

# **WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA**



## **A NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY**



**3<sup>RD</sup> DRAFT - AUGUST 2013**



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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA End of the Oregon Trail and Beginning of America's Pacific Destiny

#### Our Process

We already knew we had a unique and special landscape and history here at Willamette Falls. So when a large group of interested citizens began meeting in 2005 to strategize ways to kick-start economic development, preservation of diminishing heritage locations, and support of struggling museums and interpretive sites, they discovered a heretofore unheard of concept: a national heritage area. Upon further study, they realized they had a nationally distinctive landscape and unique national story to tell. They began researching the possibilities of National Heritage Area (NHA) designation.

After four years of study, public outreach, research & inventory, and organization-building, Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC) determined that the collection of heritage facilities and sites, opportunities for education and interpretation, positive public and private support, potential financial resources, and nationally significant themes, activities and stories existing within the proposed boundary are ideally suited for NHA designation. The vast majority of existing heritage resources are currently unconnected, contained inside a single jurisdictional boundary, often struggling for survival, and unable to sustain visitor expectations or long term marketing. Together they tell the story of American Expansion, Settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail and the Birth of Industry in the American West.

WFHAC is determined to successfully manage a Heritage Area and work to bring this nationally distinctive story together, through cooperative ventures, strategic focus, and partnerships with public and private entities within the boundaries. WFHAC has met the criteria for NHA designation, as shown within this Feasibility Study document.

#### Our Boundaries

The proposed Willamette Falls NHA (about 26 square miles) includes the resource-rich industrial areas along the Willamette River from the mouth of the Tualatin to the mouth of the Clackamas Rivers, the heritage sites and centers in West Linn and Oregon City, and the iron smelting and mining sites in Lake Oswego. In fact, the Lake Oswego area was added very recently, when we realized that our Industrial Heritage theme was incomplete without the iron smelting history and sites. The boundaries embrace all the heritage sites and facilities that augment and describe the story of American Western Expansion, Settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail and Birthplace of Industry.

#### Our Story

As turbulent as the cascading waters, the history surrounding Willamette Falls is the story of America's 19<sup>th</sup> century destiny: to become one nation from sea to shining sea. Because of Willamette Falls, the **United States expanded westward, settled at the End of the Oregon Trail, and birthed innovative industries, included the first long distance transmission of electricity in the nation.** The opportunities for interpreting these themes are many and for connecting the stories and sites to tell a cohesive story





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To understand ‘why it happened here,’ it helps to know that the area was sculpted by some of earth’s most cataclysmic floods, arising from the rupturing of a lake in Montana the size of the state of Oregon, about 18,000-12,000 years ago. These walls of water, called the Missoula Floods or Ice Age Floods, reshaped the Willamette Valley and deposited its legendary fertile soils. The floods left horseshoe-shaped Willamette Falls, the big chief “hyas tyee tumwata” and the centerpiece of our heritage area.

Our story focuses around the waterfall. The Falls’ distinctive geology, water power and unusual abundance first lured generations of tribes and bands who sustained Nature’s balance while harvesting salmon and Pacific lamprey. Their ancestors still fish at Willamette Falls today.

When competing nations discovered the mild climate, water power, and promise of plenty, the race for land control began. But because of the quantity of settlers and community-building activities around the Falls, **a new nation’s boundaries were secured** – and this vast land became American -- and not French, Russian, Spanish or British.

It was Manifest Destiny. It was the imperialistic view held by some in the early 1800’s that it was America’s God-given right to expand clear across the North American continent. Once the mass migration was in full force and free land was offered, the **unprecedented relocation** changed the face of the United States forever. **Willamette Falls was the reward at the End of the Oregon Trail.**

Tragically, the ships, covered wagons, missionaries and fur-trappers from many countries brought diseases which weakened and diminished the Indian tribes who called the Willamette Valley ‘home.’

But the message from the Willamette Falls area was ‘abundance: originally fine beaver pelts, then lumber from giant firs and cedars, water power, fish, game and acres of arable land. It was said that you could walk across a stream on the backs of salmon. The place held a mystique. It was said to be ‘the gateway to the Garden of Eden.’ Those who felt drawn to a new life at the end of the Oregon Trail called it ‘Oregon Fever.’ Those thousands of settlers that came to the Willamette Falls at End of the Oregon Trail anchored the foundations of U.S. government, industrialization, commerce, and innovation unrivaled in America’s Pacific northwest.

*“The opportunities here for water power are equal to any that can be named. There cannot be a better situation for a factory village than on the east side of the river, a dry, wide-spread level extends some distance, and the shores form natural wharves for shipping...I could hardly persuade myself that this river had for many thousands years, poured its waters constantly down these falls without having facilitated the labor of man.” (Parker, 1835)*

Because of its vast power potential, the **Willamette Falls area was at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution, with the first long distance electrical transmission in the nation** – before Niagara Falls. This was the birthplace of a technology that changed everything, revolutionized how people lived.

At 10 pm on June 3, 1889, a switch was thrown in the newly built powerhouse at Willamette Falls and one of four 32.5 kilowatt "No. 8 Brush arc light dynamos" pumped enough electricity over 14 miles of wire to light 55 carbon arc street lamps in downtown Portland—**the first long distance transmission of electricity in the North America.**



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Experimental alternating current (AC) generators ordered from George Westinghouse were shipped in the spring of 1890 to Oregon City. **The first long-distance transmission of alternating current was from Station A at Willamette Falls**, but the date is not certain. One source claims the AC generators were online in late June of 1890; Portland General Electric histories state that it was in early September of 1890.

This place generated power and produced powerful people with great ideas and entrepreneurial energy. In fact, the famous 'War of the Currents,' between Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse was won by Westinghouse's enterprise at Willamette Falls. Westinghouse beat Edison in long distance electrical transmission.

*[Note: The "War of Currents" is often personified as Westinghouse vs. Edison. However, the "War of Currents" was much larger than that. It actually involved both American and European companies whose heavy investments in one current type or the other led them to hope that use of the other type would decline, such that their share of the market for "their" current type would represent greater absolute revenue once the decline of the other current type enabled them to expand their existing distribution networks.<sup>1]</sup>*

The Falls were referred to as the "Niagara of the Pacific" or the "Lowell of the Pacific," because Willamette Falls produced four to six times more hydropower than Lowell, Mass. The paper mills contributed to the booming growth of the newspaper and papermaking industries throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Crown Zellerbach pioneered the coated paper process, which revolutionized papermaking in the American West. Industry in Oregon City began early, when McLoughlin had a mill race blasted into the rock in 1832 to power a saw mill. After that, the industrial hot spot powered grist mills, lumber mills, a world famous woolen mill, hydroelectric plant, and two paper mills that drove the economy of the area. The first iron furnace on the Pacific Coast was built down the river in Lake Oswego (then called Sucker Lake) in 1866, to take advantage of the iron ore, abundant timber, and waterpower.

Although the falling water was a huge advantage to industry, it was a major barrier to commerce. Portages made transportation of goods very difficult even though Oregon City was the crossroads for travel and trade during this period. Finally, after a fire and devastating flood, a portage railroad was built by colorful entrepreneur Ben Holladay, former owner of the Pony Express. It operated until the Willamette Falls Navigational Canal and Locks were completed in 1872. They still exist today.

Dr. John McLoughlin, who built the first mill at the Falls, claimed the area for the English Hudson's Bay Company. But he was a rebel. For his unapproved assistance to arriving pioneers, he was named 'Father of Oregon.' He and his wife Marguerite are buried in Oregon City at their historic McLoughlin House (now part of the National Park Service) and Dr. John's statue stands tall in Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol.

