
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY:
SHELLROCK MOUNTAIN TO RUTHTON POINT

HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY



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Executive Summary

This document constitutes the final report on the Historic Columbia River Highway Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI). The CLI was performed as part of the Historic Columbia River Highway Milepost 2016 Reconnection Projects, which will complete the final 12 miles of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail between Wyeth and Hood River, Oregon. The CLI was funded by the Oregon State Department of Transportation and initiated in October 2009.

Introduction to the Cultural Landscape Inventory

A Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) is a standard tool developed by the National Park Service for documenting historically significant landscapes. It provides a systematic, detailed description of the physical elements of the landscape, and provides the basis for further research and management.

The CLI records information on individual features of the landscape, defined as the “smallest physical unit that contributes to the significance of the landscape and can be managed as an individual unit” (Page 2001). Retaining walls, vistas, rock cuts, and wayside fountains are examples of features found on the Historic Columbia River Highway. The information collected includes the location, details of materials and construction, and current condition of each feature. The CLI may also inventory existing non-historic features of the landscape, and evaluate their compatibility with the historic features.

The CLI is a multi-step process, with each step corresponding to a specific degree of detail. For each level, additional information is collected, previous information is refined, and further research needs are evaluated. The information collected is entered into a database, and used to generate a report that includes text, maps, and photographs (Page 2001).

The CLI involves historical research as well as fieldwork to relocate and describe historic features. This research provides a basis for evaluating the current condition of features and their contribution to communicating the significance and history of the landscape. This research is typically limited to secondary sources.

The CLI has a number of uses. It assists managers in planning, programming, budgeting, prioritizing and tracking goals for historic landscapes. It provides the documentation necessary for a formal analysis of significance and integrity for the entire landscape based on its component landscapes and features. A CLI generally does not include treatment recommendations, maintenance planning, or design guidelines. However, the CLI provides the information needed for a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) or other management documents which address those needs.

Landscape Description

The Historic Columbia River Highway (HCRH) is a linear landscape extending 73 miles from Troutdale to The Dalles, Oregon, through the Columbia River gorge. Built between 1913 and 1922, it was the first scenic highway constructed for automobiles in the United States. The highway was designed to protect, enhance and reveal the outstanding scenery of the Columbia River gorge. It was an important precedent for later National Park Service (NPS) and other scenic roadways, and one of the earliest examples of modern techniques for automobile road building on cliff faces. The route was the first complete east-west road through the gorge connecting Portland with eastern Oregon and the Columbia Basin, and the first major paved road in the Pacific Northwest (ODOT 1983). The HCRH was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983 as a National Historic District. In 2000, the most intact portions of the highway were further distinguished as a National Historic Landmark District.

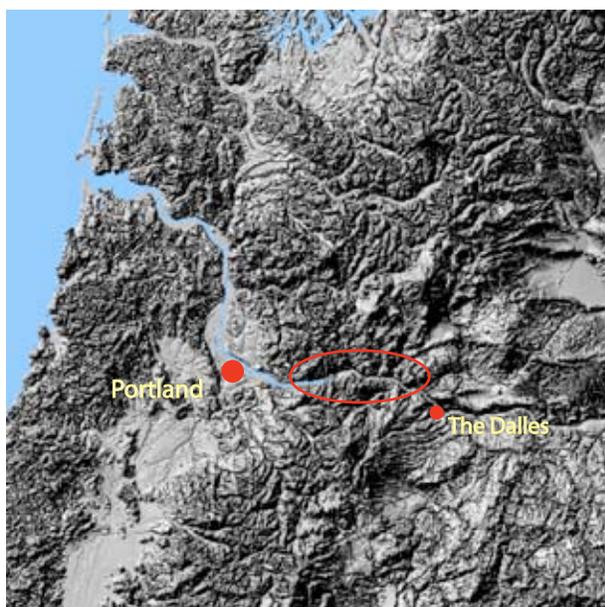


Figure 1. Columbia Gorge physiographic context

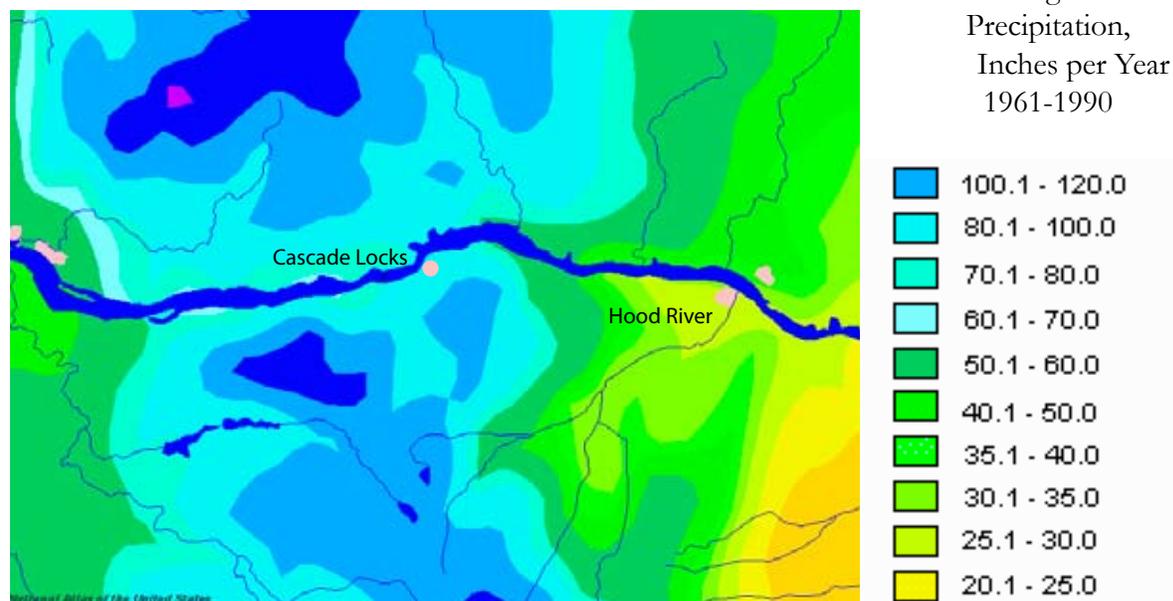
Regional Context

The Columbia River gorge cuts through the

volcanic Cascade Range from the city of The Dalles west to Troutdale, Oregon. It was formed by a combination of volcanic activity and repeated cataclysmic floods 13,000 - 15,000 years ago (Alt 2001). The gorge is characterized by basalt cliffs 1,500 to 3,000 feet high, topped by hanging valleys pouring numerous waterfalls into the river; steep, unstable rocky slopes; and gravel flats on the river bottom lands. The highest concentration of waterfalls is on the south side of the river. Most of these falls are found between Troutdale and Dodson.

The climate and vegetation of the Gorge form a gradient from the dry rain shadow of the Cascades on the east to the more humid western side of the mountains, reaching a peak average rainfall in the gorge itself. Average rainfall on the west side of the Cascades is 42 inches per year, while near The Dalles rainfall averages only 14 inches per year (Fig. 2). The physiography of the gorge itself has local climate effects, caused by its high winds, micro-climates found in side canyons, and the vertical climatic gradient of the mountains. These variations produce a unique and varied flora, with many endemic and

Figure 2. Climate zones within the Columbia Gorge, from 70 to 80 inches of rain per year at Cascade Locks to less than 30 inches per year at Hood River. Created from National Atlas. Opposite page: project area map, courtesy of HAER. Columbia River Highway Project 1981



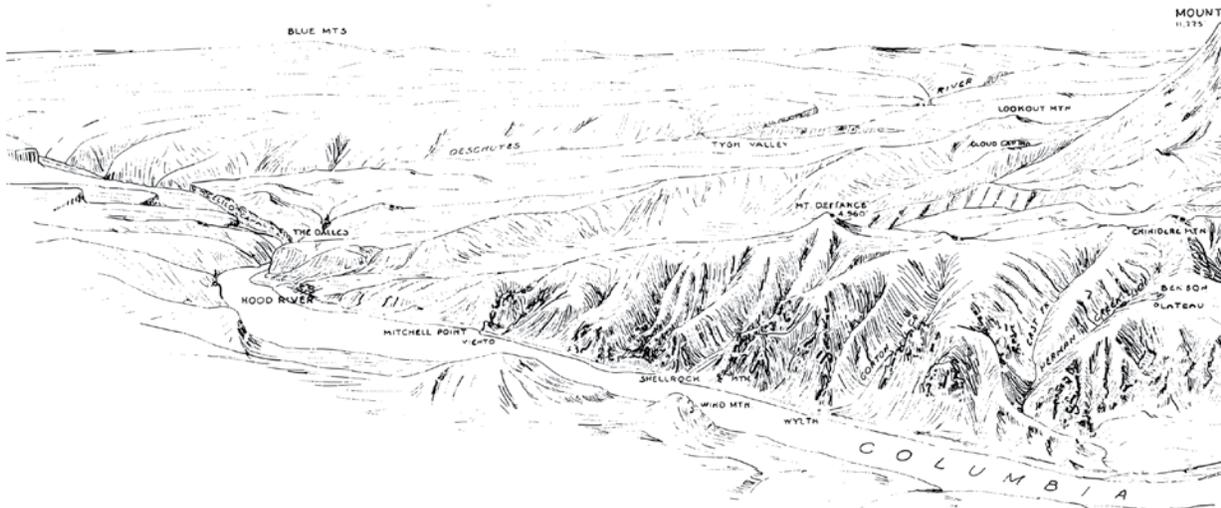


Figure 3. Columbia Gorge, adapted from USDA Forest Service Map 1916 “Columbia Gorge Park”

