

**OREGON INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
DRAFT SECTION 106 LEVEL OF EFFECT FORM**

<b>Agency/Project:</b> FHWA-Western Federal Lands Highway Division & Oregon Department of Transportation/ Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail: Wyeth—Starvation Creek Project FHWA Project. No. OR PFH 163(019), ODOT Key No. 17686	
Property Name: Columbia River Highway National Register District, NRIS 83004168	
Street Address: Historic Columbia River Highway, Historic Mile Post 52.69 to Historic Mile Post 57.04	City, County: Cascade Locks vic., Hood River
<b>Preliminary Finding of Effect:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Affected <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Adversely Affected <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Properties Adversely Affected	
<b>State Historic Preservation Office Comments:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Concur <input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Concur: <input type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Affected <input type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Adversely Affected <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Properties Adversely Affected	
Signed _____	Date _____
<b>Comments:</b>	



**View southeast along a moss-covered, abandoned CRH segment east of Summit Creek. Photo by OSMA.**

**INTRODUCTION**

This statement of finding discusses the effect of the proposed Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail: Wyeth—Starvation Creek Project, FHWA Project No. OR PFH 1630(019), ODOT Key No. 17686, on the Columbia River Highway National Register District, NRIS 83004168. This trail reconnection project will rehabilitate extant abandoned and discontinuous segments of the Columbia River Highway between Wyeth and Starvation Creek and build new trail to connect them. These old highway segments are contributing features to the National Register district. It is the finding of the Western Federal Lands Division (WFLHD) of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in concurrence with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), that the project will have No Adverse Effect on the Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District. This statement of finding is made pursuant to the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (36 CFR 800), Executive Order 11593, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

WFLHD and its partners propose to restore existing abandoned segments of the Columbia River Highway. They also propose to link these segments together with new connector trails with the goal of opening another four miles of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail for bike/pedestrian use. As part of the work, the project will also construct parking lots, overlooks, and interpretive elements along its length. The project will also restore some historic features along the old historic highway segments and reopen scenic vistas that have become overgrown since the state abandoned the roadway segments in the early 1950s.

The current project is the first of two projects between Wyeth and Hood River that will reconnect abandoned segments of the old highway for bike/ped use. The second project, now in preliminary design, will reconnect abandoned highway segments

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between Viento State Park and Hood River, east of the current project. When completed, the current project, and the one following it, will represent the last part of a multi-phase, multi-year action to reconnect the Columbia River Highway from the Sandy River, near Troutdale, to Chenoweth Creek, near The Dalles. It will offer bicyclists an alternate route to Interstate 84 through the Columbia Gorge on drivable segments of the Historic Columbia River Highway and on bike/pedestrian segments of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail. In addition, the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail segments also offer recreation opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians to explore the Columbia Gorge on a transportation facility dedicated to non-motorized use.

The project includes the following components:

1. **At HMP 52.69**, construct a trailhead with parking and other improvements immediately west of the Gorton Creek Bridge.
2. **From HMP 53.0 to 54.0**, construct a bike/ped trail where the CRH no longer exists.
3. **From HMP 54.0 to 54.84**, rehabilitate extant, but low integrity segment of the CRH at Shellrock Mountain, behind the rock catchment binwall along Interstate 84, for bike/ped use.
4. **From HMP 54.84 to 55.0**, construct a bike/ped trail where the CRH no longer exists.
5. **From HMP 55.0 to 55.46**, rehabilitate Summit Creek—Lindsey Creek segment of the CRH for bike/ped use.
6. **From HMP 55.46 to 56.47**, construct a bike/ped trail where the CRH no longer exists.
7. **From HMP 56.47 to 56.77**, rehabilitate Starvation Creek segment of the CRH for bike/ped use.
8. **From HMP 56.77 to 57.0**, construct a bike/ped trail in the Starvation Creek Trailhead parking lot from the east end of Starvation Creek segment to the west end of the rehabilitated Starvation Creek to Viento segment.

**IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC PROPERTY**

The Columbia River Highway National Register District is located in the state of Oregon, along the south side of the Columbia River between the cities of Troutdale (14.2 miles east of Portland) and The Dalles (88 miles east of Portland). The Columbia River Highway was the first modern highway in the Pacific Northwest and the first scenic highway in the United States. The road became a trunk route from Portland's large commercial center to eastern Oregon and points beyond. The highway's alignment remains true to the plan that Samuel C. Lancaster, Samuel Hill, and others envisioned for its original configuration. The road was the pinnacle of early-20th-century rural highway design created to take visitors to the Columbia River Gorge's most breathtaking and beautiful natural wonders and scenic vistas. Construction on the Columbia River Highway took place from 1913 to 1922. The Keeper of the National Register listed the Columbia River Highway Historic District on December 12, 1983 (NRIS 83004168).

The nomination's preparer described the district as narrow and linear shaped. It runs 73.8 miles, the length of the original highway from the Sandy River to The Dalles. The nominated highway within that 73.8-mile distance is the extant 55 miles. This is defined as "those portions which are still intact with observable engineering features of the original highway present (pavement, guard rails, retaining walls, bridges, viaducts, tunnels, pedestrian overlooks, and distinctive cuts and fills). . . . Smaller fragments do exist and are included in the nominations area, but are not included in the calculations" (see sheet 10.8 of the NR nomination). All observable pieces of the Columbia River Highway within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) are included within the nomination property. In addition, one structure within the APE is a contributing feature to the district. It is the Gorton Creek Bridge No. 00173, which dates from 1918.