Even though Abraham Lincoln refused President Taylor's offer to be secretary, then governor of the vast Oregon Territory, he maintained close ties to the area. In fact he likely appointed more than 50 people to positions in the Oregon Country during his presidency, making Lincoln the founding father of the Republican party (Whigs) in the five-state territory.

Pioneering leaders with national reputations, such as Henry Villard, Peter Skene Ogden, Francis Ermatinger, Eva Emery Dye, Edwin Markham, George Westinghouse, Edward Eastham, P.F. Morey, Dr Forbes Barclay, Abigail



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Scott Duniway, Marshall Joe Meek, and many others, built homes, industries, schools, churches, libraries and hospitals here. Many still exist.

### **Our Opportunity**

This place, once a hub for innovation, manufacturing, learning, agriculture, commerce and livability, is now rediscovering its roots, its potential and its unique history. Indian trails and routes for millworkers have given way to bike lanes and walking paths. Historic structures are being upgraded and re-programmed. Farm produce has returned to the communities through weekly Farmers' Markets. Tribal members are actively teaching about traditions and new ways of respecting natural resources. History will be written every day as long as the water cascades over the Falls. Our proposed NHA is poised to interpret and share it.

We have the nationally significant landscape and stories. We have the Falls. We have committed partners. We have evaluated and met all ten of the interim criteria proposed by the National Park Service.

Now we are ready for the official designation: Willamette Falls National Heritage Area.





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# Chapter 1: Introduction

### What is a Heritage Area?

***National Heritage Areas are places where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography.***

***-National Park Service definition***

National Heritage Areas present the interconnected stories of nature and human history. They are places with identifiable, nationally significant resources, with stories of broad interest, and public-private support for investment in the community. A strong base of local, grassroots support is essential, with the visible involvement and commitment of residents, government, community groups, non-profits and businesses.

Initiated and coordinated at the local level, heritage areas do not come with rules and regulations and do not have any impact on existing local, state, or federal regulations -- nor do they impact private property rights. Managed locally, heritage areas play vital roles in preserving the physical character, traditions, and stories of our country, reminding us of our national origins and identity.

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress. Newly designated NHAs have three years to develop a management plan, which must be approved by the Secretary of the Interior. The plan defines the mission, vision and goals of the NHA and outlines the strategies that the coordinating entity, partners and residents will use to achieve these objectives.

**The Benefits?** A heritage area is uniquely situated to help achieve the balance between economic development and the conservation of significant historic, natural and cultural resources. Working in partnership with units of government, planning agencies, park agencies, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and foundations, heritage areas promote stewardship, community revitalization and economic development projects, leverage significant resources, collaborate across political boundaries, and inspire greater pride in the region's heritage.

The first National Heritage Area was designated by Congress in 1984, the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, to celebrate the canal era. To date Congress has designated 49 National Heritage Areas across the country --but none in the Pacific Northwest.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the Willamette Falls Heritage Area Feasibility Study is simply to determine if the area encompassing Willamette Falls and the historic sections of Oregon City, West Linn, Lake Oswego and Clackamas County meet the suitability and feasibility requirements for National Heritage Area (NHA) designation.

### The Study Process

Although Congressman Kurt Schrader of Oregon's Fifth Congressional District enthusiastically introduced HR 4081 in 2009, to authorize and fund the Willamette Falls Feasibility Study, the bill died in committee as did so many others during that Congressional session.

But the local communities and National Heritage Area support team were not deterred. Believing strongly in the benefits of NHA designation for this area and in the benefit to the nation of highlighting and preserving this



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significant part of the national story, they raised the necessary money to complete the Feasibility Study. In 2012, this stakeholder group formally became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC). WFHAC developed and guided this study in accordance with the National Park Service's 'National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines' and ten interim criteria for evaluation of candidate areas.



**Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition – 2012 Board of Directors**

*Representing the Ice Age Floods Institute, Oregon State Parks, One Willamette River Coalition, City of West Linn, City of Oregon City, Portland General Electric, Clackamas County, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, Main Street Oregon City, Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs, Clackamas County Arts Alliance, Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Main Street West Linn. Not pictured: West Linn Paper Co., Metro.*

WFHAC is a unique partnership of local and tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, business groups, and private companies who care about the future of the Willamette Falls area, its heritage, its physical assets, its economic vitality and its preservation. WFHAC is the force behind this feasibility study and is already performing as the management entity for the Study Area.

WFHAC created a Themes and Inventories committee to gather, research, and verify information for the study. The Outreach and Communications committee developed the public workshops, citizen involvement, and materials to ensure public input into the Study. Each aspect of the Study has under-gone extensive public review, as documented in this report. The Management and Operations committee provided oversight of all functions, finances, and progress.

This Study summarizes the unique geography of the Study Area and its historical, cultural, recreational and natural resources. It presents an interpretive framework for understanding the national importance of the Willamette Falls and key role of the settlements at the End of the Oregon Trail in shaping the nation's boundaries, industries and way of living. It presents alternatives for managing the heritage area and outlines realistic catalyst projects to further the goals envisioned by the communities.



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### **Environmental Compliance**

Our NHA Feasibility Study has not included an Environmental Assessment because it is not required at this stage in our development. However, we understand that upon designation, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 compliance work will be required not only for our heritage area management plan, but for any future projects requiring federal funding.

### **Description of the Study Area**

The proposed Willamette Falls National Heritage Area stretches eight miles along the beautiful Willamette River, an American Heritage River and National Water Trail. It covers about 26 square miles of water-created landscape and remnants of a transformative Settlement and Industrial period in American history. With thundering Willamette Falls at the heart of the geography of the Study Area as well as at the core of our national stories, the area encompasses the original tribal villages along the river and the pioneer communities that came later, now known as the cities of Oregon City, West Linn, and Lake Oswego, all in Clackamas County. Oregon City was the first and only capital of the Provisional Government and the Oregon Territory, which originally stretched from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, and included the current day Canadian province of British Columbia and U.S. states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon and parts of Montana and Wyoming.

Stand at the Falls Overlook in Oregon City on Oregon 99E. From here you can see the two mills and hydropower generation sites that hug the horseshoe-shaped Falls. Perched on rocky outcroppings and islands in the river, the industries that changed a nation stand as sentinels of the Industrial Age. It is easy to see why Settlement occurred here next to the Falls. The core area of the study includes many historic properties close to the river, including a mix of public and private ownership. Visit the bronze bust of Dr. John McLoughlin that sits facing the Falls, as he and Marguerite did so often after their daily walk along the river in the mid-1800's. McLoughlin's presence reminds us that we could have been English, since the British & the Hudson's Bay Company (McLoughlin was Chief Factor) were quite aggressive in occupying and owning this resource-rich area.

**[NOTE:** If you're headed to Washington D.C., you will discover just how important this British citizen was to the founding pioneers of Oregon, since a statue of Dr. McLoughlin is part of the National Statuary Hall Collection in the United States Capitol Building.]

A short walk up the pedestrian path alongside the river from the overlook will take you to the village of Canemah, 'place of the canoe,' once a thriving steamship-building community and portage area around the Falls. From this vantage point 200 years ago, you would have seen the fires of many tribal villages along the river and in the forests.

Take a walk to the center of Conde McCullough's recently restored Oregon City-West Linn Arch Bridge. Stop below those graceful arches and appreciate the great view of the paper mill operations, the Locks, and the power plant that dominate the river's western shoreline, as they once influenced America's future. Look into the mouth of the 140-year old Willamette Falls Navigational Canal and Locks, built to uncork the bottleneck that the Falls created for shipping.

