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Open House scheduled for Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail

Federal, state and local officials today announced a July 22 open house to share plans and receive comments on the last 11-mile segment of the proposed Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail between Wyeth and Hood River.

The open house will be held 3:30-7 p.m. at the Hood River County Commission Room, 601 State Street, in Hood River. It is hosted by the Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon Parks and Recreation, the US Forest Service Columbia Gorge Management Unit and Hood River County.

The Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail Plan provides a plan for development of future facilities along the trail, such parking lots, overnight bike camping, and rest rooms. It also identifies opportunities for view points and overlooks along the route. We are inviting the public to participate in the planning process, provide input to help us understand the opportunities and constraints associated with the proposed 11-mile trail. It also helps us plan for and seek the needed funds to reconnect the Historic Columbia River Highway as a significant historic and visitor attraction.

Another open house will be held in Portland on Tuesday, August 24 between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. at ODOT Region 1 offices at 123 NW Flanders, Portland.

Background

The Historic Columbia River Highway was a marvel of engineering and road construction when it was dedicated in 1916, and it remains one of nation's great scenic highways. While many miles of the original highway are intact, other portions were abandoned or eliminated by the construction of Bonneville Dam in 1936, the water route in the 1950's and the construction of Interstate 84 in the 1960s and 1970s.

Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail

The Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail supports the 1987 Oregon Legislature's mandate to complete projects to create "a continuous visitor attraction providing economic development to the communities."

Since 1987, 11 miles of the state trail have been completed. Of the original 73 miles of historic highway, 61 miles are accessible by car on the drivable portions or by foot or bike on the state trail sections. About 12 miles of the state trail await construction. The goal is to complete the remaining 12 miles in time for the 100th anniversary of the Historic Columbia River Highway in 2016.

##ODOT##