The National Register nomination divided the Columbia River Highway Historic District into three sections. Section 1 included the road and contributing features from the Sandy River to Dodson (HMP 14.2 to 35.8). Section 2 included the road and contributing features from Dodson to Mosier (HMP 35.8 to 73.4). Section 3 included the road and contributing features from Mosier to The Dalles (HMP 73.4 to 88.0). The project is in Section 2, from HMP 52.69 to 57.0.

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On May 16, 2000, US Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt designated the Columbia River Highway National Historic Landmark District. The segments of the Columbia River Highway in the project APE are outside of the NHL district. The CRH from Cascade Locks to Hood River (HMP 48.8 to 65.8) does not possess a high enough level of integrity for inclusion in the CRH NHL district. This is because it lost many contributing features, including the Mitchell Point Tunnel, scenic overlooks, and segments of roadbed during construction of the water-level realignment of the CRH in the 1950s and 1960s—what eventually became Interstate 84.

The Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District meets National Register Criterion C as an outstanding example of modern highway development in 20th-century America for its pioneering advances in road design. It is the single most important contribution to the fields of civil engineering and landscape architecture by Samuel C. Lancaster. The pioneering advances include the adherence to grade and curve standards, and the use of comprehensive drainage systems, dry and mortared masonry walls, reinforced-concrete bridges, and asphaltic concrete pavement on a rural, mountain road during the formative years of modern highway building in the United States. The district meets National Register Criterion A as and as an exemplary example of American landscape architecture, specifically as the first scenic highway in the United States. The Columbia River Highway's aesthetic and engineering achievements greatly influenced the design and construction of other scenic highways, including national park roads, in the 1920s and 1930s. A combination of advanced engineering with landscape architectural elements as embodied in the CRH put in practice the concept of "landscape engineering" in modern highway design a decade before the National Park Service employed it on the Going-to-the-Sun Road and throughout the national park system.

Multnomah County constructed the portion of the Columbia River Highway within its jurisdiction, under the direction of Lancaster, from the Sandy River to the Hood River County line, beginning in the fall of 1913. Likewise, Hood River County began construction of the segment from the Multnomah County line to Hood River in 1914. John Arthur Elliott, a former student of Lancaster, laid out the alignment and designed the road.

Elliott began his survey of Hood River County in late 1913. By early February 1914, crews had located much of the twenty-two miles of the new highway from the Multnomah County line to the city of Hood River. They mostly filled in gaps of the military road that construction of the ORN mainline in the early 1880s had destroyed. Hood River and Wasco counties eventually realigned portions of the military route to avoid its steep grades and tight curves. By July 1914, Hood River County citizens voted nearly three-to-one for a \$75,000 bond issue to begin constructing connector segments of the CRH between the Multnomah County line and the City of Hood River. What may have prompted the issue's overwhelming popularity was businessman and highway promoter Simon Benson's guarantee that if the citizens would approve the \$75,000 bond, which was the state highway department's cost estimate to construct this section of road. Benson would pay for any overruns. The roadway segments within the current project's APE were part of the CRH in Hood River County that Benson helped complete.

**AVOIDANCE ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**  
**(including No Build Alternative and Minimization Efforts)**

**No Build Alternative**

This alternative would prevent the project from meeting its purpose and need, which calls for reconnecting abandoned segments of the Columbia River Highway with new trail segments and rehabilitating the highway segments for bike/ped use as part of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail.

**Build Alternative—With Minimization Efforts**

1. **At HMP 52.69**, construct a trailhead with parking and other improvements immediately west of the Gorton Creek Bridge. The project will construct a trailhead immediately west of Gorton Creek Bridge. This bridge is original to the historic highway. Siting the trailhead parking lot at this location will not affect those qualities of integrity that the bridge possesses (location, design, materials, workmanship). The bridge does not possess setting, feeling, or association. Having a trailhead nearby offers visitors opportunities to see up close an example of an early reinforced-concrete deck girder span along this highway.
2. **From HMP 53.0 to 54.0**, construct a bike/ped trail where the CRH no longer exists. This work begins east of Gorton Creek Bridge and heads east, on a new alignment, towards HMP 54.0. There, the new trail segment and an extant highway segment meet. Constructing the new bike/ped segment between Gorton Creek

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Bridge and Shellrock Mountain will not affect the integrity of either the bridge or the extant remnant highway segment at the base of Shellrock Mountain.

3. **From HMP 54.0 to 54.84, rehabilitate extant, but low integrity segment of the CRH at Shellrock Mountain, behind the rock catchment binwall along Interstate 84, for bike/ped use.**

At present, the remnant pieces of basalt masonry retaining walls along the south side of the CRH alignment and part of the roadbed, itself, are all that remain of the CRH segment at the base of Shellrock Mountain. This segment functions as part of a rock-catchment area behind a metal binwall to prevent material from bouncing down the mountain and onto Interstate 84. Installation of the binwall on the north side of his rock catch zone during Interstate 84 construction destroyed the north-side masonry parapet wall and much of the CRH's roadway.

The project at this location would install a Brugg rock protection fence (a proprietary fence) in front of the remnant masonry retaining walls, on top of the buried CRH roadbed. This would involve mounting posts through the roadbed in front of the wall and construct the Brugg fence on the posts. It would also include placing some fill material on top of accumulated talus debris to create a smooth roadbed for the trail segment. On top of this, the project will install pavement 12-to-14 feet wide to provide a smooth, safe trail surface.