Upriver from the Falls is another Willamette tributary, the Tualatin River and its two important parks: Willamette Park and Fields Bridge Park, where you can learn about the massive Ice Age Floods and the largest meteorite in North America, the Willamette Meteorite, relocated to West Linn thousands of years ago by



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hitchhiking on the glaciers. In Willamette Park, you can find Bernert Landing where Bernert barges moved log rafts down the river more than a century ago.

You will want to explore the Willamette Falls Heritage Trail and visit 30 sites of significance established during the Settlement and Industrial heyday of the heritage area. This area was nurtured and sustained by the stable resources at the Falls: fish, hydropower, and ready transportation of commercial goods to international markets and trading centers.

Grab your kayak and paddle downriver from the Falls. Watch for Pacific lamprey and Chinook salmon. You will have to dodge the 'hoglines' in the river, fishing boats tied together to create more challenges for the migrating salmon and steelhead. Look out for the huge California sea lions that follow the salmon runs and look for an easy catch when they hear the shout, "Fish on!"

When you see the Clackamas River entering the Willamette, you are near where the Clackamas Indian village once sat. You are also near the federally designated End of the Oregon Trail at Abernethy Green, the terminus of the Oregon National Historic Trail. The Visitor Center and programs at the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center will transport you back to the 1840-50s when tens of thousands of pioneers arrived here via covered wagons, exhausted, cold and hungry. They finished their journey just as winter was about to begin and rested up before they dispersed up and down the fertile Willamette Valley, along the coast and into current-day Washington. Their pioneering stories are legendary.

Look for the rocky islands in the river that host rare Oregon white oaks and blue heron rookeries. Along the way you will pass many public parks and private docks, frequented by water fowl and people.

Continue your journey down the Willamette River to George Rogers Park in Lake Oswego. Here stands a rare and important stone structure from 1866: the only surviving Civil War era iron furnace west of the Rockies. This iron smelting industry once supported similar structures from San Francisco to Vancouver, BC. Walking the Oswego Iron Heritage Trail takes you to seven sites associated with Oregon's iron industry and past Oswego Lake, 400 acres in the middle of the city.

You may wish to finish your tour in the charming Willamette Historic District in West Linn and take a walking tour past turn-of-the-century homes and heritage trees. Or Oregon City's Main Street may lure you into its thriving business district to discover sites of historic significance. Wherever you turn in the historic area, the stories of Native tribes and their continued presence, early settlement and innovative industry at the End of the Oregon Trail are easily discovered and readily enjoyed.

### **Public Involvement Strategies**

Over the past three years, Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC) has held a series of forums and gatherings to involve the public in the development of the vision for the heritage area, as well as the other elements of the Feasibility Study.

Public meetings, events, workshops, planning sessions, and booths at summertime fairs and festivals gave WFHAC Board members opportunities to hear stories from residents, gain insights into public opinions, and receive input and feedback about potential future plans for the area. Several hundred people attended the



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workshops and gave WFHAC invaluable information on items needed for this study, including the boundaries, management alternatives, history and themes for the Heritage Area. Over 350 people were directly involved in the study process, with another 15,000 targeted through marketing and promotions.

The history of the area was compiled by known experts in specific areas. WFHAC requested information and research from nearly 50 individuals who willingly provided the narratives and references that helped shape the stories and themes of the study.



**1.3 – Discussion leader Lloyd Purdy, executive director of Main Street Oregon City, engages the public in brainstorming about heritage area projects at a Willamette Falls Heritage Area planning meeting at the Museum of the Oregon Territory in Oregon City – Fall 2010.**

### **Imagine the Possibilities**

In 2008 and 2009, WFHAC worked with landscape architecture students at the University of Oregon. The professors developed a series of studios to allow students to develop concepts, drawings and scale models for the proposed National Heritage Area. The final visual products from these studios provided colorful and intriguing examples of the potential for redevelopment and enhancement of areas surrounding the Falls. This student work was the basis of our very first public open house, where guests were invited to “imagine the possibilities.”

The first draft of this feasibility study was sent out for Public Comment in early 2012. The document and feedback sheets were available on-line and in the public libraries in all Study Area communities. From the information and comments received throughout the public comment period, the Feasibility Study document and its contents have undergone many changes and significant revisions. This was a helpful and illuminating process that made our Feasibility Study stronger and more focused on its themes.

### **Public Response was Positive**

WFHAC has received an overwhelmingly positive response from the public and community leaders regarding the establishment of the Willamette Falls National Heritage Area. The benefits of creating a heritage area have been easily understood and enthusiastically embraced by both individuals and organizations.

Nearly all of the responses received from government entities, businesses, organizations, and individuals included a desire to be involved and to assist in furthering the efforts to preserve and advance the revitalization of the area and its national designation.





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### Coordinating with ongoing Studies and Initiatives

The Willamette Falls area is currently a hotbed of planning and study processes, particularly focused on the dormant Blue Heron Paper Company sites (23 acres on the Oregon City waterfront and 39 acres on the West Linn waterfront) and the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for preservation and redevelopment adjacent to the Falls. Local partners, including WFHAC, are involved in the planning for redevelopment that includes preservation of important structures, public access, cultural interpretation and habitat restoration.

Other active organizations, which also include Board members from WFHAC, are working on critical heritage projects in the Study Area:

- reopening of the Willamette Falls Locks and transfer of ownership from the Army Corps to a new operating authority (One Willamette River Coalition, Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation)
- rehabilitation of 1845 Ermatinger House (City of Oregon City and Historic Preservation League of Oregon)
- restoring open visitor days at McLoughlin House (National Park Service)
- reprogramming at the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center (Clackamas Heritage Partners)
- beginning a recreational river user study (Oregon Marine Board)

WFHAC has been actively involved in many of the studies listed below. We believe this is due to recognition of the depth of knowledge, strength of advocacy, and growing influence that WFHAC board members and partners bring to the processes and projects in the Study Area.

### Completed Studies:

1. [Willamette Falls Legacy Project Site Stabilization and Building Assessment Report](#) – a study that examined and assessed the condition of the existing buildings on the OC Blue Heron Site
2. [Willamette Falls Legacy Project Habitat and Water Resources Opportunities](#) – a study that examined the environmental landscape of the Blue Heron site
3. [2002 Willamette Falls Industrial Area, Request For Determination Of Eligibility](#) – a study commissioned by PGE (Portland General Electric) for FERC relicensing
4. [Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Result](#) – environmental assessment of the Blue Heron site
5. [Catalytic Value of the Willamette Falls Project](#) – a study of the economics of redevelopment of the Blue Heron site
6. [History of Willamette River Transportation](#) – 1996 Clackamas County Historic Resource Planners
7. [Nomination of Willamette River as American Heritage River](#) – 1997, Curtis Robinhold, Natural Resource Policy Coordinator, Office of the Governor, State of Oregon
8. [Willamette Falls Locks Economic Impact Analysis](#) – 2005, Clackamas County Tourism Development





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Council and Oregon Tourism Commission

9. The Willamette Falls Locks: A Case Study Analysis of Potential Transfer Issues – 2008, CEDER: Center for Economic Development Education and Research for One Willamette River Coalition
10. National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet for The Canal and Locks at Willamette Falls – 2009, Wm. Hanable for One Willamette River Coalition
11. Rediscovering a United Willamette River: Upper Port Scope – 2012, Michael Bernert, Dept. of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Duke University for One Willamette River Coalition