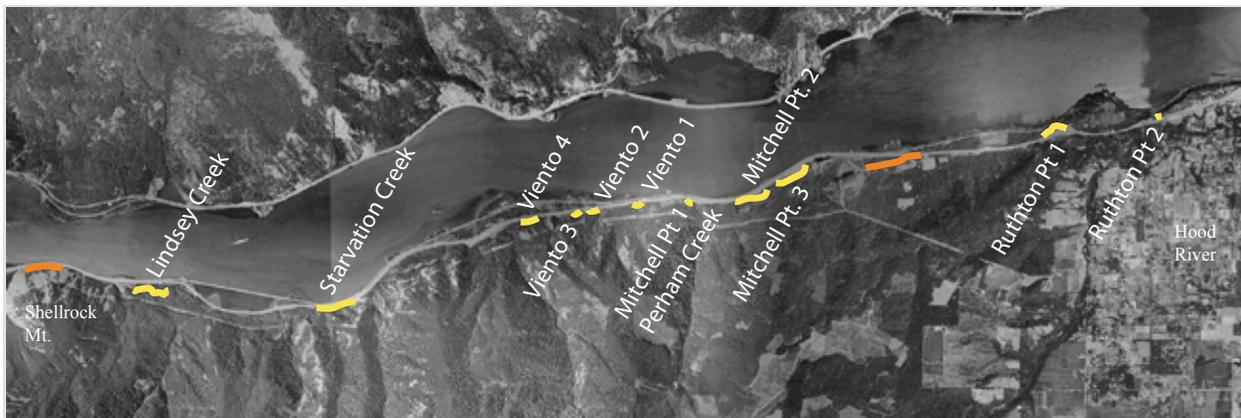
relict plant species.

The Columbia River is the only sea-level passage through the Cascades in the Pacific Northwest, and a major migration route for plant and animal species. The waterway has a long human history as well, as a travel route and as a major trade center pre-dating Euro-American contact. Exploration of the area by European and American fur traders began in the eighteenth century and culminated with Robert Gray’s discovery and naming of the Columbia River in 1792. Next, Lewis and Clark’s overland journey brought attention the area. Still later, nineteenth

century trappers and pioneers navigated the river for enterprise and settlement of the region.

The area of the gorge between Dodson and Hood River has a somewhat different character than the sections to the east and west. The basalt cliffs, high waterfalls, and lush fir and hemlock forests of the central Gorge gradually give way in this region to a somewhat drier climate and more open vegetation, transitioning to pine and oak forest near Hood River. The geology is characterized by steep, unstable shellrock slopes, cliffs with unstable slopes or slides below them, gravel flats, and rocky volcanic points

Figure 4. Segments of Historic highway inventoried (shown in yellow)





protruding into the river. These alternate rapidly within a short distance, creating a fine-grained mosaic of soils and geological conditions (Elliot 1914, Williams 1923).

Boundary description

The area of the CLI consisted of fragments of the historic highway remaining between the Shellrock Mountain (lat. 45.6919, long. -121.7436) and Ruthton Park, Hood River (lat. 45.7085, long. -121.5641), for 100 feet on either side of the approximate center line of the HCRH (Fig. 2 and 4). This amounted to a little over three miles of original historic highway alignment, in discontinuous fragments.

Relationship to the Milepost 2016 Reconnection Strategy

The segments surveyed for this inventory are located within the following sections corresponding to the Milepost 2016 Reconnection Strategy (Fig. 4):

- Segment 3 - Shellrock Mtn. Crossing

- Segment 4 - Shellrock Mtn. to Lindsey Creek
- Segment 5 - Lindsey Creek to Starvation Creek
- Segment 6 - Viento State Park to Perham Creek
- Segment 7 – Perham Creek to Mitchell Point West
- Segment 8 – Mitchell Point Tunnel
- Segment 9 - Mitchell Point East
- Segment 10 – Baumann Property to Ruthton Point
- Segment 11 - Ruthton Point to Ruthton Park

Significance of the Historic Columbia River Highway

As America’s first scenic highway, the HCRH is historically significant for its aesthetic design, and as an example of the development of early highway engineering. It is also significant as the first highway connecting the Columbia Basin with Portland and the coast. The design of the road solved major engineering challenges and was an aesthetic triumph of its time.

One of the more important consequences of

Historic Columbia River Highway: Shellrock Mountain to Ruthton Point

the highway's engineering was its influence on the National Park Service, in shaping its scenic roads. The NPS borrowed from the highway's aesthetic principle of "lying lightly on the land", as well as the style and construction of its tunnels, viaducts, and other structures.

The overall design of the HCRH was as important as the details of its construction. This includes the alignment and topography of the road and its relationship to the geology and geomorphology of the gorge. It unrolled before the driver a dynamic sequence of views, vistas, and scenic "events" such as waysides, fountains, and waterfalls. The CLI documents these important features of the highway, and helps us understand how they were constructed and how they fit into the overall experience of the road.

The HCRH is a National Historic District, a

National Register Historic Landmark District, a National Scenic Byway, and a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark.



Mitchell Point Tunnel was a precedent for several National Park tunnels, including the Zion - Carmel Tunnel, Zion National Park. Photo courtesy of ODOT.

Chronology

Year	Event	Description
1851	Built	First wagon road portage established in the Columbia Gorge (also called the 'military road').
1882 - 1883	Built	Oregon Railway and Navigation Company constructed a water-level railroad track from Portland to The Dalles. It was the only viable alternative to steamships for getting through the gorge.
1894	Altered	High water washed out the wagon road and railroad tracks below Cascade Locks.
1908	Designed	Samuel Lancaster and Samuel Hill attended the first International Road Congress in Paris and toured Europe by auto. The design of medieval roads, particularly the Axenstrasse in Switzerland (built 1865), inspired design of the Columbia River Highway.
1912	Built	Simon Benson contributed \$10,000 for the construction of a new road across Shellrock Mountain. The road was built by Honor prisoners from the State Penitentiary.
1913	Established	Legislature approved the Columbia River Highway for construction.
1913	Established	Samuel C. Lancaster was appointed as consulting engineer in Multnomah County and assistant state highway engineer.
1913 - 1914	Built	The Columbia River Highway route was graded from Chanticleer Point to Eagle Creek.
1913 - 1914	Designed	John A. Elliott, locating engineer for the Oregon State Highway Commission (OSHC), surveyed from the Multnomah/Hood River county line to the City of Hood River; including the location of Mitchell Point Tunnel.
1913	Designed	Lancaster surveyed from Chanticleer Point (now Portland Women's Forum State Scenic Viewpoint) to Multnomah Falls and later to Eagle Creek.
1913	Established	Oregon State Highway Commission established.

Chronology

Year	Event	Description
1914	Established	Hood River County passed \$75,000 bond issue to connect the Columbia River Highway from the Multnomah County line to the City of Hood River.
1914	Established	Newport Land and Construction Company contracted to complete the Columbia River Highway sections west of Hood River.
1914	Built	Grading of three segments in Hood River County totaling 5.3 miles. (Multnomah/Hood River County line to ½ mile west of Cascade locks—1.5 miles; east of Wyeth to Shellrock Mountain—1.7 miles; and Shellrock Mountain to Viento Hill—2.1 miles.)
1914 - 1915	Built	22 miles were graded from 2 ½ miles west of Cascade Locks to the city of Hood River.
1914	Built	From Crown Point to Horsetail Falls, the construction of bridges, viaducts and the Oneonta Tunnel were completed.
1915	Established	Official opening of the highway from Chanticleer Point to the city of Hood River.
1915	Built	Construction of the Mitchell Point Tunnel completed.
1915	Established	John Yeon and Simon Benson campaigned for funds to pave the Columbia River Highway.
1915	Built	Construction of bridges and viaducts from McCord Creek to Eagle Creek.
1915	Designed	J.A. Elliot surveyed from the city of Hood River to the Hood River Wasco county line.
1916	Designed	Elliott conducted a preliminary survey from the Hood River/Wasco County line to The Dalles.
1916	Built	Warren Creek Bridge built.
1916	Built	Dedication of the Columbia River Highway (June 7, 1916) with ceremonies at Crown Point and Multnomah Falls. (Paving with Warrenite completed to Multnomah Falls at time of dedication.)

Chronology

Year	Event	Description
1916 - 1918	Built	Construction of bridges and viaducts from Ruckel Creek to Rock Creek west of Mosier, including the Hood River Bridge.
1916	Built	Lindsay Creek Bridge built.
1917	Built	Wasco County road built over Seven-Mile Hill between Mosier and The Dalles.
1917 - 1918	Built	Viento and Cascade Locks segments graded and surfaced.
1917 - 1918	Built	Ruthton Hill segment relocated and graded.
1917 - 1918	Built	Grading and macadamizing from the Multnomah/Hood River county line to City of Hood River.
1918	Built	Herman Creek Bridge, a reinforced concrete deck girder bridge 100 feet in length, was built.
1918	Built	Completion of Crown Point Vista House (Dedicated May 5, 1918).
1918	Built	Viento Creek Bridge built.
1918	Built	Road surface macadamized from Cascade Locks to the City of Hood River.
1918	Built	Gorton Creek Bridge, a 50' reinforced concrete slab structure designed by Metzger, was built. (Mile post marker 58, also from 1918, is nearby.)
1918	Built	Ruthton Point Viaduct built. Designed by Metzger, it was a fifty foot concrete curving viaduct, with one 10 foot and two 20 foot spans.
1919	Designed	Final location of the M-Rowena route surveyed by J. H. Scott, locating engineering (OSHD).
1919 - 1920	Built	Grading and macadamizing was completed from city of Hood River to Rowena. Paving was completed from Cascade Locks to City of Hood River. These sections opened to traffic in August 1920.
1919	Built	Phelps Creek Bridge built.

