

THE SCENE



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A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA

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Smokey Bear and Forest Service Ranger engaging with spectators at the Hood River Fourth of July Parade.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HOLIDAY

RECREATION UPDATES

From the Forest Service family to yours we hope everyone had a fun and safe Fourth of July in our National Forests. Groups of 3rd-5th grade students began their holiday by participating in the **Oregon Zoo's Urban Nature Overnight program** at **Eagle Creek Overlook**. These happy campers enjoyed multiple outdoor activities, including a wildlife scat and tracks scavenger hunt.

On the Fourth, Smokey made an appearance in the **Hood River Parade** where he wowed the crowd with his giant 75th birthday cake. Smokey was joined by Rangers, Fire Prevention Experts, and local engines in celebration of the holiday and his upcoming birthday next month.

Across the water in Husum, WA, **River Fest** took over the local fire station during the last weekend of June. Locals joined the celebration, eager to learn about the surrounding rivers and connect with local organizations at the symposium. Our Rangers made quite a splash with activities highlighting the Wild & Scenic White Salmon River.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY: Mosier Fest

Attending for the first time, Forest Service Rangers and Fire Prevention Experts from Oregon Department Forestry provided fun and educational opportunities at Mosier Fest. This included a live fire demonstration showing defensible space for home owners and an activity allowing participants to take charge of a wildland fire and learn about fire management.



"Managing fire is much more complicated than I realized..."

- YOUNG ACTIVITY PARTICIPANT



Smokey with Scenic Area Rangers

FIRE RESTRICTITONS

SMOKEY IS KEEPING AN EYE OUT

With fire season officially here, dispersed campfires are prohibited (liquid stoves and lanterns are still allowed) except in these Forest Service campgrounds:

- Wyeth Campground
- Eagle Creek Campground
- Eagle Creek Overlook Group Campsite

While out in the Scenic Area keep an eye out for **Smokey Bear Sundays!** On Sundays he will be out with Rangers visiting federal sites in the Gorge, keeping a watchful eye out for wildfires. Come meet Smokey and get the latest fire updates.

Trail Tales

UPDATES & ANCEDOTES

The long-awaited **Catherine Creek Bridge** was installed last week! Our Trail Crew worked with twelve volunteers from **Washington Trails Association** who choose to spend their Fourth of July on a “**volunteer vacation**,” cutting a new mile of trail tread and helping rig, pull, lift, and assemble the fifty-five foot **single log stringer bridge**. It was not an easy task, and required resourcefulness and field-based solutions.



The five-ton log was manually winched on log rollers about three-hundred feet down a rocky slope and perfectly fitted onto the first wooden sill. It was then pulled across the creek— by assembling an incline ramp out of old 2x12s and pouring creek water on them to reduce friction as the log was pulled. Once across, the log was lifted onto the final sill using a combination of six-ton bottle jacks, rock bars, heavy-duty vehicle ramps, and human muscle power. Then came the fun part: attaching the posts, railings, backboards, and steps. All in all it required a **solid week** of hard work in the **ninety-degree sun**. The result, however, is a beautiful new bridge and a new section of trail through Catherine Creek. **Many thanks to the WTA crew!**

BRIDAL VEIL CREEK RESTORATION

THE REMAKING OF A FLOODPLAIN FISH WILL LOVE

This time last year, fish were quietly rejoicing in an **ecological restoration project** on Larch Mountain that connected two relic stream segments and a natural floodplain to **Bridal Veil Creek**. Two excavators and a dump truck decommissioned part of **Forest Service Road 1520**, and added wood to the stream channel, restoring both **stream and floodplain** function. Berms and culverts at stream crossings were removed to restore flows into two long-disconnected stream channels.

A stringer staged **200 large pieces of wood originally cut for Eagle Creek firelines** along the former road for use as roughness while wood, slash and boulders were placed in the new streambed to recreate **natural stream habitats**.

The project improved a mile of **instream fish habitat** by enabling fish to return to the Creek’s headwaters and by eliminating the road, a chronic source of sedimentation in Bridal Veil Creek.

Now that the area has reopened, **hikers and bikers on the old 1520 road will encounter a new turnaround**. Please help protect the new fish habitat by staying out of the recently restored floodplain.



Barriers mark the end of the road where restored habitat begins.



A road returns to natural drainage