### Studies Underway

1. Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs: Heritage/Cultural Asset Inventory and Assessment. Completion set for early 2014.
2. Willamette Falls Master Plan – a plan for public engagement in creating a Master Plan for the Oregon City Blue Heron site. Completion set for early 2014.
3. West Linn Blue Heron Task Force – a large citizen group, commissioned by the City of West Linn, to plan the future of the West Linn Blue Heron site
4. Ice Age Floods Geologic Trail, from Missoula, Montana, through Idaho, Washington and Oregon to the Pacific Ocean (planning for waysides, interpretive centers and markers, and trail)
5. Economic Benefits/Cost Analysis Study of Reopening the Willamette Falls Navigation Canal and Locks – commissioned by the Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation
6. Feasibility Study for Transferring Willamette Falls Navigation Canal and Locks Out of Army Corps Ownership – two-part study from ACOE and new owner perspectives

### Steps to be Undertaken at the Conclusion of the Study

This Feasibility Study has undergone a first public review, was revised and publicly reviewed a second time. It is our conclusion, after nearly three years of research and study, that all of the criteria for National Heritage Area designation have been met and that the Willamette Falls area is a candidate for Congressional designation as an official National Heritage Area.

A National Heritage Area designation will provide credibility, authority and momentum to existing projects and programs that are bringing together community and governmental resources to promote the heritage of this amazing place. The national designation will greatly aid in providing centrality and focus to previously disjointed efforts at heritage interpretation of this important piece of the American story. National designation will also



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expand the collaborative atmosphere and approach to heritage preservation and management throughout the Willamette Falls Heritage Area.

Recognition of this NHA will bring national attention to what we at the regional level already know: that this area is an extremely important piece of the history of the American settlement of the West, that as the End of the Oregon Trail it is a key part of the story of the expansion of the United States from “sea to shining sea,” that the area was a key catalyst for the growth of industry and commercialization in the western half of the nation, and that the Willamette Falls NHA contains significant pieces of the history of the United States, including the proof that an amazing new invention (electricity) could be sent long distances over wires strung on poles – a process that changed the world!

### **Next steps will include:**

- Delivering the study to the Secretary of the Interior and National Park Service for review and comment, in partnership with U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley and U.S. Congressman Kurt Schrader, both of Oregon.
- Designation by Congress as a National Heritage Area.
- Scheduling the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Willamette Falls National Heritage Area.



## CHAPTER 2 – STUDY AREA HISTORY AND CONTRIBUTIONS

# ~ Willamette Falls Heritage Area ~

## Gateway to America's Expansion From Sea to Shining Sea



*Fig. 4-1 Hyas Tyee Tumwata, "Great Chief Waterfall."*

## Where Settlement & Industry Secured the Nation's Boundaries

**Oregon City** (first named Willamette Falls) is no longer the capital of the vast Oregon Territory and it is no longer the capital of Oregon. Although it is the 15<sup>th</sup> largest city in Oregon today, Oregon City was once the 'mother city' of the West, the most important and influential community west of the Rocky Mountains. When American settlers arrived at the End of the Oregon Trail, they were foundational to cementing United States boundaries, creating new institutions, and birthing transformative industries. All because of a waterfall: Willamette Falls.

For formative decades in the 1800s, the Willamette Falls area was the epicenter of government, industry, transportation, innovation, and commerce in northwestern United States.

Because of Willamette Falls, 12 key industries and manufacturing plants located along the Willamette River. Although only a single paper mill and a hydroelectric plant remain today, they are a signature reminder of the milling heyday when the area around Willamette Falls was at the forefront of the industrial revolution and formed the greatest concentration of industrial activity in the western United States. Fortunately, those early



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mills left their mark on the landscape and on the people living near the Falls, and are part of the story for the Willamette Falls Heritage Area.

Because of the reliability and enormous hydropower of Willamette Falls, prosperity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was defined differently. The first long distance transmission of electricity from Willamette Falls to Portland (14 miles) revolutionized the world and changed the patterns of living, learning and leisure, and of course industry.

The abundance of resources at Willamette Falls became a magnet for explorers, settlers, entrepreneurs and traders from many countries. Americans risked their lives on the Oregon Trail and settled in greater numbers than European competitors. They put down deep roots in the Northwest and spread out from the End of the Oregon Trail throughout the Oregon Territory. Thus the vast Oregon Territory became part of the United States with nary a shot being fired.

### **The Potential of Willamette Falls Was Recognized in 1835**

*"The opportunities here for water power are equal to any that can be named. There cannot be a better situation for a factory village than on the east side of the river, a dry, wide-spread level extends some distance, and the shores form natural wharves for shipping...I could hardly persuade myself that this river had for many thousands years, poured its waters constantly down these falls without having facilitated the labor of man." (Parker, 1835)*

## **THE AMAZING STORY OF THE WILLAMETTE FALLS AREA**

### **Ice Age Floods Shaped the Falls Region -- and Our Unique History**

One cannot understand why this area became nationally significant without knowing about the cataclysmic Ice Age Floods that shaped and 'fertilized' the entire Willamette Valley. The Falls themselves were formed over 15 million years ago from repeated volcanic basalt flows from eastern Oregon and northern Idaho. But the valley above and around Willamette Falls was sculpted by a series of cataclysmic floods -- not just any old floods, but among the **largest ever to occur on earth!** Ice dams containing gigantic Glacial Lake Missoula in Montana (as large as Lakes Erie and Ontario combined) formed and broke several times 12,000 to 15,000 years ago, sending tremendous masses of water and ice careening over 16,000 square miles in Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. **The peak flow rate was ten times the combined volume of all the rivers of the world!**

The floods sculpted extraordinary landscapes and distinctive geologic features, moving huge boulders weighing many tons to new locations far from their origin. These 'glacial erratics' are regularly found near the Falls. On their way, the floodwaters scoured the land of topsoil and deposited glacial silt, or loess, in the Willamette Valley, thus providing the legendary rich and fertile land stretching along the Willamette River above the Falls for more than 100 miles. **This soil is said to be among the best in the world** and over 100' deep in some places. The Floods transformed the Falls area and shaped its environment, influencing the use of the land and its resources, from early tribal people to contemporary societies in northwestern United States.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### First Ones at Willamette Falls...

Indigenous tribes and bands, as the earliest human presence in the area, understood the importance of the Falls as a provider of food and sustenance and as a spiritual place. The Falls were a gathering place for many tribes throughout western North America.

#### Willamette Falls had Other Names

Chinook Name: ikHishachk

Chinook Wawa Name: T\_mwata

Alternate spelling: dfNwAda

Alternate spelling: Tum-water

Clawewalla Name: Kwgchyawhesuschk1

Northern Kalapuya Name: Chatuulik

Alternate spelling: tcha tUlik\_

Alternate spelling: tcaDú'lik

Molalla Name: chakAawa

To native people the waterfall was the spirit and soul of the river and represented a sacred place. For hundreds of generations of Clackamas, Molalla and Clow-we-wal-la (*Kwgchyawhesuschk*) Indians, the Falls were the heart of life and trade. Their villages thrived along the riverbanks between the base of the Falls and the Clackamas River Rapids. (The name "Willamette" is derived from a local Clackamas village called Walamt, or a Yakama word meaning 'blue water.')