Chronology

Year	Event	Description
1919 - 1921	Built	Construction of bridges, viaducts and Mosier Twin Tunnels in Hood River and Wasco Counties completed. (Mosier Twin Tunnels completed in April 1921). Grading and macadamizing completed from Mosier to Rowena (open to traffic in June 1920.)
1921 - 1922	Built	Paving completed from City of Hood River to The Dalles, and was officially opened to traffic in June 1922.
1921	Established	The Columbia River Highway became part of the National Highway System as U.S. Route 30.
1922	Built	Final segment of highway at Rowena Point paved.
1922	Established	Formal dedication of the eastern paved portion of the Columbia River Highway held at the Dalles (July 2, 1922).
1925	Established	Viento State Park opened 1925. Final land acquisition in 1967.
1930	Established	Starvation Creek State Park opened in 1930 at Starvation Falls. Final land acquisition in 1960.
1932	Designed	Lancaster proposed a new water-level highway for higher speed traffic, leaving the Columbia River Highway as a scenic route.
1932 - 1969	Established	Lang State Park established by purchase and condemnation of private property. It was named for the original owner, Elizabeth Lang.
1933	Designed	Surveys for the new water-level highway ordered between Troutdale and Cascade locks.
1933 - 1938	Built	Bonneville Dam was built. Rising waters flooded the railroad tracks in 1938 and made it necessary to move sections of the Columbia River Highway.
1933	Built	The first facility improvements in State Parks were made by the CCC.
1933	Established	Wygant State Park established on 251 acres donated by Simeon and Olivia Reed.

Chronology

Year	Event	Description
1935	Built	Oregon State Highway Commission and US Army Corps of Engineers built a cut-through just east of Eagle Creek on new water-level alignment to provide passage for railroad and highway traffic.
1936	Built	Highway Bridge across Eagle Creek constructed on new water-level alignment. This was the first section of the new highway to be constructed.
1937	Built	Toothrock Tunnel on new water-level alignment opened as part of Bonneville Dam project.
1943	Established	Lindsay Creek State Park established by purchase and gift from private owners. The creek was named for John Lindsay, an 1850s settler in the area who later worked on Columbia River steamboats. The park was later expanded.
1943	Established	A picnic area along the Columbia River Highway existed at Lindsay Creek State Park until the 1960s.
1944	Established	Seneca Fouts State Park established on 150 acres given by Seneca Fouts.
1949 - 1953	Built	Water-level freeway constructed to replace the HCRH.
1949	Built	A segment of water-level freeway was built from Troutdale to Dodson.
1950	Closed	Lindsey Creek Bridge, the Viento Bridge and Warren Creek Bridge were torn down in the early 1950s.
1953	Closed	Rockfall blocked the highway between Mosier and Hood River at the mouth of the Twin Tunnels. Traffic was rerouted to Washington side until the new water-level highway opened later that month.
1953	Established	The Columbia River Gorge Commission was established.
1954	Closed	Mitchell Point Tunnel, Mosier Twin Tunnels and Oneonta Gorge Tunnel barricaded and closed to the public due to safety concerns.

Chronology

Year	Event	Description
1954		Portland attorney Frank Branch Riley wrote a letter criticizing the maintenance of the old highway as being “shabbily neglected”, which caused debate over the closing of the Mosier Twin Tunnels, Mitchell Point Tunnel and Oneonta Tunnel.
1954	Built	New water-level highway completed from Portland to the Dalles, replacing about 26 miles of the middle section of the old Columbia River Highway and fragmenting much of the remainder.
1954	Established	Vinzenz Lausmann State Park was established by gift from the Lausmann family.
1956	Built	The water-level freeway was widened and transformed into Interstate 84.
1966	Closed	Mitchell Point Tunnel destroyed.
1979	Closed	Herman Creek Bridge destroyed.
1983	Established	National Register Historic District nomination by ODOT approved by the Secretary of the Interior.
1986	Established	290,000 acre Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area established.

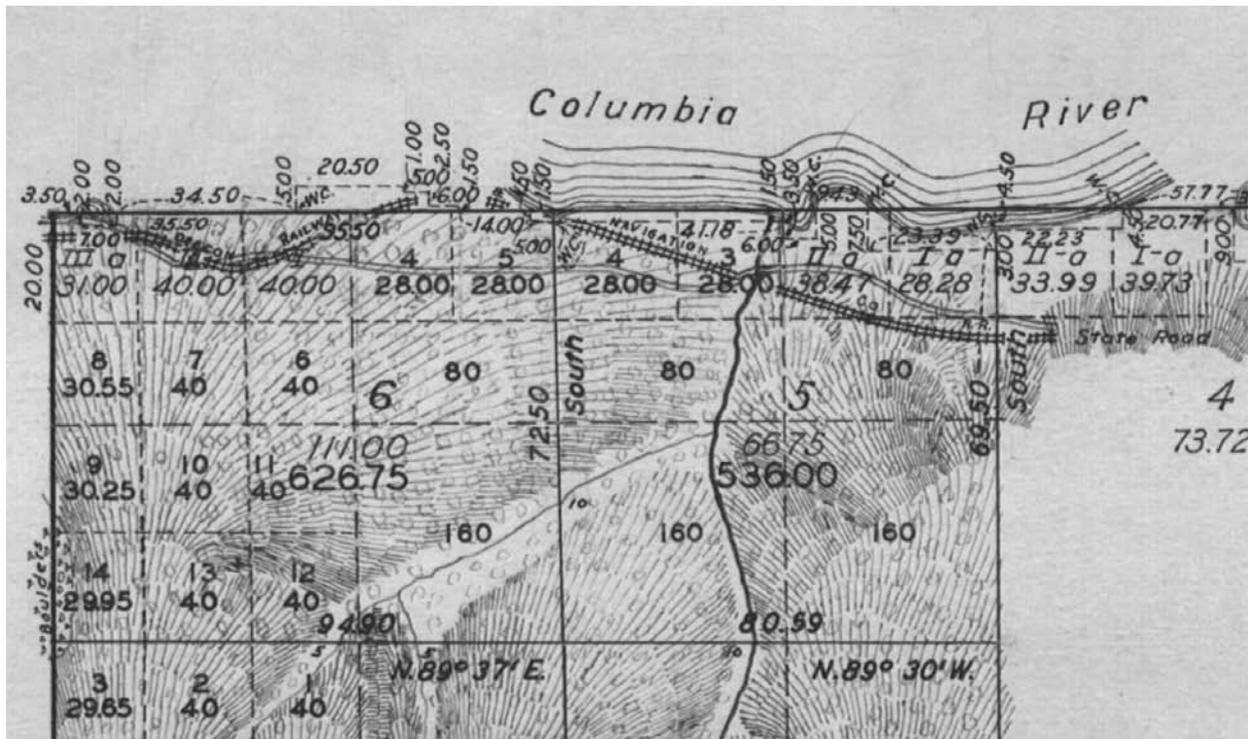


Figure 5. Survey Lindsey Creek area, 1881. Courtesy University of Oregon Libraries.

History

Early History

The Columbia River gorge has been important since pre-history as the only near sea-level passage through the Cascades in the Pacific Northwest, and as a economic and social center. The lower Columbia river, with its abundant salmon runs and wild bird migrations, was densely settled by Native Americans. Celilo Falls, at what is now The Dalles, was a trade center for Native Americans from a much larger area. When Lewis and Clark followed the Columbia to the sea, they encountered many well-established cultures centered on the river.

The earliest Euro-American settlers in the Oregon Territory used boats or rafts to navigate through the gorge. In places it was necessary to portage around large rapids, and short roads were

made for this purpose, but the geology of the gorge made road building difficult. Another transportation development of the 1850s was the introduction of steamships on the Columbia, which would continue in use well into the 20th century. Steam-ship travel still required portage around the major rapids at the Cascades (now Cascade Locks) and Celilo Falls. In 1862 the first steam locomotive, the “Oregon Pony”, was introduced to facilitate portage around the Cascades. The companies that owned these portages had a monopoly on passage on the river until the opening of the government-built locks in the 1890s.

In 1872 the State of Oregon built the first continuous road through the gorge from Sandy to The Dalles. This wagon road was known for its sharp turns and very steep grades. Much of this route was destroyed when the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company constructed a water-level track through the gorge in 1882-83. In spite of several subsequent attempts at road-building, steamboat and rail remained the main mode of transport through the gorge until the construction of the Columbia

River Highway.

Columbia River Highway Construction: 1913-22

The highway was the result of a collaboration between entrepreneur Samuel Hill and engineer Samuel C. Lancaster, who together worked to realize their vision for a scenic highway that would reveal the beauties of the landscape while also creating a modern highway connecting The Dalles with Portland. The goal was to create a drivable road, with moderate grades and a good surface, that would emulate the great scenic roads of Italy and Switzerland. The highway was begun in 1913, and completed in 1922. With the laying of the first sections it quickly became a major tourist attraction, and was heralded as “the King of Roads”.

