and discounts at participating area businesses. Note the shuttle will not run on Memorial Day, so expect crowds! Schedule available at: skamania.org/public-transportation/