### CREATION OF THE FALLS

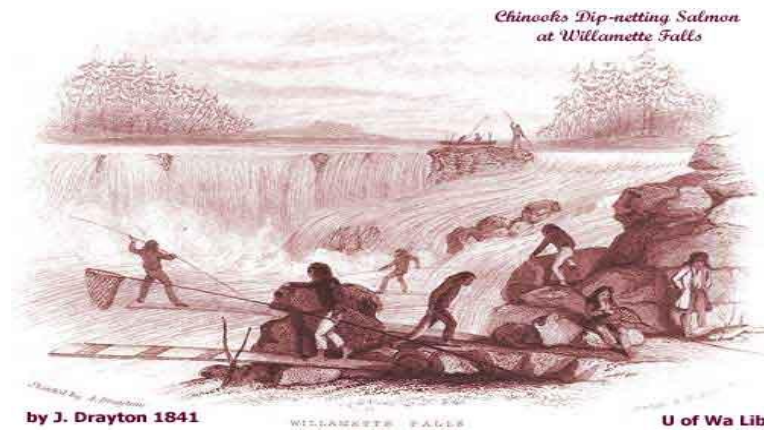
A Clackamas Chinook story tells how Willamette Falls was created by Coyote. Coyote came to a place near Willamette Falls and found the people very hungry. The river was full of salmon, but they had no way to spear them in the deep water. Coyote decided he would create a big waterfall, so that the salmon would come to the surface and be caught. He would build a salmon-trap. First he tried at the mouth of the Pudding River, but it was no good and he ended up with just a gravel bar there. So he went to Rock Island and it was better, but after making the rapids there, he gave up again and went farther down still. Soon he came to a place called "Tumwata" and found just the right place. He made the Falls high and wide. All the people came to fish...

*The first tribe of Indians are the Kallamooks, on the left bank, on a small stream of the same name, 30 miles from its mouth : 2d are Keowewallahs, alias Tummewatas or Willhametts. This tribe, now nearly extinct, was formerly very numerous, and live at the falls of the river, 32 miles from its mouth, on the right bank. They claim the right of fishing at the falls, and exact a tribute from other tribes who come hither in salmon season (from May till October.) Principal chiefs deceased. This river at the present day takes its name from this tribe.*

*William Slacum report to Congress 1836*



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY



*Figs. 1-1 Joseph Drayton sketch 1841 - Indians dip netting for salmon at Willamette Falls*

**Lieutenant Charles Wilkes on a U.S. Naval expedition 1838-1842 described the Falls and the fishery:**

*The river at the falls is three hundred and fifty yards wide, and its greatest fall twenty-five feet. When the water is not very high, the rapids begin some distance above the falls. Some of the Indians are in the habit of coming down in canoes to the brink of the falls, where they secure themselves by thrusting down poles in the crevices of the rock. There they take many fish, that have succeeded in passing the lower fall, with a hook fastened to the end of a pole. These are esteemed to be of the best flavour, as they are the strongest and the fattest. It is said from these places the fish can be seen very distinctly passing up, and are taken very rapidly; but few Indians are willing or expose themselves to the risk of fishing there. The number of Indians at Willamette Falls during the fishing season, is about seventy, including all ages and sexes: there are others who visit the falls in canoes for fish, which at times will raise the number to not far from one hundred. Those fish which are unable to get up, remain some time at the falls, very much exhausted, and finally resort to the smaller streams below. Mr. Drayton's sketch of the scene is given in the vignette.*

**Lt. Charles Wilkes, "Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the Years 1838-42, published in 1845.**

Willamette Falls was a very important resource to tribes of the region. As a stricture in the river, the Falls funneled anadromous salmon and Pacific Lamprey eels into a constricted area, where they were forced to leap or climb to their spawning grounds, making them easy netting for those who fished at the Falls. Steelhead, smelt, and small sturgeon were plentiful at the Falls—enough to enrich the tribes beyond simple survival, and permitted trading outside the tribe.

The Clackamas tribes and bands were Kiksht speakers. The Chinookan tribes, including the Clackamas, were tied by kinship, a common culture and a common language. Several hundred tribes and bands lived in the region, using many languages and dialects, making communication with neighboring tribes difficult. In order to talk to the Kalapuyans who lived upstream of Willamette Falls, the Chinookan tribes had to speak Chinuk Wawa, a trade jargon that was used throughout the northwest. The development of trade languages and Indian sign language assisted in communications.

The Clackamas built villages near the Falls and claimed the area, access to the Falls and to the salmon taken



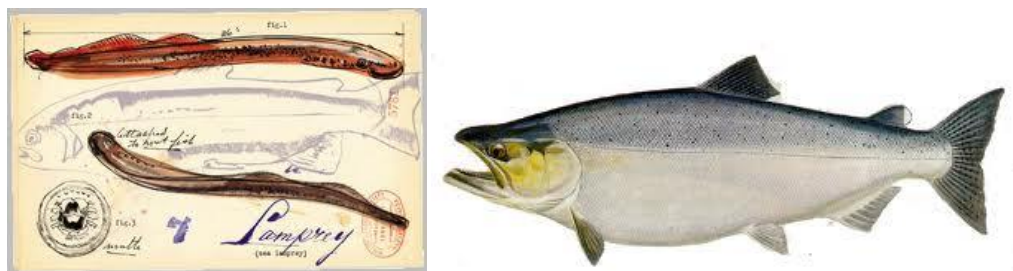


## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

there. Tribes who traveled to this prime fishing location to catch anadromous salmon, lamprey and other fish met with the Clackamas headmen and offered a 'price' for the opportunity to fish at the Falls. It might be a portion of their catch or the gifting of trade goods brought from home. The area was a major gathering place where tribes from all over would come to trade, fish, marry and meet old friends.

At the Falls, tribes traded huckleberries, animal hides, ooligan smelt, sturgeon, smoked salmon, medicinal herbs, tobacco, pheasant, duck, quail, acorns, roots, canoes and clothing. Even the more distant Siletz and Warm Springs tribes visited to trade and interact with others at the Falls.

The Clackamas Tribe would organize social events such as dances at the Falls to display hospitality and wealth. Seasonal harvests, marriages, and festivities were celebrated, as well as convening of the more serious Tribal Councils to settle disputes or plan policies.



*Pacific Lamprey and Chinook salmon.*

Salmon have become an icon in the Pacific Northwest, but lamprey harvests were just as sacred and as significant to the tribes. Pacific Lamprey, reported to be 650 million years old, are jawless fish-like vertebrates, characterized by a toothed, funnel-like sucking mouth by which they cling to rocks—perhaps not as appealing in looks as the well-known salmon. Harvested in early summer, the tradition continues today. In fact, **Willamette Falls has the largest tribal harvest of lamprey in the world.**

The Falls and river, valley, and upland and lowland forests provided unparalleled bounty—not only food, but also the material necessities of life. The forests of Western red cedar, for instance, provided clothing, canoes, and shelter as seen in the village longhouses. These dwellings provided for communal cooking and sleeping and were built along the lower river near the Falls.