Section of the Highway under construction. From Elliot 1914.



In 1914, Hood River County issued a \$75,000.00 bond to complete its section of the highway. The Newport Land and Construction Company was contracted to do the work. A student and protégé of Lancaster’s, engineer John Arthur Elliot, was hired to complete the survey and direct the construction of the highway east from the Multnomah County line. In 1913, Elliot surveyed from the Multnomah County/Hood River County line to the city of Hood River. His 1914 report details the decisions made in locating the route through this part of the gorge.

The main problems Elliot faced were the steepness and instability of the mountains slopes, and the necessity of avoiding the railroad right-of-way, which in many places took up the flat areas along the river. In his 1914 report, Elliot noted that the ground in this part of the gorge “is very broken, being composed of many slides and sinks” (Elliot 1914). Avoiding flood-prone and unstable creek mouths was another consideration.

These problems largely dictated the route and topography of the new highway. The final route connected remaining pieces of the 1872 wagon road, while avoiding its steep grades. The highway remained close to the river and the railroad, except in areas where the railroad right-of-way forced Elliot to build along the mountain slopes.

From Cascade Locks to Wyeth, the highway crossed one of the broad, wooded gravel flats along the river. Here it generally followed the old wagon road, but diverged to stay at lower elevations approaching Wyeth between Hermann and Gorton Creeks. Between Wyeth and Viento the highway closely followed the railroad, which had replaced the course of the wagon road. In the area between Shellrock Mountain and Lindsey Creek, staying close to the line of the wagon road was not possible. To avoid the railroad, the highway rose to about 200 ft. in elevation on the approach to Lindsey Creek, where cuts and fills created the roadbed along the slope of the hills. The highway then came back down to follow the railroad track along the water to Viento Hill. The railroad itself was re-routed in the area of Lindsey Creek to accommodate the highway. From Viento to Mitchell Point the highway again followed



Constructing the Hood River County section, forty eight foot rock cut and forty foot fill. From Elliot 1914.

the old wagon road “in and out among many rock points projecting into the river” (Elliot 1914), up to Mitchell Point, at an elevation of about 200 ft. At Mitchell Point, it avoided the steep ascent to the saddle above the point taken by the wagon road by the creation of the Mitchell Point tunnel, which was to become one of the scenic highlights of the route. From the east side of Mitchell Point the historic highway again followed the wagon trail for half a mile, then avoided its two railroad crossings and steep grades by approaching Ruthton Hill from the south. From Ruthton Hill the highway followed the wagon trail into Hood River (Elliot 1914). Despite the challenges, this section of the highway was constructed almost entirely between 140 and 200 feet in elevation, with a grade of five percent or less.

Grading of the Hood River county sections of the highway began in 1914, and by 1915 twenty

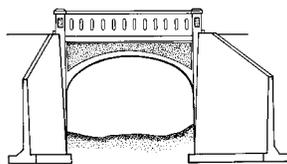
two miles between Cascade Locks and Hood River were completed. Mitchell Point Tunnel, the great engineering and design triumph of the historic highway, was completed in 1915, and the highway was officially opened to Hood River.

The bridges in this section were of the reinforced concrete slab, beam, or girder type. Generally, they were of a simpler design than those to the west. This may have been because they were crossing streams lower down, in less challenging areas, and so the splendid arches of, for example, the Sheppard’s Dell Bridge, were unnecessary. Again, the design of these bridges may also have been driven in part by costs, county politics, and materials shortages caused by World War I. Between 1914, when highway construction began, and 1918, when this segment was being completed, the automobile and its associated landscape and culture also developed rapidly, which may have affected the design of this part of the road.

The 1916 Lindsey Creek Bridge incorporated a simple arch design. The Warren Creek Bridge, also built in 1916, was a reinforced concrete slab bridge. In 1918 Gorton, Herman, and Viento Creek Bridges were built. The Ruthton Point Viaduct was also completed in 1918, suggesting the highway must have used the old county road through Ruthton prior to this date. Both the bridges and the viaduct were designed by Lewis W. Metzger. All of these bridges

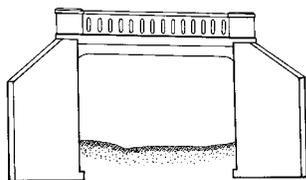
Viento Station 1918. Courtesy of ODOT.





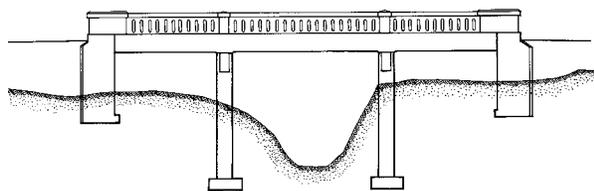
**LINDSEY
CREEK
BRIDGE**
1916 - ca. 1950

M.P. 55.75
18' OVERALL



**VIENTO
CREEK
BRIDGE**
1918 - ca. 1950

M.P. 58.77
18' OVERALL



GORTON CREEK BRIDGE 1918
M.P. 52.7 50' OVERALL

except the Gorton Creek Bridge were later destroyed.

The highway was macadamized from the Multnomah County Line to Hood River in 1918 and was paved between Cascade Locks and Hood River in 1920. Construction and paving of the road from Hood River to The Dalles was completed in 1922.

In subsequent years the road was widened, new guardrails were added or replaced old ones, and repairs to retaining walls and culverts were made. However, investigation of the history of these repairs and alterations is beyond the scope of this project.

Most of the scenic attractions of the HCRH were found between Troutdale and Cascade Locks. There the dramatic western gorge scenery was complemented by the beautiful stone walls, waysides, built viewpoints, and fountains of the highway. The Hood River County portion of the road had fewer of these kinds of aesthetic details, although Elliot, under Lancaster's direction, appears to have considered the scenery in designing the route (Elliot 1914). Between Cascade Locks and Hood River the main scenic moment was Mitchell Point and its famous tunnel, one of the highway's most photographed features. The highway then took tourists on to visit the Columbia Gorge Hotel, and explore the Hood River Valley (Unknown 1915, George 1923, U.S. Tourist Service 1940).

There are a number of possible reasons for this difference in design. Costs, county politics, difficulties with obtaining materials or labor caused by World War I, differences in philosophy between Elliot and Lancaster, and differences in the landscape itself may all have played a part. The design of the automobile and how it was used also changed during this period, in turn transforming the American landscape. The curb side gas station, for example, was developed during this period (Jeckyl 1994). In any case, the highway east of Dodson came in time to be seen as a more utilitarian part of the road. In 1954, an article in the Oregonian stated that the portion of the highway from Dodson to Hood River

Figure 6. Bridges. Only one (Gorton Creek Bridge) of the original bridges in the Cascade Locks to Hood River area still stands. Drawings courtesy of HAER., 1981.

was “not part of the scenic route” (Tooz 1954). This statement may have been in part a justification for the destruction of much of this section of the highway, an inevitable result of the building of the water-level freeway in the early 1950s.

Columbia River Highway: 1922-1948

During its heyday, the HCRH not only provided a major commercial and tourist route through the Cascades, but knit together gorge towns and settlements along its path. Oral history testimony (Hadlow *et al* 2009) describes the importance of the highway to these isolated communities. Bus service on the highway connected neighbors, families, and businesses. The road itself was a community resource, around which people interacted. Wayside parks and fountains, like the frequently mentioned Viento fountain, were shared pleasures and meeting places. The road was slow, winding, and sometimes dangerous, requiring interactions with other drivers: a very different experience from a modern freeway (Hadlow *et al* 2009).

Lindsey Creek Inn, c. 1930. Courtesy of ODOT



Walkway at Mitchell Point Tunnel, 1924. Courtesy of ODOT.

The highway also provided a source of income in the services and small business that sprang up along it. Important sources of employment in the gorge were logging, the railroad, and some agriculture. The Columbia River Highway brought tourism and recreation as well. There were private campgrounds, hotels, lodges and restaurants along the road at Wyeth, Viento, Lindsey Creek, and Mitchell Point. Oral histories describe the road as dotted with restaurants and gas stations “every five



miles” (USDA Forest Service 1936, Hadlow et al 2009). These served recreational visitors, truckers, and locals (Hadlow et al 2009).

The highway in the inventoried area provided access to parks and forest recreation, fulfilling one of its important original purposes. Much of the Hood River County section of the road was protected as part of the Hood River National Forest, which maintained campgrounds and trails along the route. Four State parks (Wygant, Starvation Creek, Lang, and Viento) were established along the highway between Dodson and Hood River in the 1920s and 1930s as part of the system of highway parks and waysides, and expanded in subsequent decades. In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was active in building trails, picnic areas and campgrounds in these parks. Lindsey Creek and Seneca Fouts State Parks were added in the 1940s.

Abandonment and Decay: 1948 -1980

As automobiles became the main mode of transport, instead of primarily a leisure amusement,

the need for a more efficient highway through the gorge adapted to larger vehicles and higher speeds became clear. A new, water-level highway was proposed by Lancaster himself as early as the 1932. Gorge communities were for the most part enthusiastic supporters of the new road. In 1936 the construction of the Bonneville dam necessitated moving the railroad and re-routing a portion of the highway, resulting in the completion of Toothrock Tunnel in 1937. Plans for the water-level road were shelved during World War II, but by 1948 a new four lane highway had been laid out. The first section, between Troutdale and Dodson, was completed by 1949. The Mitchell Point section of the HCRH was closed in 1953, and the tunnel filled in. By 1954, the new water-level highway was open.