Installing the Brugg fence at this location and placing fill will have direct impacts to a roadway segment that has very poor integrity. However, aligning the connection trail at this location presents the best opportunity to show visitors the remnant walls and interpret the challenges that engineers in 1915 faced to construct the highway at the base of Shellrock Mountain. There is also the opportunity at the east end of this highway segment to rehabilitate a short segment of dry-stacked masonry wall. Finally, there is the opportunity to install a replica of the original plaque commemorating Simon Benson's 1912 attempts to build walls along Shellrock Mountain using prison labor. The state highway department relocated the original plaque to the Starvation Creek Trailhead some years ago. However, the current plaque there is a replica.

4. **From HMP 54.84 to 55.0, construct a bike/ped trail where the CRH no longer exists.**

Constructing this short trail segment between Shellrock Mountain and the Summit Creek—Lindsey Creek will require a new viaduct (Summit Creek Viaduct) to bring the trail up to the elevation of the western end of the next extant highway segment.

5. **From HMP 55.0 to 55.46, rehabilitate Summit Creek—Lindsey Creek segment of the CRH for bike/ped use.**

The project will rehabilitate this nearly half-mile highway segment. Roadside inventories from the 1920s note locations of standard wooden guard fence and concrete-capped masonry parapet walls. The remains of these features are evident along the segment. However, the project will not recreate them. The goal here is to establish a trail segment on this long-bypassed roadbed without taking away from its overgrown, abandoned charm.

The project design calls for excavating 150-to-200 feet of highway at the west end of this segment for the Summit Creek Viaduct's footings and anchorage. The project will also remove the moss duff accumulated on the roadway for a 12-foot-wide track down the middle of the pavement for accessibility. However, the remaining duff will stay in place so that visitors have the opportunity to see nature's efforts to reclaim the highway alignment. The project will install a 12-foot-wide lift of asphalt over the uncovered pavement to provide a smooth traveling surface for visitors.

There is an opportunity along this segment to reestablish one original turnout through tree thinning. There is also an opportunity to create a picnic area along the highway and establish a new overlook at the end of an existing trail leading to the former site of a cabin. Through thoughtful design, neither of these actions will affect the highway's integrity.

At the eastern end of this segment, the project will require placing up to five feet of fill on up to 500 linear feet of historic highway. This is to raise the grade so that it lines up with a new trail segment through a rock formation that will head east toward the Starvation Creek segment.

6. **From HMP 55.46 to 56.47, construct a bike/ped trail where the CRH no longer exists.**

The project will construct a mile-long trail east of the Summit Creek—Lindsey Creek segment.

7. **From HMP 56.47 to 56.77, rehabilitate Starvation Creek segment of the CRH for bike/ped use.**

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The project will place up to 3 feet of fill for 100 feet along the western end of this segment to transition from the new trail segment to the west. From there, the project will sweep out and pave with asphalt a 12-foot-wide trail along this relatively flat original highway segment. This segment also has a dry-laid masonry retaining wall that the project will maintain and not alter.

8. **From HMP 56.77 to 57.0**, construct a bike/ped trail in the Starvation Creek Trailhead parking lot from the east end of Starvation Creek segment to the west end of the rehabilitated Starvation Creek to Viento.

The project will construct a new trail along the west side of the Starvation Creek Trailhead parking lot to connect these to highway segments.

### **EVALUATION OF EFFECTS**

#### Application of the Criteria of Adverse Effect (36 CFR 800.5)

An application of the Criteria of Adverse Effect required evaluating the project for both how it affects Segment 2 of the Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District and how it affects the entire historic district.

#### Affects to Segment 2 of the Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District

The activities called out in the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail: Wyeth—Starvation Creek Project will result in a Finding of No Adverse Effect on Segment 2 of the Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District. Segment 2 includes about 18 extant miles of Columbia River Highway roadway from Dodson to Mosier. These include long segments from Tanner Creek to Cascade Locks (4.1 miles) and Hood River to Mosier (8.0 miles). The project will affect 1.60 miles of National Register Historic District Segment 2. The longest continuous segment in the current project is the Summit Creek- to-Lindsey Creek segment, which is 0.46 miles.

The project will follow the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* under "Rehabilitation" in modifying the extant segments of the CRH to make them part of the HCRH State Trail. The project will preserve those materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give the historic highway segments their historic character. However, to adapt them for reuse as part of the HCRH State Trail, the project will make some minor changes to physical features, namely the end points of extant highway segments where they join up with new trail segments. At two locations, the project will place some fill on the original highway to achieve acceptable grades as the HCRH State Trail transitions to new trail segments. At a third location, the project will excavate at the western end of an intact segment for footings for a connecting viaduct. The project will also excavate through what is left of the original pavement behind the binwalls at Shellrock Mountain for footings for a rock protection fence. Other than at these locations, the project will not alter features associated with the National Register district or remove them from their historic locations or change their use. These features include the remnant masonry retaining walls along the road traces at the foot of Shellrock Mountain.

The project will not introduce any atmospheric or audible elements that diminish the National Register district's significant historic features. It will not neglect the district, nor will it transfer the property out of federal ownership [the portion of the National Register district within the project's Area of Potential Effect is not under federal ownership].

#### Affects to the entire Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District

The activities called out in the current project will result in a Finding of No Adverse Effect on the Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District for the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail: Wyeth—Starvation Creek Project. The project affects 1.60 miles of the 55 extant miles of original highway by making small alterations to intact contributing features. This is a very small percentage of the intact segments. However, these alterations are necessary to achieve one of the project's goals, that is, to reconnect short highway segments to form part of a bike/pedestrian trail that will connect with drivable highway segments. The ultimate goal is to reconnect all extant highway segments to form one continuous road/trail from the Sandy River, near Troutdale, to Chenoweth Creek, near The Dalles.