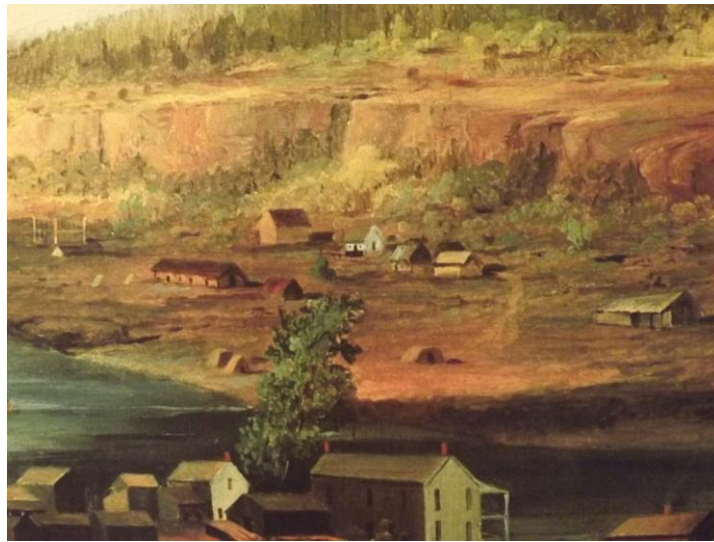
For thousands of years, the culture of the region remained stable and supported a stable population. Then in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, change arrived. It came first via stories of different-looking people, white people. Next, transformative products began to appear through native trade networks. Trade goods such as horses made travel faster and metal knives made work easier.

Then came more change: Disease. Malaria, influenza, measles, smallpox and tuberculosis crossed the continent and ocean from person to person, village to village, and region to region very quickly. As the diseases spread, the epidemics were catastrophic for the tribes, as the people did not have any built up resistance to the germs and viruses. The decimation of Native people in 19<sup>th</sup> century epidemics severely disrupted traditional life in the Willamette Falls area.



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In the Willamette Valley, complete villages were abandoned. Explorers such as David Douglas encountered empty villages in the 1830s. In the 1840s, Methodist missionaries found few Indians to convert to Christianity and therefore started schools instead. During the 1840s and 50s, the greatest number of emigrants flowed into the Oregon Country. They encountered essentially no resistance to settlement in the Willamette Valley, because there were no longer enough of the Clackamas and Kalapuyan people to resist the onslaught of the pioneers. Regrettably, by the 1850s, about 97% of the region's native populations had died from disease. [Boyd, Robert. "The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence," 1999]



*This section of John Mix Stanley's Oregon City painting is of the west side of the Willamette River at the Falls. It shows the Plankhouse of the Clowewala Chief at the far right. Some of the small huts at the riverside are for fish processing, storage and servant's quarters. On the far left are fish drying scaffolds.*



*Rene' de Girardin drawing of a Clackamas tribal house with Willamette Falls in the background.*



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Drastic change came also to the native landscape, brought about by settlers and trappers over-harvesting beaver and sea otters, killing of game animals, overgrazing of livestock, and pollution of natural resources. It became impossible for Native people to continue living as they had for tens of thousands of years in their natural and spiritual homeland.

The last longhouse on the west bank at the Falls was criminally burned in the early 1850s and treaty records state that a small group remained at the ferry crossing until 1856.

In 1856, the remaining Indians in the region were shunted to reservations (Grand Ronde, Siletz, and Warm Springs) without consideration for tribal affiliations or even family ties. Most of the tribes and bands in the Willamette Falls vicinity were sent to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation more than 60 miles from their homeland, in the foothills of the Coast Range. There they were left to coexist with myriad other tribes from even further away, far removed from their Falls, their fishery, and their beautiful, sacred and navigable river.

Some Molalla people were placed at the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO) as well as Grand Ronde, creating family ties between the two Tribes. The many bands of the Wasco people from the Columbia River area who traveled to the Falls for trade, fishing, and social networking, were also placed at the CTWSRO and the Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation (YN). Members of the neighboring Watlala tribes, the Cascades, who signed the Willamette Valley Treaty, were removed to the temporary White Salmon Reservation. They were then removed to Yakima and many today are members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

### **The Tribes and Willamette Falls Today**

The modern-day Grand Ronde, Siletz, and Warm Springs people all have distinct and important economic and cultural ties to the Willamette Falls area. Even after treaties were signed ceding the area to the federal government in the 1850s, families would obtain passes to leave the reservations and travel to set up fishing camps at the Falls. Chinookan and other tribes have continued an uninterrupted presence at the Falls for 15,000 years.

Tribal stories not only provide a context for Euro-American exploration, settlement, and innovation, but are also the foundation of the region's character today. Chinookan and other tribes continue to share their languages, culture, stories, and traditions today, as they celebrate 15,000 years of uninterrupted presence at the Falls.

Oregon's reputation for environmental innovation and land stewardship is rooted in the stories of *hyas tyee tumwata*, enriching the fiber of Willamette Falls history. The tribes are partners with the United States government and the State of Oregon in studies at the Falls and work to maintain a healthy ecosystem for fish in the Willamette River Basin.

The Willamette Falls area meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria as a Traditional Cultural Property and is recognized as such by the tribes. [Under section 106 as Criteria A,B,C, and under Section 101(d)6(a) as a important religious and cultural property for an Indian Tribe as supported by Bulletin 38.]



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### Fur Traders and British at the Falls

By the early 1800s, French-Canadian and Russian trappers, pursuing valuable furs, already had a strong presence in the Oregon Country and had discovered powerful Willamette Falls. But it was Great Britain who claimed the area through the influential Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) under the leadership of Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin. McLoughlin was given immense power by King Charles II, including the right to decide the fate of Indians in the Oregon Territory. Although HBC headquarters was established at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River, McLoughlin saw the future at Willamette Falls and in 1829 set up an HBC outpost there and laid claim to property, including a small island for the erection of a mill.

*McLoughlin "for himself took possession of the land and water power at the falls of the Willamette River on the east side of the river...situated near the crest of the falls. Its location made it valuable for convenient use of water power..."*

### U.S. Leaders Didn't Like the British Encroachment

U.S. President Thomas Jefferson didn't like imperialism, but believed it was not in the country's best interest to have contiguous land held by Britain. He sent Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their famous Corps of Discovery expedition in 1805-1806 to seek "the most direct and practicable water-communication across the continent, for the purposes of commerce" with the Indians. Although the Corps of Discovery did not actually make it to the Willamette Falls (and actually missed the entrance to the Willamette River both directions on their Columbia River passage), Clark returned in 1806 and paddled several miles up the Willamette (called "Multnomah River" by a Chinook guide of Lewis and Clark). His journal noted the many tribes along the Willamette River and the "very large salmon fishery at that place."

*This Indian also informed me that Multnomah above the falls was crowded with rapids and thickly inhabited by Indians of the Cal-leh-po-e-wah Nation (Lewis, et al. 1969d:254-255, sic)*

The United States Exploring Expedition, sometimes called the Wilkes Expedition, passed through the Willamette Valley in 1841 while traveling along the Siskiyou Trail. The expedition members noted extensive salmon fishing by natives at Willamette Falls, much like that at Celilo Falls on the Columbia River.<sup>[48]</sup>

Shortly before his death in 1845, President Andrew Jackson became obsessed with the idea that Great Britain was trying to hem in the United States and block its territorial growth by establishing political control of such areas as California and Oregon. In Jackson's words, this kind of encirclement would "form an iron hoop that would cost oceans of blood to burst asunder."

### What motivated the U.S. to expand to the Oregon Country? Manifest Destiny?

In 1811, John Quincy Adams wrote to his father: *The whole continent of North America appears to be destined by Divine Providence to be peopled by one nation, speaking one language, professing one general system of religious and political principles, and accustomed to one general tenor of social usages and customs.*

Adams quoted in McDougall 1997, p. 78.

They called it Manifest Destiny. It was a divine right. It became a rallying cry for American expansion when John



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O'Sullivan, writing in the New York Morning News, urged that the United States had the right to all of the Oregon Territory in its heated boundary dispute with Great Britain. At that time, Oregon was a vast country stretching west of the Rockies to the Pacific Ocean and from California to Alaska, encompassing the present day states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and the Canadian Province of British Columbia. Manifest Destiny played an important role in U.S. expansion.