The old Columbia River Highway between Troutdale and Dodson remained intact and used as a scenic route, while the section from Hood River to Mosier became a county access road or reverted to private ownership (Tooz 1954). The new water-level road was built over much of the historic highway between Wyeth and Hood River, leaving a number

Construction of water level highway, near Gorton Creek, 1952. Courtesy of ODOT.





Mitchell Point Tunnel filled in, c. 1950s. Courtesy of ODOT.

of disconnected, inaccessible fragments. Some short sections of the old highway became frontage roads or local streets; others were abandoned. In the late 1950s the water-level road was expanded to four lanes, and eventually became Interstate 84. In 1966 Mitchell Point tunnel was removed by blasting; the fragmented rock became roadbed for the widened water-level road.

For some towns the new highway brought improvements, while others struggled to survive. The closing of the historic highway led to the demise of the many businesses that had established themselves along it, and the new water-level road divided towns and property along its route (Hadlow et al. 2009). At the same time, the 1954 route improved connections to Portland and reduced the isolation of the gorge, bringing an even larger volume of tourists to certain areas.

The unused, isolated fragments of the old highway between Dodson and Hood River lapsed into deterioration. The road bed became overgrown with moss and shrubs, drainage structures clogged, and parts of the road washed out. Business, homes, and farms along abandoned sections of the

highway disappeared, leaving only foundations and naturalized ornamental plants behind.

Preservation and Re-Use: 1981-Present

In 1981 the National Park Service's Columbia River Highway Project inventoried almost the entire length of the historic highway and evaluated some closed portions of it for possible reuse as hiking or bike trails (Columbia River Highway Project 1981). This was followed by the nomination of the highway as a National Register Historic District in 1983. In 1986 the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area was established, and in 1987 the Oregon Legislature directed the Department of Transportation to reconnect abandoned and extant portions of the historic highway as a state trail for foot and bicycle traffic (ODOT 2009).

Moffet Creek Section of the Columbia River Highway State Trail. Courtesy of Friends of the Columbia River Highway.



Inventory

Objectives of the Inventory

This inventory is intended to document important characteristics and features of the sections surveyed, and to set up a database and data collection process to support a more comprehensive inventory in the future. The part of the historic highway that lies between Shellrock Mountain and Ruthton Point does not have a large number of intact historic features left, in part because it has been fragmented and abandoned for many years, and perhaps in part because the nature of the original construction. As we know from the historic road log, there were more wooden guard rails, and fewer stone features, on this portion of the road. However, other very important characteristics and features remain.

The naturalistic design of the HCRH was intended to create an experience of the road in harmony with the natural landscape. The inventory describes, in terms of specific features, this relationship of the road to the geography. It includes elements that might be overlooked or not recognized as designed. Rock cuts, for example, were made to look like natural rock, perhaps with ledges left or created for plants to grow on (Mark Davison, personal communication October 2009), and deliberately irregular surfaces. Drama was created, in some cases, by having the rock cut hang over the road. Views and vistas were framed and orchestrated by the layout of the road. This inventory identifies these features, which make up the designed character of the road, as well as remaining structures such as retaining walls, guard walls, and culverts.

Previous Inventories

There have been several previous inventories of the HCRH. However, because so little of the original historic highway is left in this section, most previous inventories have not included it. The inventories for the National Register and NHL districts focused on more intact sections to the east and west. The 1981 Columbia River Highway Project Inventory does

include parts of this section, noting some views and structures as well as the general condition of the road, but does not provide details of construction or exact locations for features. The sections have also changed over the nearly 30 years since it was done. The Federal Highway Administration's Western Federal Lands Highway Division issued a geotechnical report for the HCRH which focused only on retaining walls, and did not include this section of the highway (Evans et al. 2005). The 1987 *Study of the Historic Columbia River Highway* (Gronowski and Kloos, 1987) includes these sections but provides only an overview of their general condition.

None of these previous inventories included features related to the topography and alignment of the road, or detailed descriptions of views and vistas. This inventory looks at features of the road that are essential to its character and that have not been previously inventoried. It focuses on a section of the road for which no detailed inventory work has been done before. It provides us with a picture of the overall character of the highway and structural elements which will inform the design guidelines that are currently under development.

Inventory Methods

The inventory process included historic research, documentation and field work. Preliminary research in primary sources (for example, oral histories, historic aerial photographs and historic highway maps) and secondary sources (National Historic Landmark nomination and other documents) was used to describe the construction of the historic highway and large scale changes that have taken place in it over time, and to define important characteristics and features that communicate its history.

We used an inventory method developed for historic roads by Mark Davison and Susan Dolan for the National Park Service (NPS). Based on their methodology, we created a data dictionary of characteristics and features specific to the HCRH. These features were grouped into seven landscape

characteristics (Appendix 1). The characteristics are based on NPS standards for describing historic designed landscapes (Page *et al.*1998). They group individual features of the road into categories, such as “Buildings and Structures” or “Circulation”, that describe the organization of the landscape. We refined and standardized the descriptions of road characteristics and features for the HCRH based on our field work and previous inventories, especially the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) drawings and data for the Columbia River Highway (HAER 1981). From the data dictionary we created a generalized data sheet for use in the field (Appendix 1).

We identified the segments to be surveyed from the maps provided in *The Historic Columbia River Highway Milepost 2016 Reconnection Projects* (Friends of the HCRH 2009) and from high-resolution aerial photos provided by the Oregon Department of Transportation. We began each segment at its western terminus, and moved to the east. We recorded a GPS latitude and longitude for the starting point for each segment of highway. Where it was not possible to get a field GPS point, we identified the start point on the aerial photograph for the segment, and estimated the latitude and longitude to the nearest 11 meters, using Google Earth.

We used a measuring wheel to record distances in feet from the start point along the approximate centerline of the historic highway. We recorded locations of features as distance from the segment start point, and offset or estimated offset from the centerline of the historic highway (to the nearest foot). It was not always possible to identify the centerline of the highway. The distance in feet from the start point of the segment to the feature became the feature identification number.

We identified and described each feature using the data forms and data dictionary developed for the historic highway. We photographed each feature and mapped it on an aerial photograph as closely as possible. The locations of features were compared, when feasible, with the historic road log (ODOT 1924) and 1939 aerial photos, to verify features as historic and to identify them. This was not always

possible, as not all features are listed on the log. Also, it was not always possible to find a known reference point on the log to measure distances from.

Inventory Results

The CLI identifies and describes 72 individual features, found in fragments that add up to about two miles of historic road. Because of time limitations, only features that were apparent (not buried or hidden) are included in the inventory. A general description of the findings in each characteristic is given below, followed by more detailed descriptions of each of the segments surveyed. The full database that accompanies this report provides detailed descriptions and photographs of every feature inventoried.

Circulation

Circulation is defined as those features, such as trails, roads, and parking lots, which determine systems of movement in the landscape. For the HCRH, circulation included the highway itself, intersecting roads and paths, trail heads along the road, and turnouts. Only fragments of the highway and its associated roads remain.

The historic highway

The original Columbia River Highway served a dual purpose. Initially, it provided access to nature and grand scenery – rivaling or outstripping that of Europe – as scenic highway, but quickly became important as the only automobile route connecting Portland to The Dalles and so to eastern Oregon and the Columbia Basin. It was also important as a local connector between small towns and farms in the gorge and the city of Portland, maintaining their economic viability.

As the practical and commercial use of automobiles increased in importance, the function of the highway also shifted, resulting in its rapid obsolescence. The scenic nature of the road was not suitable for increasingly larger and faster cars,

and heavier traffic. Lancaster himself recognized as early as 1932 the need for a more modern road. He hoped to retain the old highway as a scenic alternate through the gorge, a hope that has in part been fulfilled.

Even with the increasing commercial importance of the highway, tourism still accounted for a large proportion of the traffic on the highway between Portland and Hood River in the 1920s and 1930s. After the dramatic waterfalls and scenery between Portland to Cascade Locks, the road took visitors to Mitchell Point, and then on to the Columbia Gorge Hotel and the Hood River Valley. The highway also provided access to National Forest trails and recreation sites. The highway between Cascade Locks and Hood River connected four state parks (Wygant, Starvation Creek, Viento, and Lang), to which Lindsey State Park was added in the early 1940s. There were also many private resorts and campgrounds along this section of the road.

The original surface of the road was Warrenite, a patented paving process that was customized for the construction of the highway. The roadway was repaired, widened and repaved over the course of its active lifetime. This inventory recorded the start and end points and condition of paving along the historic highway fragments, except where debris and vegetation made it impossible to do so. Much of the pavement was buried or overgrown with vegetation. The shoulders of the road were generally filled in with vegetation encroaching on the paved surface.

Intersections and trails

There were no major intersecting roads on the highway between Wyeth and Hood River. All the intersections were short local roads leading to the railroad, the river, parks and campgrounds; Forest Service access roads; or roads into private property. Some of these remain, but most have become overgrown or were removed by the construction of the water-level freeway. There are still several trails that are associated with portions of the HCRH, notably the Mt. Defiance Trail at Starvation Creek and the Wygant Trail that crosses the Mitchell Point

section.

Turnouts

Turnouts along the HCRH were often associated with rock cuts, and were built from the excess rock taken from the faces of the cut. These turnouts were as much by-products of the construction process as circulation features. Turnouts were also found near features, such as waterfalls or trail heads, where people stopped regularly, providing parking for a few cars. A turnout might be associated with a fine view, as they would be later in NPS roads (Davis et al. 2004). The inventory identified two historic turnouts in poor condition, one of which may have been associated with a view. Others may be identified and relocated in the future from historic aerial photographs.