The project will introduce no visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that diminish the National Register district's significant historic features. It will not neglect the district, nor will it transfer the property out of federal ownership [the portion of the National Register district within the project's Area of Potential Effect is not under federal ownership].

### **COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Wayne Stewart, chair of the HCRH Advisory Committee, provided a presentation on the project's type, size, and location report to the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee at their March 25, 2014, meeting in The Dalles. The

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advisory committee has had periodic updates on the project since 2010. A public outreach campaign related to the proposed project commenced in the summer of 2009. ODOT staff provided tours and presentations to multiple agencies and local stakeholder organizations. ODOT staff presented the “State Trail Plan” to the HCRH Advisory Committee in June 2010. In July 2010, the mayors of Oregon cities in the Columbia Gorge hosted a tour with congressional staff of the proposed project. In July and August 2010, ODOT and the advisory committee held “State Trail” open houses in Portland and Hood River. Over 70 stakeholders attended these meetings. There has been continuous project updates through the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail electronic newsletter which goes out to over 1,500 email addresses.

The WFLHD followed its own protocols to offer government-to-government notice to tribal governments in the project vicinity. WFLHD and ODOT personnel, along with consultant staff, have consulted with the Oregon SHPO staff on-site and in a series of meetings throughout the development of this project.

**CONCLUSION**

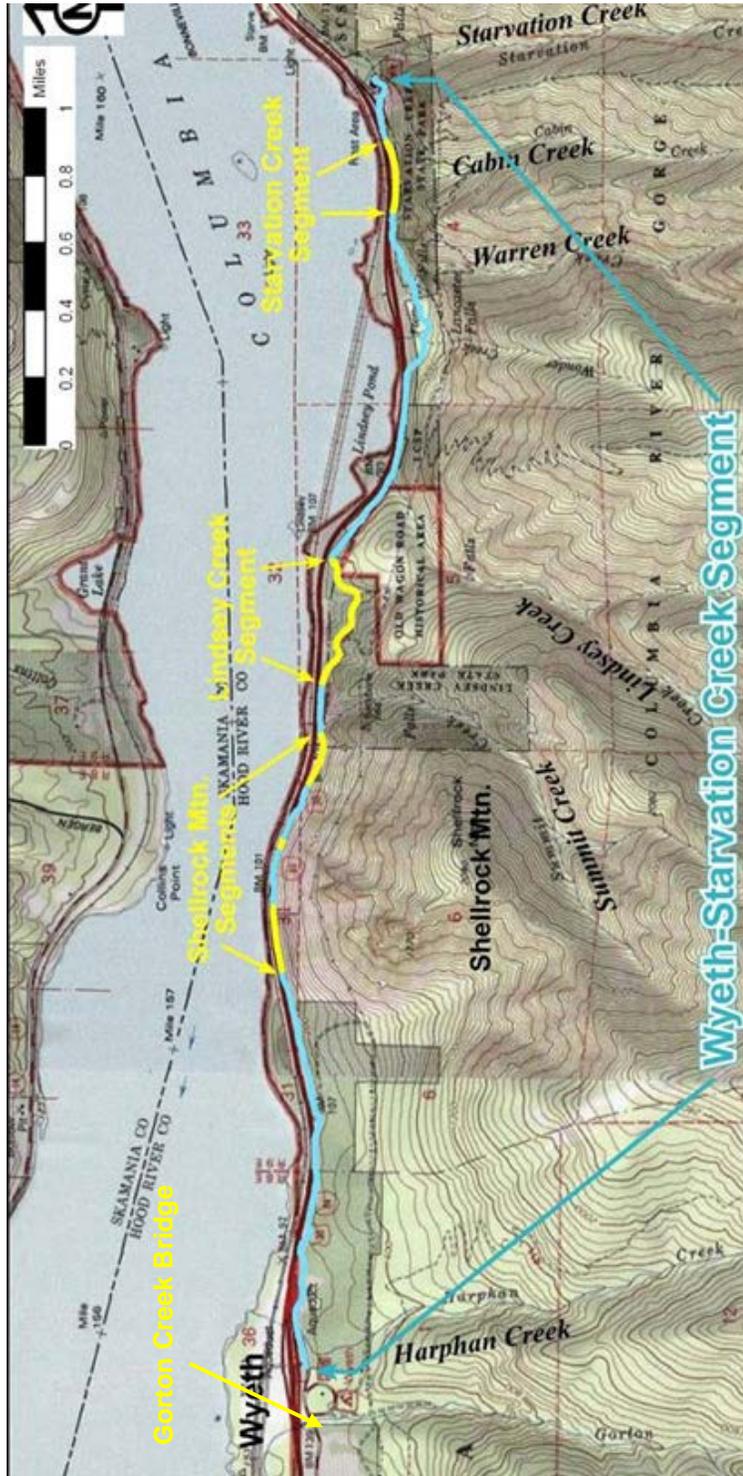
It is the determination of the Federal Highway Administration—Western Federal Lands Highway Division and the Oregon Department of Transportation that the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail: Wyeth—Starvation Creek Project will affect the Columbia River Highway National Register Historic District, but it will not be adverse. An application of the Criteria of Adverse Effect results in a finding of “No Historic Properties Adversely Affected” for the project both for Segment 2 of the National Register historic district and for the entire National Register historic district.