*And that claim is by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us.*  
*John O'Sullivan, December 1845*

### Joint Occupation – Discouraging Settlement

John Adams orchestrated the Treaty of 1818, which provided for joint U.S.-British occupation of the Columbia District or as the Americans named it, the Oregon Country. Joint occupation seemed a good idea, but Britain's powerful Hudson's Bay Company, administered by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver, controlled nearly all northwest trading throughout the 1820s and 1830s, which discouraged Americans from exploring and settling in the territory. Back east, people were beginning to hear about the tremendous potential around Willamette Falls from explorers and missionaries, but few settlers felt encouraged to make their way west with HBC's trading monopoly in place.

### Missionaries Make the Oregon Country Safer for Settlement

Among the first Americans in the Oregon Country and in the Willamette Falls area were Protestant Missionaries sent by the Methodist-Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches. Their mission was to bring the Word of God to the Indians, those who survived after the early explorers' diseases ravaged the population. They largely failed in their primary goal to convert the Indians to Christianity, but they played a significant role in the westward expansion of the United States. Their missions and churches provided an incentive for emigrants to come west and gave an appearance of civilization in a wild and untamed land.

In 1834, Jason Lee, a Canadian Methodist-Episcopalian, started the first transcontinental mission in America, upriver from Willamette Falls. But he became concerned about the lack of white women in Oregon when he saw white men marrying Indian women, so he started a recruitment effort to attract Americans from the east to Oregon. He travelled east in 1838 and went on a speaking tour selling the virtues of Oregon and the Willamette Valley as an Eden-like promised land. He was successful. Besides new missionaries and settlers, skilled laborers, farmers, doctors, and craftsmen as well as some members of Oregon's future provisional government arrived by ship in 1840. On board was the Rev. Alvin Waller and his supporters, dispatched by the Methodist Church to organize a congregation at Willamette Falls (now Oregon City), the first community in the northwest to have both a church and a mission.

The Catholics were aligned politically and nationally with the French-Canadians and directly with Great Britain. The Americans were in a race to settle the Oregon Territory ahead of the British and claim the land for the United States and Protestantism.





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*First Protestant church in the Oregon Territory: Methodist Episcopal Church & Mission, Oregon City, 1844.*

The intense rivalry between the Protestants and Catholics at Willamette Falls was noted in Rev. Alvin F. Waller's Diary, 1841:

*Sund. 14 Held meetings with my Indians as usual. Found that the Catholic priest had been down in my absence endeavoring to set the Indians against me giving them beads with crosses attached to them &c.*

Finding little need for converting the Indians, the Methodist Mission at Willamette Falls (which was the name of both the community and the waterfall) established the **first school for Americans in the territory, the Oregon Institute in 1842.** Those who settled with Waller's group created trades and industry which would be instrumental in America's quest for Oregon Country sovereignty.

### ***A need for government***

The Panic of 1837 took the United States into an economic depression with bank failures, currency problems, and a widespread inability to repay loans. Many in the east were cut out of work and intense flooding along the Missouri, Mississippi, and Ohio Rivers during the late 1830s left many in the Midwest homeless. These conditions—combined with the praise of the Willamette Falls as a 'Garden of Eden' by Jason Lee and others—made the Willamette Valley appear as an attractive alternative to living in the rest of the country and convinced those seeking a new life to take the long trip west. Many traveled by ship around the Horn of South America and via the Sandwich Islands (Hawaiian Islands) up the Columbia and the Willamette Rivers to the growing town at Willamette Falls. Thousands of others took the overland route, the Oregon Trail that ended in Oregon City.

As settlement and farming brought more people to the Oregon Country, a need for some sort of legal stability and structure became more urgent. With the decline of the British influence, the fur trade, and with the French-Canadian fur trappers (former employees of the Hudson's Bay Company) settling down in the Willamette Valley, concerns grew over the future of the Oregon Country.

The Willamette Falls Lyceum and Debating Society held its first meeting in 1840 at the Willamette Falls home of Sidney Moss. The forum was an opportunity for the leading settlers to debate government issues and discuss scientific pursuits, literature, and other local concerns, **and was a precursor to the government discussion that**





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would later convene at Champoeg.

While the need for government was evident, it took a catalyst to bring it about. In 1841, wealthy cattle rancher Ewing Young died without a will or heir. The inheritance questions instigated a series of meetings at Champoeg, just up river from Willamette Falls. Meeting participants appointed a probate judge and discussed the notion of creating a government for the Oregon Country, but nothing was decided.

Meanwhile, the strong presence of French Canadian Catholics in the valley fueled fears that Britain intended to annex the Oregon Country. It was rumored in 1842 that Daniel Webster, in negotiations with Lord Ashburton of England concerning the boundary between the U.S. and Canada at Maine, was about to concede the Oregon Country to Britain.

Meetings reconvened to discuss predatory animals, but the urgency of creating a territorial government prevailed. At Champoeg, a decision to establish the Provisional Government won with a vote of 52-50.

### **Oregon City is Capital of the new Provisional Government**

The first governmental meetings were held at Willamette Falls (today's Oregon City) in May and June of 1843 at Alvin Waller's Methodist Church. Here, the committee forged the skeleton of a government and Willamette Falls resident George Abernethy was elected the first governor. The Provisional Government was to last and settlers were to abide by its laws "until such time as the United States of America extend their jurisdiction over us." This phrase made the interim government decidedly American and ended efforts to make Oregon a separate country.



*Seal of the Oregon Provisional Government 1843*

The committee met again in Champoeg and on July 5<sup>th</sup> 1843, the Organic Laws of Oregon, the territory's first constitution, was ratified. The first set of laws guaranteed freedom of religion and the right to a trial by jury, encouraged education, prohibited slavery but excluded Blacks from the Oregon Territory, and dealt with measures including Indian property rights. They also directed the territorial government's policy towards Tribal nations: *Of utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians, their lands and property shall never be taken away from them without their consent and in their property, rights and liberty they shall never be disturbed unless it be in just and lawful laws, authorized by the representatives of the people (Carey 1971:336).*

The Provisional Government intended this law to help manage the settlement and actions of the initial waves of settlers to Oregon. In the following year, over 800 Americans arrived in Oregon. The statement in the Organic Act by the Territorial Legislative Commission demonstrates that the provisional government initially intended to protect the rights of the Indians.



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The second set of laws, which would stimulate even more settlement and was crucial to western expansion, included provisions for married couples to claim up to 640 acres of land and unmarried settlers 320 acres at no cost. These claims were not valid under British or U.S. law at that time, but were eventually honored by the United States in the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850, a precursor of the 1862 Homestead Act. The Provisional Government in Oregon City passed the first militia law in July 1843, but in reality militia units were never formed due to the political climate. The large population of French Canadians and British HBC officials and employees did not recognize the new government and distrusted the formation of any organized military unit in the disputed territory.