Topography

Topography includes the three dimensional surface and orientation of the landscape. The topography of a road is defined by its alignment, rock cuts, fill-throughs, and cut-throughs. Rock cuts and cut-and-fill areas on slopes created the bed of the road.

On the HCRH, cut and fill was minimized to avoid disturbing mountain slopes. Where necessary, it was balanced to create a half-bench. Rock cuts were sometimes shaped to achieve a naturalistic look, perhaps including areas that could be planted or allowed to re-vegetate naturally. These rock cuts could bring a sense of intimacy with the landscape or add drama to the road by bringing rock outcrop close to the roadway, in some cases even overhanging it. Rock cuts might be shaped to create aesthetically pleasing waterfalls and control how the water reached the road (Davis et al. 2004), although it is not known if this was done along the historic highway.

Fill-throughs carried the road through draws without the need of a bridge. Cut-throughs, like rock cuts, brought the landscape close to the road by taking the roadbed between two pieces of it.

Circulation

Area name	Feature ID	Feature Name	Condition	Condition Description
Lindsey Creek	1315	Intersection	Fair	Overgrown vegetation, drainage
Lindsey Creek	1132	Intersection	Poor	Overgrown vegetation
Lindsey Creek	768	Intersection	Poor	Overgrown vegetation
Perham Creek	83	Intersection	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, drainage problems
Perham Creek	83	Intersection	Poor	Overgrown vegetation
Viento 1	280	Intersection	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, drainage problems
Mitchell Pt 2	1481	Road Surface	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, 3" duff buildup, 10-20' deep washout.
Mitchell Pt 2	147	Road Surface	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, 3" duff buildup.
Viento 1	112	Road Surface	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, edges eroded, partially buried roadbed.
Viento 1	570	Road Surface	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, edges eroded, partially buried roadbed.
Ruthton Pt 1	10	Road Surface	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, surface buckled and broken in places, rockfall debris.
Ruthton Pt 1	621	Road Surface	Poor	Rockfall debris, moss, erosion, water pooling.
Mitchell Pt 2	1450	Trail	Poor	Alignment, grade, drainage problems
Mitchell Pt 2	330	Trail	Poor	Alignment, grade, drainage problems
Starvation Creek	871	Trail	Fair	
Mitchell Pt 3	1581	Trail	Good	
Lindsey Creek	450	Turnout	Poor	Overgrown vegetation
Mitchell Pt 2	807	Turnout	Poor	Overgrown vegetation
Mitchell Pt 3	1558	Turnout	Good	



Lindsey Creek intersection, abandoned road



Broken Pavement, Mitchell Creek diversion, Mitchell Point 2



Mount Defiance Trailhead, Starvation Creek



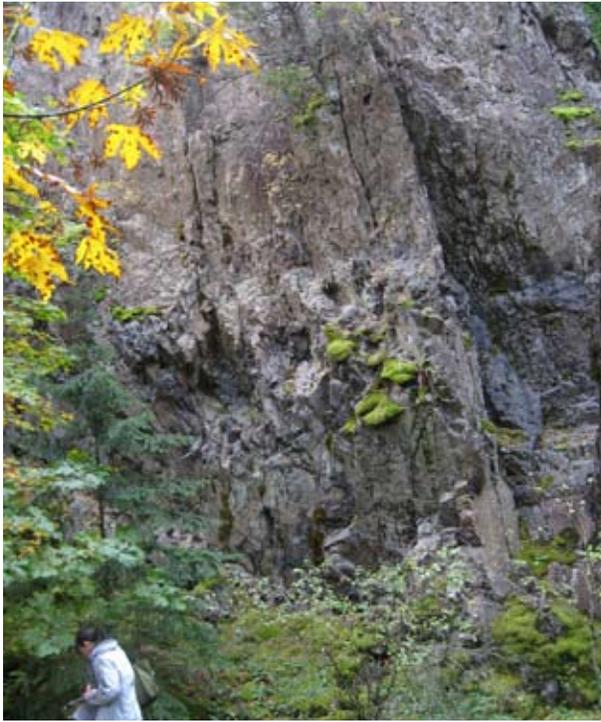
Wygant trail, Mitchell Point 2



Turnout, Mitchell Point 2

Topography

Area name	Feature ID	Feature Name	Condition	Description	Contributing
Mitchell Pt 3	473	Cut Through	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, erosion, gutters clogged	Yes
Mitchell Pt 3	210	Fill Through	Fair	Overgrown vegetation, culvert clogged	Yes
Mitchell Pt 2	1319	Rock Cut	Fair	Overgrown vegetation in gutter	Yes
Perham Creek	12	Rock Cut	Poor	Erosion slumping onto road	Yes
Lindsey Creek	282	Fill Through	Poor	Overgrown vegetation into roadway, drainage problems	Yes
Lindsey Creek	451	Rock Cut	Fair	Overgrown vegetation, erosion / rock fall onto road	Yes
Lindsey Creek	2	Rock Cut	Fair	Overgrown vegetation, rock fall onto road	Yes
Lindsey Creek	627	Rock Cut	Fair	Overgrown vegetation	Yes
Lindsey Creek	1709	Cut Through	Fair	Overgrown vegetation, erosion, drainage problems	Yes
Lindsey Creek	2000	Fill Through	Fair	Overgrown vegetation	Yes
Lindsey Creek	891	Fill Through	Fair	Drainage problems	Yes
Viento 3	050	Cut Through	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, drainage problems	Yes
Viento 1	001	Rock Cut	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, erosion, drainage problems	Yes



Rock outcrop, Lindsey Creek



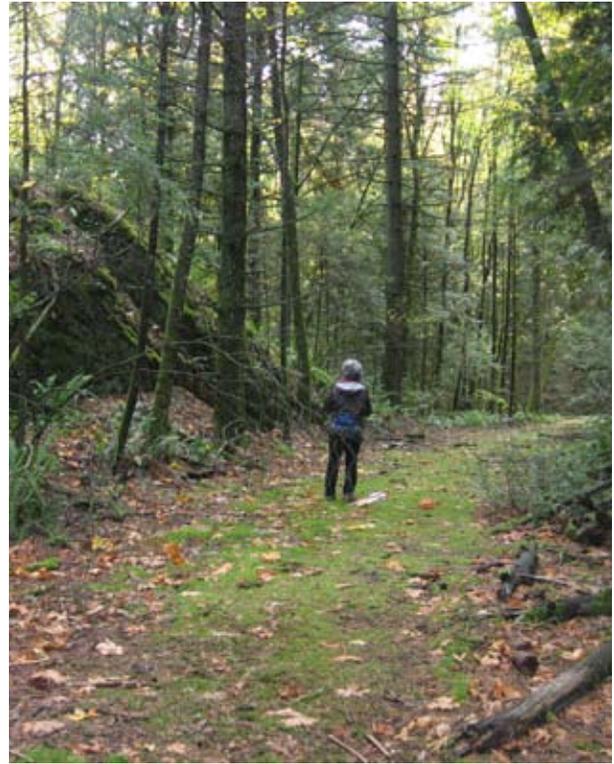
Rock cut, Lindsey Creek



Rock Cut, Mitchell Point. The vegetation and piled debris at its base are signs of poor condition. Note the slide in the background.



Rock cut, slide, Perham Creek



Cut through, Lindsey Creek



Fill through, Lindsey Creek

Because so much of this part of the road has been lost, it is difficult to generalize about the overall topography. In general the road stayed close to the edge of the river and the railroad tracks, avoiding the unstable slopes above as much as possible (Elliot 1914). Between Shellrock Mountain and Lindsey Creek, Elliot was forced by the railroad right of way to go up the slope and create the road with cut and fill. The area from Lindsey Creek to Starvation Creek may have included some large rock cuts or cut-throughs as it wound around the projecting rocky points above the railroad line. However, only very short fragments of the road remain here. Some of the larger rock cuts – for example those associated with Benson Point, Mitchell Point and Ruthton Point – were lost with the construction of the I-84.



Buildings and Structures

Buildings and structures include built elements, such as culverts, retaining walls, and guard walls, that are part of the road, and those associated with the road, such as comfort stations, fountains, or built viewpoints.

Structures on the HCRH are an important part of its character and history. Along with their practical function, they visually united the road and its natural setting through their materials, design and workmanship. For example, guard walls and retaining walls, used to edge the road around rock cuts and rocky areas, were made from native stone to blend in color and character with the surrounding scenery. Retaining walls were usually crafted from native basalt, hewn and bossed to blend with the cliffs of the Gorge. The reinforced concrete bridges met the highest engineering standards of the period, while remaining sensitive to their natural setting. The design of these elements reflected principles of rustic design, incorporating arched or curving forms, simplicity, sturdiness, irregularity, and a naturalistic



Examples of types of structures. Top: guard teeth on top of retaining wall, near Sheppard's Dell. Center: Wayside fountain, near Horsetail Falls. Bottom: concrete guard rail reconstruction, Ruthton Point.



Cabin Creek culvert detail. The basalt stones on this culvert would be described as medium sized, hewn, bossed (shaped to have a convex face), laid in straight courses, dry laid with mortar around the pipe.

look.

Viaducts

Viaducts were used to carry the historic highway along cliffs or slopes, while minimizing disturbance to topography and vegetation. They were an important part of the innovative engineering of the highway, developing cliff-face road building to an extent not seen before (Dwight 1984). Two viaducts were built between Cascade Locks and Hood River, one at Mitchell Point, and one at Ruthton Point. Part of the Ruthton Point viaduct still remains, and has been restored. The Mitchell Point viaduct was destroyed along with the tunnel.