**REFERENCES**

- Connolly, Thomas J. and Julia A. Knowles. “Summary of Historic Columbia River Highway Roadway Segments and Engineering Features; HCRH State Trail Project, Wyeth to Starvation Creek (I-84 eastbound MP 51.0 to 54.9) Segment, Hood River County, Oregon.” Oregon State Museum of Anthropology, January 2014.
- National Historic Landmark Nomination, Columbia River Highway Historic District, Multnomah, Hood River, and Wasco counties, Oregon, National Register #83004168, by Robert W. Hadlow, 2000.
- National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Columbia River Highway Historic District, , Multnomah, Hood River, and Wasco counties, Oregon, National Register #83004168, by Dwight A. Smith, 1983.
- Oregon Department of Transportation. *The Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail News*. Available online at <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/HCRH/Pages/news.aspx>
- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and the Oregon Department of Transportation. “The Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail Plan—Wyeth to Hood River.” by Quatrefoil, Inc., Portland, Oregon, 2010. Also available at: [http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/HCRH/docs/statetrailplan\\_complete.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/HCRH/docs/statetrailplan_complete.pdf)

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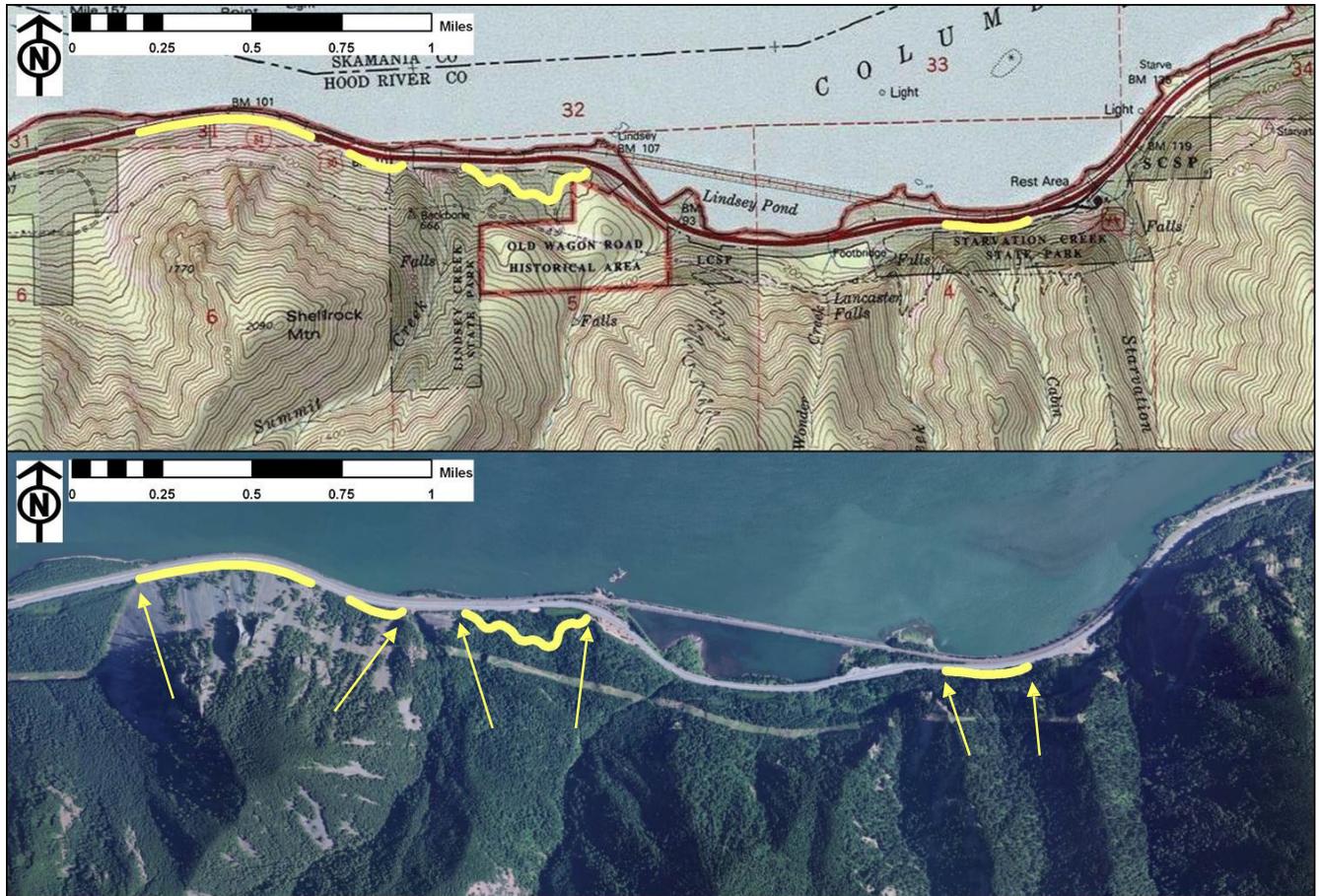
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**Figure 1. General Project Location.**