Guard Rail and Guard Wall

Guard rails and walls served to warn motorists of a steep road edge, and to keep cars on the road. Two main types of guard rail were used in the original construction of the historic highway (HAER 1981; Fig.30).

The Standard Arched Masonry Wall had a mortared rubble facing around a grout core, with a concrete cap. The design incorporated an elliptical arch for drainage. Italian stone masons reportedly

supervised the building of these walls, which were modelled after similar guard walls on European roads. Masonry guard walls were more expensive to build than wooden rails, but had low maintenance costs. Variations on this type of wall were used throughout the highway. In the 1950s, protests over the abandonment of the highway focused on the loss of these “Italian” masonry walls in particular (Portland *Oregonian* 1954). In the historic road log, “rubble masonry parapet” probably describes this type of wall.

According to the historic road log, rubble masonry parapet was used around Shellrock Mountain (not included in this inventory), for a short stretch of the Lindsey Creek segment adjacent to a rock cut, near Cabin Creek on the Starvation Creek segment, at Mitchell Point, at Ruthton Point, and in the area of Ruthton Park (Historic Road Log 1924). The locations of these walls suggest that masonry guard rail was used where there was a supply of rock available and the rail blended in with the surrounding landscape. Of the walls listed in the historic log, only the Ruthton Point wall and a heap of broken concrete and rubble along the Lindsey Creek segment, in a location roughly corresponding to the rubble masonry guard wall in the historic road log, were located by this survey. The rubble masonry

parapet at Ruthton Point has been restored.

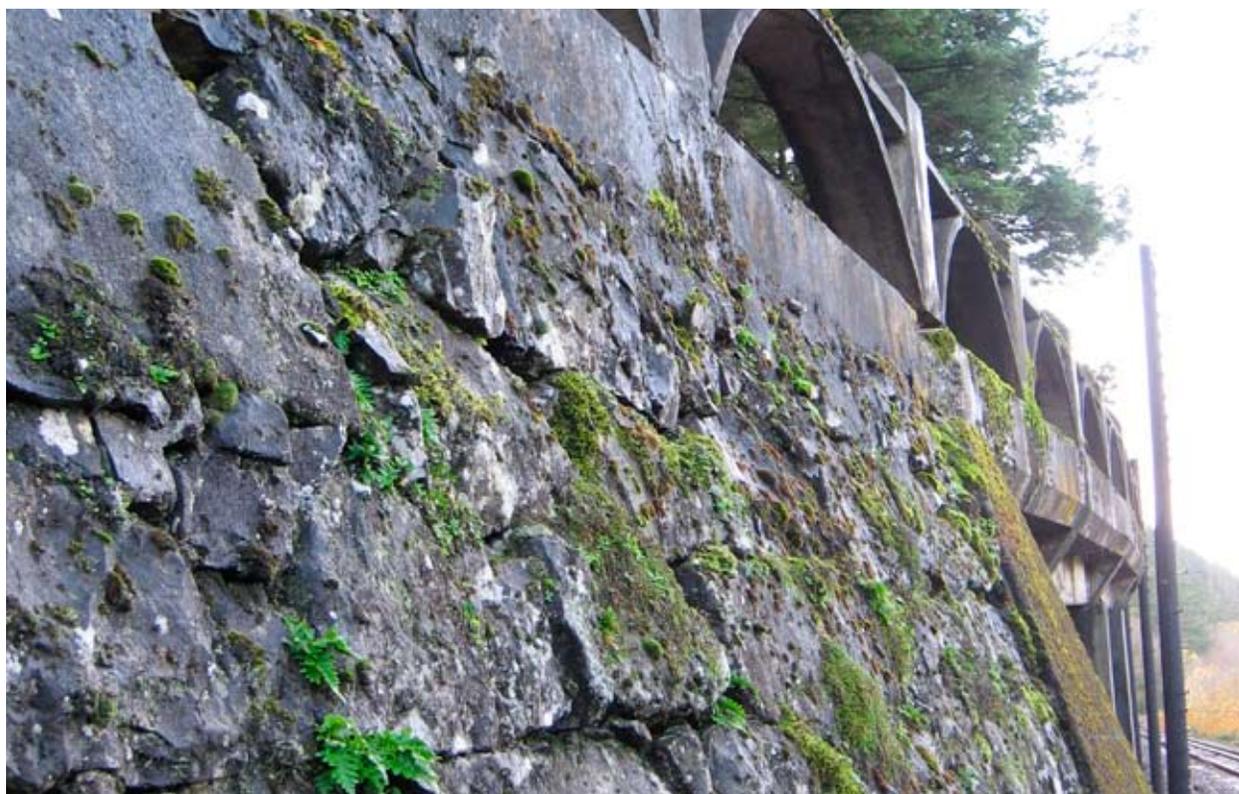
Standard Guard Fence was a second common type of guard rail used during the early years of the highway. It was introduced in about 1920 and was in use throughout Oregon (HAER 1981). The simple white-painted post and plank design was inexpensive to construct and suitable to the rural landscape. This was the most common type of guard rail used on the Dodson to Hood River segments of the highway (Historic Road Log 1924), possibly because there was less stone here than elsewhere. No Standard Guard Fence was relocated by this survey.

Two other types of guard rail were sometimes used on the historic highway. Concrete arch and cap guard rail was used at Oneonta Gorge, Multnomah Falls, and Horsetail Falls. Another type of stone barrier was created by an extension of dry laid stone retaining walls, finished with taller coping or guard stones that projected like teeth above the road to

act as a guard rail (Figs. 27, 29). Current evidence suggests these types of rail were not used on the segments included in the Reconnection Strategy. A simple concrete guard rail was used on the Mitchell Point and Ruthton Point Viaducts. This guard rail has been restored on the Ruthton Point viaduct.

Retaining Walls

Retaining walls were used to prevent rock fall from unstable slopes above the road, and to retain the roadbed in areas of cut and fill. In general, retaining walls associated with the road were dry laid stone walls, built by Italian masons (WFLHD 2005). The stone used was taken from the nearest available source. It might be coursed or random in design, using shaped stones or rubble. Dry laid walls typically had small chink stones used to tighten small gaps between wall stones. Dry laid walls allow water



Retaining wall, viaduct and guard rail, near Multnomah Falls. The retaining wall is battered (sloped to the base), dry laid, unbosomed, and laid in a random pattern. Many chink stones are missing, some can be seen.

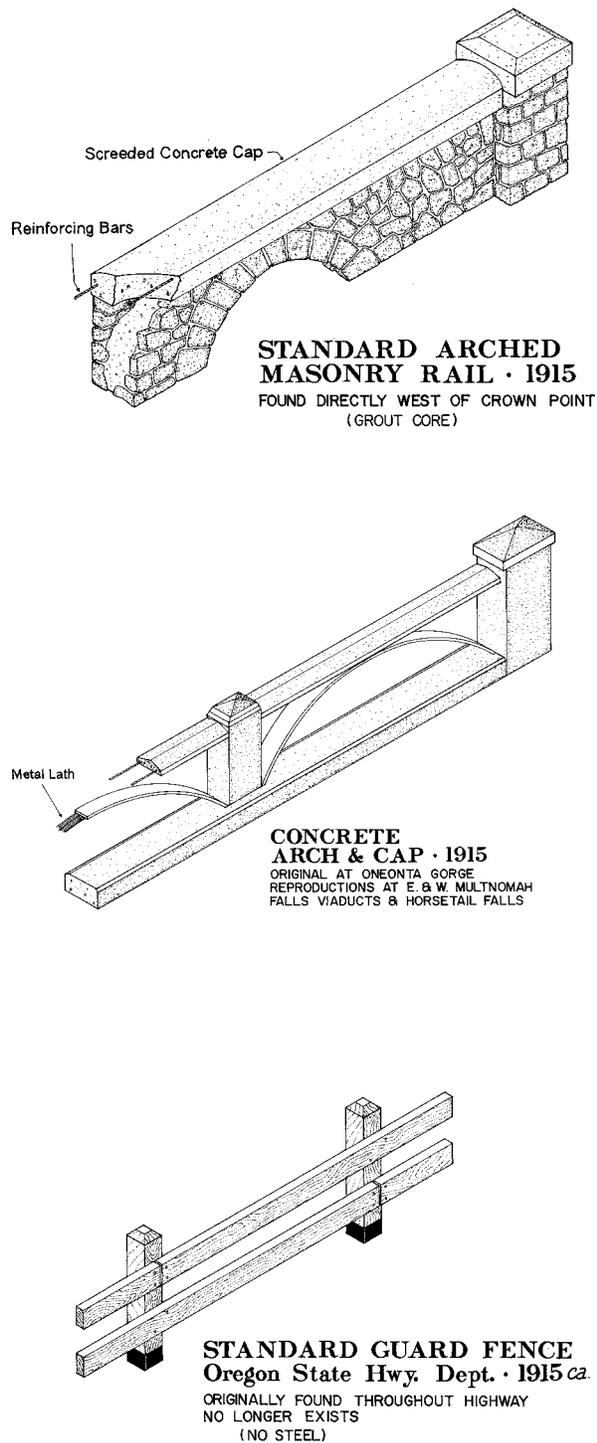


Figure 7. Guard rail types. Courtesy of HAER.

to pass through them, which decreases the hydraulic pressure on the wall. Retaining walls often were battered, or larger at the base, for stability. Later walls and wall repairs included mortar and mortar caps to hold the wall together (Figs. 28, 29).

John Elliot (1914) describes retaining walls built at Shellrock Mountain and a substantial retaining wall in the Cabin Creek section. This second wall was built to cross an old slide above the railroad right of way, “between station 700 and 725.” Elliot describes a retaining wall for the roadbed and a face wall for the uphill, mountain side at this location. The 1939 aerial photo appears to show two large retaining walls in the vicinity of Cabin Creek, one of which is in the area of a slide and may be the wall Elliot mentions. This retaining wall would have been lost with the construction of I84. Retaining walls are not recorded on the 1924 road log.

The inventory recorded a 270-foot long retaining wall in below the road on the north side of the highway, in the area of Cabin Creek. It is a typical coursed, dry laid stone retaining wall, with a mortar cap. The wall is in poor condition, with a crumbling mortar, some missing stones, and missing chink stones. It is overgrown with vegetation. The mortar cap may be a later addition.

Three other small retaining walls were found, all in poor condition. Of these, one is associated with the terrace and entry of the development associated with the road at Mitchell Point and has been patched with rubble and repaired with mortar in several places.

Culverts

Drainage structures along the historic highway included concrete, dirt, or stone gutters, catch basins, and culverts. Culverts were used to carry runoff from the gutter or ditch on the south side of the road. Where small seasonal or perennial streams crossed the road, a fill-through was often constructed and a culvert used to carry the stream under it.

Culverts varied in design from simple concrete pipes to box culverts with stone head walls and

Buildings and Structures

Area name	Feature ID	Feature Name	Condition	Description	Contributing
Ruthton Pt 2	18	Retaining Wall	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, sections collapsed	Unk
Ruthton Pt 2	10	Guard Wall	Poor	Original purpose lost	Unk
Ruthton Pt 2	20	Fence	Fair	Chain or rope for linking posts missing	Unk
Ruthton Pt 1	10	Guard Wall	Good	Modern repair	No
Ruthton Pt 1	73	Guard Wall	Good	Mortar has been patched	Yes
Starvation Creek	287	Retaining Wall	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, missing stones, mortar cap eroding	Yes
Starvation Creek	783	Culvert	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, clogged	Yes
Starvation Creek	668	Culvert	Poor	Catchbasin clogged, culvert clogged, missing stones	Yes
Viento 1	320	Retaining Wall	Poor	Overgrown vegetation, collapsed structure	Yes
Viento 1	317	Fence	Fair	A collapsed section	No
Lindsey Creek	553	Guard Wall	Poor	Rubble remains	Yes
Mitchell Pt 2	300	Culvert	Poor	Collapsed headwall, clogged	Yes
Mitchell Pt 2	1092	Culvert	Poor	Completely buried except for hole	Unk
Mitchell Pt 3	1785	Fence	Good		No
Mitchell Pt 3	299	Culvert	Poor	Buried headwall, clogged, missing stones	Yes
Mitchell Pt 3	1132	Retaining Wall	Poor	Stones missing, wall collapsing, overgrown vegetation	Yes
Mitchell Pt 3	1576	Building	Good		No
Ruthton Pt 1	298	Built Viewpoint	Fair	Overgrown vegetation blocking view, bench missing	Yes



Restored Masonry Parapet, Ruthton Point



Collapsed Masonry Parapet, Lindsey Creek



Retaining Wall, Cabin Creek Area



Retaining wall, Ruthton Park



Detail, Cabin Creek retaining wall



Culvert, rubble wall, Mitchell Point 2



Concrete culvert, concrete head wall, Mitchell Point 2



Cabin Creek culvert

detailing. Culverts that could be seen from waysides or trails were generally more elaborate than those hidden by the design of the road. These culverts were built with the same rustic design principles as other structures of the road, to blend in to the natural environment.

Drainage structures along the segments included in the inventory are almost all buried or washed out, and it was not possible to relocate them within the scope of this project. Some potentially could be relocated from the road log. The inventory found five culverts, all in poor condition. All but one appeared to be clogged, and one to have been repaired or extended with corrugated steel pipe. At Cabin Creek, the culvert is clearly designed to be seen from the path up to the falls, with a hewn, bossed basalt head wall on the inlet side, topped by a rubble wall. Another culvert in the same segment located from the historic road log includes a dry laid stone head wall. This culvert also has a stone rim on the concrete pipe.

Views and Vistas

Views and vistas were an important part of the HCRH. They were the heart of the experience of the road, and important to its alignment and routing. Lancaster wrote of choosing views of the gorge and vistas of waterfalls as “control points” for the highway. Elliot (1914) writes more frequently of the practical constraints on the Hood River County part of the road, but his inclusion of photographs of views and waterfalls in his report indicates that these were still influencing the design of this section.

Several types of views have been defined to describe the experience of roads (Davis et al 2004). *Moving views* are those seen unfolding along a stretch of the road, sometimes partly screened or interrupted by areas of vegetation. *Panoramic views* are often found at a peak in the road on a curve, and associated with a turn out or view point where motorists can stop to enjoy them. Views may be *framed* by rock or vegetation. An *axial view* is defined by the line of the road oriented toward it on a straight stretch. A *vista* is a view directed toward a

particular focal point and limited in extent, as in an opening in the forest that reveals a waterfall in the distance.

What views were most scenic or important in the early days of the road can partly be inferred from what people took pictures of at that time. Between Wyeth and Hood River, the important focal points represented in historical images are Shellrock Mountain, Wind Mountain, and Mitchell Point. Contemporary views of Wind Mountain are especially important in the Lindsay Creek segment. The distant view of Mitchell Point seen from the Viento and Mitchell Creek segments foreshadow the main event of the road, the tunnel at Mitchell Point, and provide a focal point toward which the road winds along the river. There were numerous views of the gorge and the wooded or pastoral landscape along the river, with vistas of buildings, orchards and fields opening up between wooded areas.

There were also notable views from Ruthton Point, looking down at Ruthton and the gorge to the west. The views from Ruthton Point that one can still enjoy today, were noted by Elliot (1914). The view from the Mitchell Point tunnel is of course lost, and the views preceding the tunnel are partly blocked by trees and interrupted by the chain link safety fence at the Point itself.

The landscape in the 1920s and 1930s was much more open than it is now, and many of the views and vistas are now blocked by the vegetation that has grown up since that time. There are still definable views of Mitchell Point and Wind Mountain from the existing fragments of the road. Also of interest are vistas of waterfalls and rocky draws or cliffs on the south side of the road. The inventory records four such vistas, all compromised by overgrown vegetation.

Most of these views are either gone or have been altered since the historic period. The Columbia River itself has changed dramatically, with the building of dams and dredging that have occurred since the 1930s. Farmland on the river bottom land, rapids and sandbars are all under water. Interstate 84 has replaced many of the farms and houses scattered along the road. However, important elements

Views and Vistas

Area name	Feature ID	Feature Name	View	Condition	Contributing
Ruthton Park 2	11	Panoramic View	Ruthton Point, Columbia River, agricultural fields	Good	Yes
Ruthton Pt 1	70	Panoramic View	Columbia River, framed by canyon walls into distance	Good	Yes
Starvation Creek	863	Framed View	Rock columns through trees	Poor	Unknown
Starvation Creek	620	Framed View	Cabin Creek Falls framed by rocky outcrop and draw	Fair	Yes
Mitchell Pt 3	1705	Framed View	Columbia River, I84, at Mitchell Pt end of HRCH	Fair	Yes
Mitchell Pt 3	100	Framed View	Trees frame high rocky peak in distance	Fair	Yes
Mitchell Pt 2	228	Framed View	Up a draw	Fair	Yes
Perham Creek Mitchell Pt 1	1	Framed View	Mitchell Pt from road segment (picnic area?)	Poor	Unknown
Lindsey Creek	1	Framed View	Wind Mt., I84, Columbia River	Fair	Unknown
Lindsey Creek	283	Framed View	Rocky outcrops frame draw	Poor	Yes
Ruthton Pt 1	299	Panoramic View	Columbia River	Poor	Yes



Panoramic View, Ruthton Point



Framed, axial view of Mitchell Point , overgrown with vegetation



Mitchell Point from Perham Creek



Lindsey Creek, vista up draw

of these views remain in the gorge itself and its surrounding mountains, the river, and the forests.

Small Scale Features, Archaeology, and Vegetation

Small scale features include features such as signs, seats, light poles, and mile posts. Small scale features in the inventoried section include a CCC signpost at Perham Creek, and remnants of posts or poles found elsewhere. Wooden posts still intact in the wet climate of the Gorge are unlikely to be historic.

Vegetation includes specimen trees and designed plantings associated with the road. Although plantings at waysides and specimen trees may well have been part of the design of the road, the vegetation has grown up so much that it would be difficult to identify them. Remnants of old gardens, however, are frequent along the highway, in patches of periwinkle, English Ivy, non-native roses, and other common dooryard species. These were not inventoried. A pair of beech trees (*Fagus sylvatica*) at Mitchell Point defines the barely discernible entry to a path off the old highway, but the trees are in very poor condition.

Archeology includes the remains of settlements and objects associated with the road, or found within the right of way. Foundations, old retaining walls, and piles of artifacts or rubble are examples. Most of the archeological features noted were traces of buildings that once stood along the road. Mitchell Point Segment 3 was particularly rich in these. This inventory did not detail archeological features.