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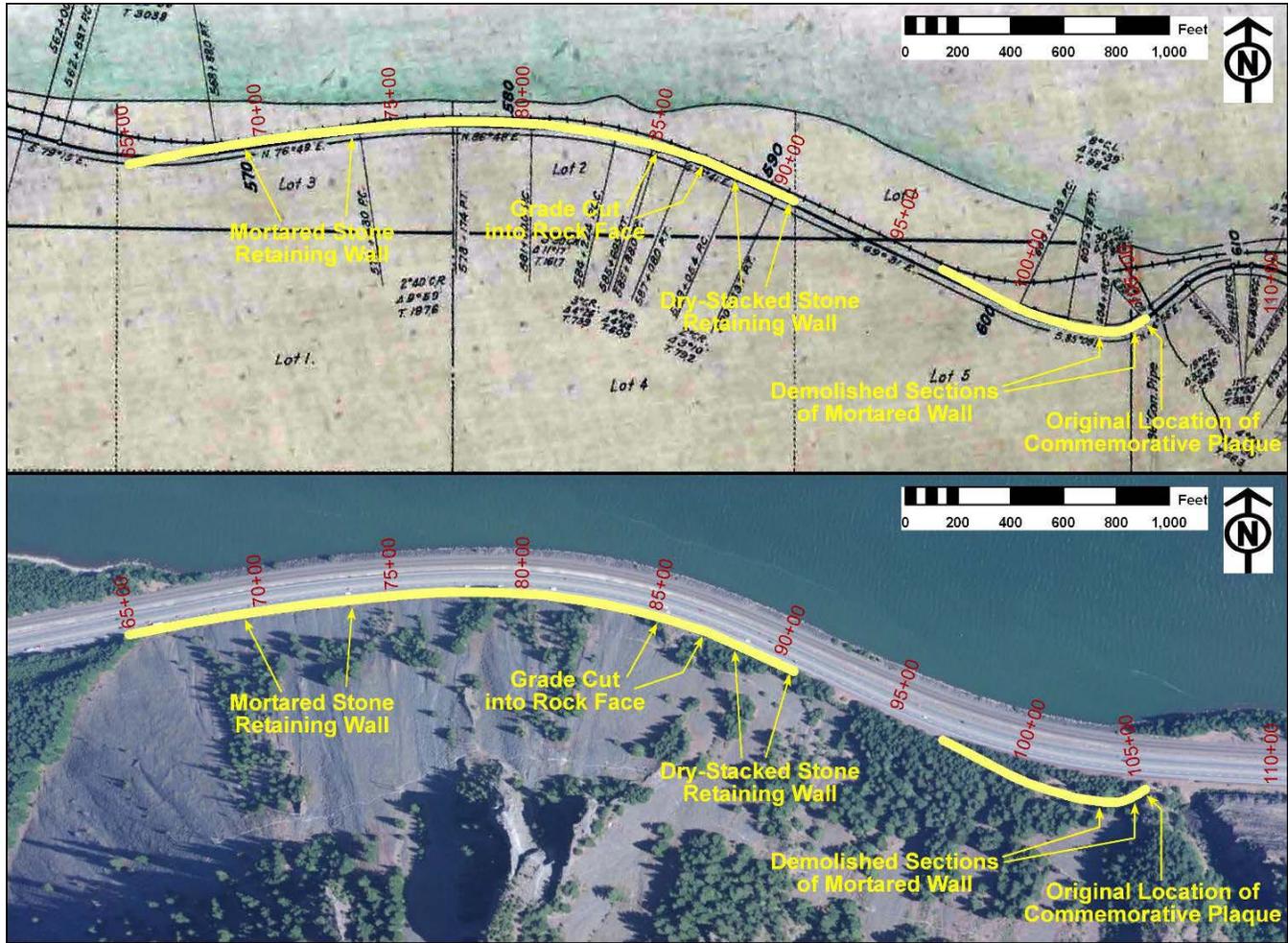
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**Figure 2.** Extant HCRH Roadway segments from Shellrock Mountain to Starvation Creek.

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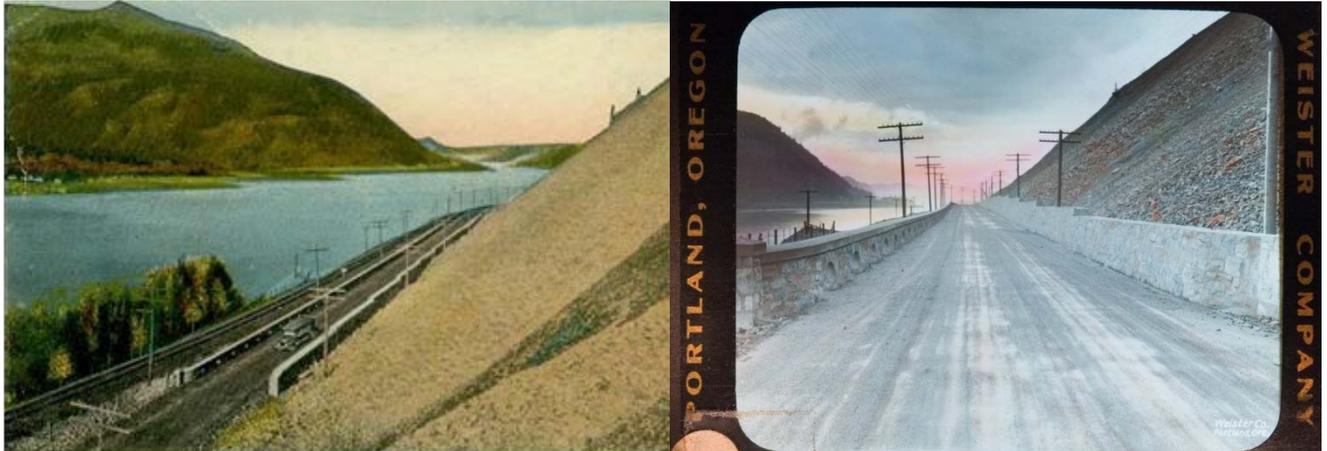
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**Figure 3.** HCRH Features along the Shellrock Mountain segment (1922 ODOT map top; modern aerial bottom); the solid yellow line shows the extent of visible grade, and other engineered features are noted.

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**Figure 4.** Colorized postcard from the 1920s showing the masonry parapet wall on the left and the masonry retaining wall on the right.

**Figure 5.** Hand-colored glass lantern slide from c. 1920 showing masonry parapet wall on the left and masonry retaining wall on the right.



**Figure 6.** View east along HCRH corridor, at the approximate west end of mortared masonry retaining wall; the rock fall fence overlooking Interstate 84 and rubble anchor rest on the HCRH road surface at left.

**Figure 7.** View westerly showing the mortared masonry retaining wall bordering the south edge of the HCRH roadway; cavities in the mortar indicate that capstones have been removed along the top of the wall segment.

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**Figure 8.** View southeast, showing dry-stacked masonry retaining wall, south edge of the HCRH grade.

**Figure 9.** View southeast, showing east end of dry-stacked stone wall, south edge of the HCRH grade.

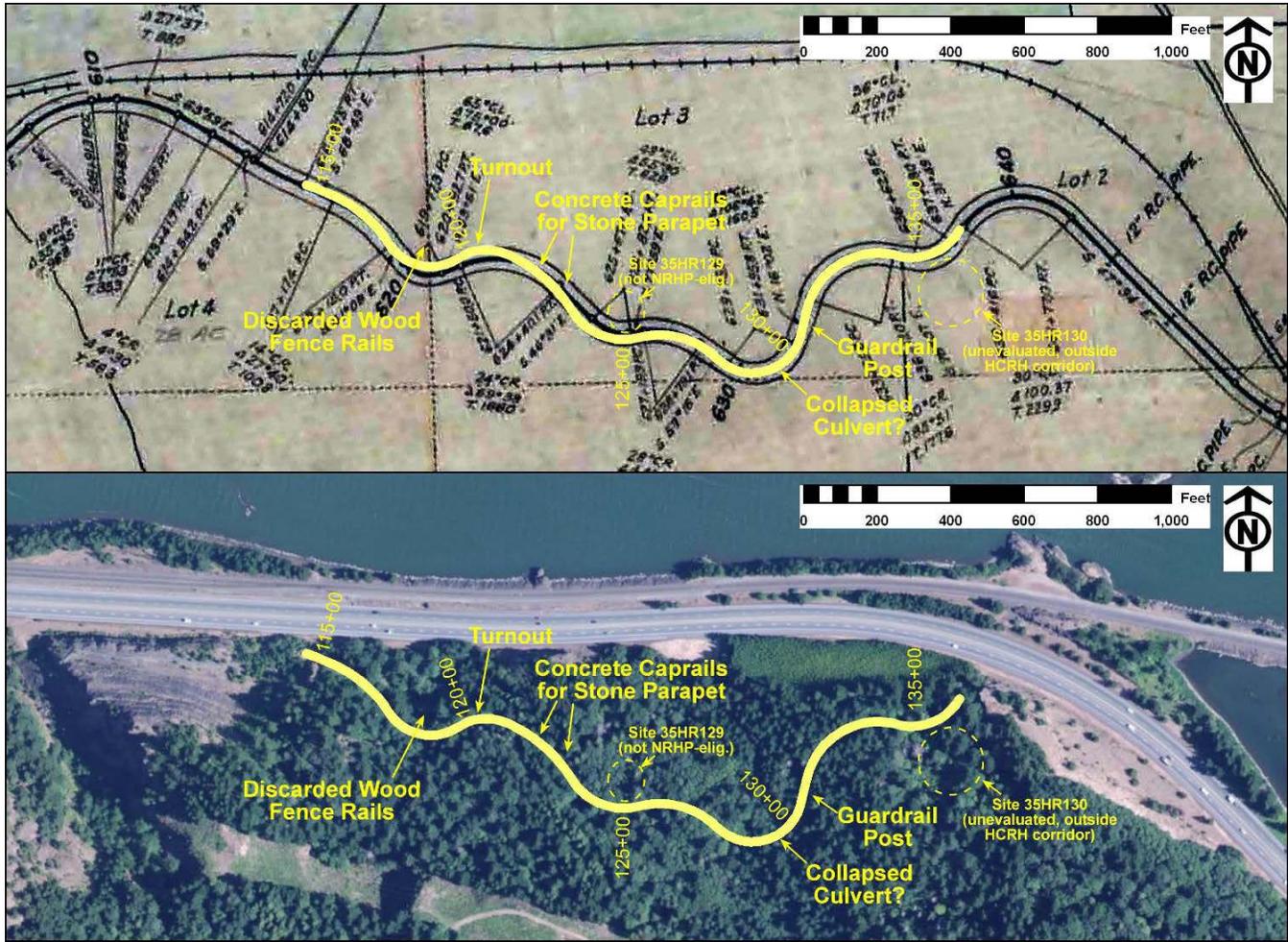


**Figure 10.** Original location of Simon Benson commemorative plaque, approximate trail Sta. 104+80.

**Figure 11.** Reproduction commemorative plaque, now relocated to the Starvation Creek Trailhead.

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**Figure 12.** HCRH Features along the Summit Creek—Lindsey Creek segment (1922 ODOT map top; modern aerial bottom); the solid yellow line shows the extent of visible grade, and other engineered features are noted.

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**Figure 13.** View southeast along the abandoned HCRH corridor, ca. Sta. 120+00.

**Figure 14.** View northwest at the west end of the Summit Creek—Lindsey Creek segment, where it has been truncated by the I-84 roadway cut at ca. Sta. 114+50.

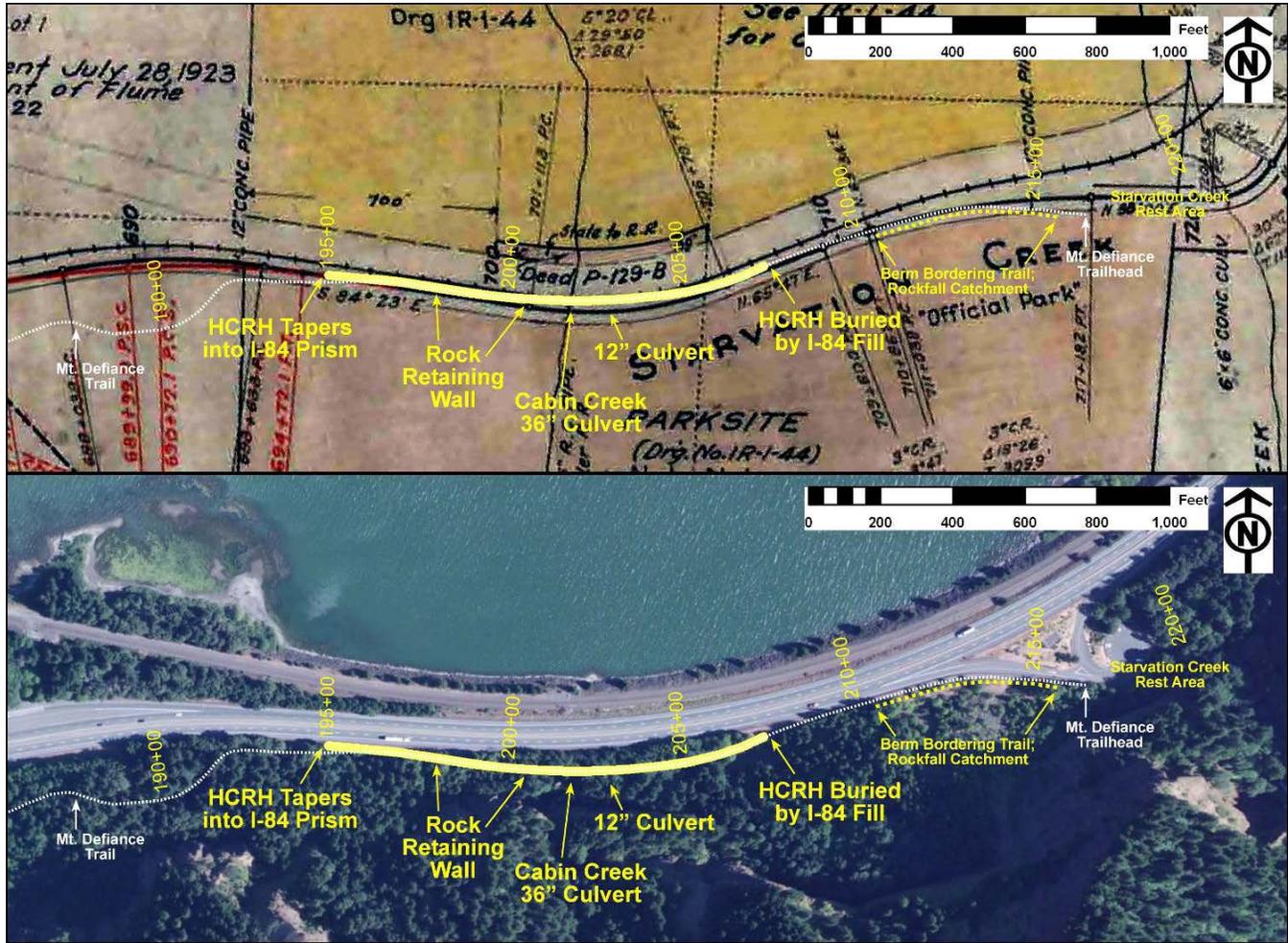


**Figure 15.** View south (upslope), ca. Sta. 119+00; wood rails discarded ca. 50 ft. downslope from the HCRH.

**Figure 16.** View west at ca. Trail Sta. 120+60; the graded platform to the north of the HCRH roadway would have served as a pullout.

**OREGON INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
DRAFT SECTION 106 LEVEL OF EFFECT FORM  
Continuation Sheet**

<b>Agency/Project:</b> FHWA-Western Federal Lands Highway Division & Oregon Department of Transportation/ Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail: Wyeth—Starvation Creek Project FHWA Project No. OR PFH 163(019), ODOT Key No. 17686	
<b>Property Name:</b> Columbia River Highway National Register District	
<b>Street Address:</b> Historic Columbia River Highway, Historic Mile Post 52.69 to Historic Mile Post 57.04	<b>City, County:</b> Cascade Locks vic., Hood River



**Figure 17.** HCRH Features along the Starvation Creek segment (1922 ODOT map top; modern aerial bottom); the solid yellow line shows the extent of visible grade, and other engineered features are noted. The Mt. Defiance hiking trail is shown as a dotted white line.

**OREGON INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**  
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**Figure 18.** View west along the paved HCRH corridor (Mt. Defiance Trail), ca. Trail Sta. 207+50. The project will pave a 12-foot-wide strip through this segment.

**Figure 19.** View east from the west end of the Starvation Creek Segment, now part of the Mt. Defiance Trail (ca. Sta. 196+40) where it tapers into the I-84 grade. The project will pave a 12-foot-wide strip through this segment.



**Figure 20.** View easterly at ca. Sta. 199+50, showing part of the rock wall from ca. Sta. 198+00 to 200+70.

**Figure 21.** View easterly, ca. Sta. 200+00, showing the rock wall on the north edge of the HCRH roadway.