Things changed in March 1844 when a Wasco Indian named Cockstock and four Molalla Indians rode into the town of Willamette Falls, brandishing weapons and threatening local citizens. George LeBraton, clerk of the Provisional Government, attempted to arrest them but received a fatal gunshot wound. An arrow also killed an innocent bystander. In the melee that followed, Cockstock was slain by Winslow Anderson, a free black settler, but the Molallas escaped unharmed. Until this time, relations with the Indians had been good and the military force authorized by the territorial government had never needed to be officially formed. As word of the Cockstock incident spread, **the first military unit in the territory was organized—a 25-man company of mounted riflemen.**

### Seeking the American Dream

Despite the prominence of Fort Vancouver and the HBC, American settlement in the Oregon Territory far outstripped British Canadian efforts, mainly former employees of Hudson's Bay Company. In 1844, there were approximately six Americans to every British subject, or 6000 to 1000. (Lewis, et al. 1969d: 402)

Regardless of which country laid claim to the territory, Americans were flooding into Willamette Falls and the adjacent valley. Already new enterprises were underway: stores and churches were built; a furniture factory and ship building facility were underway; mills were constructed; rules of law were established (including the first jail), as well as schools and a library system. The small outpost of Willamette Falls was renamed Oregon City in **1844, the first incorporated city west of the Rocky Mountains.**

***Oregon City is the single most important historical site in the American West. It is astonishing that a site of such importance in the history of the United States has been left uncommemorated in any significant fashion.***  
**(Terence O'Donnell, historian, author, 1990)**

The divisive issue of sovereignty in the Pacific Northwest between the U.S. and Great Britain began heating up. President James K. Polk ran his 1844 campaign with the slogan "54-40 or fight," urging the United States to claim its northwest boundary at the 54<sup>th</sup> parallel, the southern tip of modern-day Alaska. Great Britain, on the other hand, called for its jurisdiction to extend down to the 42nd Parallel, today's northern border of California.



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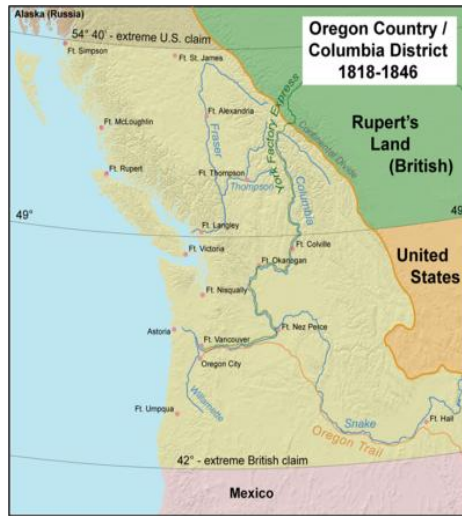


Fig. 1-5 Map of U.S.-Britain territorial border dispute

Publicity from Oregon Country boosters deliberately fed the land grab. Peter H. Burnett (later first American governor of California) inflamed ‘Oregon Fever’ as he wrote in 1844:

*Timber...in inexhaustible quantities on the Columbia and Willamette, just where the water is at hand to drive mills for lumber and flour. The water power at the falls of the Willamette can not be surpassed in all the world. And after the land is cleared of trees...the timbered land will be the best wheat land in this country.*

Between 1838 and 1845, the population of white people in the Willamette Falls area swelled from 55 individuals to nearly 6,000. In contrast, since the white man’s arrival, the area’s Indian population of perhaps 13,000 was approximately 1,000.

*“In 1844, Cincinnati and Chicago were little more than villages. San Francisco was a sleepy Spanish Fortress. Seattle was an Indian village with a fur trading post and Portland, although it had one house, was distinguished chiefly as the site of Sauvie’s Dairy on Wapato Island. Oregon City [first called Willamette Falls] was platted, had streets, two churches, the Pioneer Lyceum and Literary Club, mills, a ferry, and the beginnings of a fine apple orchard in the yard of the Methodist parsonage.” (Welsh, 1941)*

### Mass Migration on the Oregon Trail

While the Provisional Government dealt with new laws and actions, the first wave of overland emigrants—a wagon train consisting of nearly 1,000 settlers—set out to Oregon City from Missouri in what was dubbed “The Great Migration of 1843.” This set the stage for the future of the United States and also established the route of the Oregon Trail, which would become the most influential component of western expansion.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY



*Fig. 1-6 The Oregon Trail*

With the promise of free land and the divine right to claim it, “Oregon Fever” and the mass emigration to the west was in full force—an unprecedented relocation that would change the face of the United States forever. Their destination was Oregon City, where the only federal land office west of the Rockies was located. There they would register their claims.

The Oregon Trail lured tens of thousands to sell out, pack all their belongings in a 4' x 10' wagon with a canvas cover (thus, “covered wagon”), buy several yokes of oxen, mules or horses, and set out to walk or ride the arduous 2,000 miles in search of ‘the land at Eden’s gate.’

The six-month journey across the Oregon Trail was an epic moment not just in American history, but in human history. No one had ever seen anything quite like it. The hardy, determined emigrants prevailed over a dusty, rugged, difficult journey across deserts, through forests and rivers, over mountains and inhospitable lands to reach their destiny. Many were burdened with grief. For every mile of trail, there was an estimated ten graves—family lost to accident, disease, and childbirth.

### **Easier Route to Oregon City: The Barlow Road**

The earliest route of the Oregon Trail ended abruptly at the Columbia River in The Dalles. Emigrants were left to disassemble their wagons and raft down the treacherous river rapids or hire guides at exorbitant prices to take them downriver and then up the Willamette River to Oregon City.

One of the first acts of the Provisional Government in 1846 was to authorize Sam Barlow and Oregon City merchant Philip Foster to build their proposed Mount Hood Road, a new branch of the Oregon Trail that bypassed the feared and treacherous Columbia River. It became known as the Barlow Road and was the preferred route to Oregon City, although it was a despised primitive toll road with horrendous passages of its own. It is estimated that 75% of the emigrants used this so-called road.

### **The End of the Oregon Trail at Willamette Falls**

So massive was the migration that by 1869 hundreds of thousands of emigrants had arrived at the end of the Oregon Trail, at their longed-for “Garden of Eden.”

*We are now at the place destined at no distant period to be an important point in the commercial history of the Union – Oregon City. Passing through the timber that lies to the east of the city, we beheld Oregon and*



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

*the Falls of the Willamette at the same moment. We were so filled with gratitude that we had reached the settlements of the white man, and with admiration at the appearance of the large sheet of water rolling over the Falls, that we stopped, and in this moment of happiness recounted our toils, in thought, with more rapidity than tongue an express or pen can write.*

Joel Palmer Nov 1, 1845



*Emigrant family enroute to Oregon City on the Barlow Road with Mt. Hood in background.*

As more emigrants arrived, the community around the Falls became less dependent on the services of the Hudson's Bay Company and settlement of the area evolved into an American phenomenon. Despite the HBC's attempt to monopolize trade for Great Britain, settlement and farming became overwhelmingly American, with Oregon City as an all-important base of operations and a center of industry and trade.

### **Oregon City Unprepared for Flood of Emigrants**

Eva Emery Dye in the book, *Portland Oregon, Its History and Builders* (vol 1, pg 655 published 1911) described the chaos at Willamette Falls with the arrival of the newcomers:

*None too soon was the provisional government established, for as early as August, 1843, boats of every description, canoes, batteaux, and rafts came paddling up the Willamette with the new overland emigration, a thousand people with families and herds of cattle. The town could not shelter them all, camps were set up along the river bank, and Mr. Moss went up and down ringing a hand bell calling the people to dinner where he had set up a half-faced barracks to feed the people. This was the beginning of Moss's hotel and of his fortune. Dr. McLoughlin, who had helped many at Vancouver, came up to Oregon City in his anxiety, and assisted them in every way in his power. He also now had a Hudson's Bay Company store there and trusted them for goods when they could not pay, as also did Abernethy and Pettygrove. Every door was open, beds were laid on every floor and in workshops and in the half built Methodist church. All winter long and into the spring belated ones came straggling in, having tarried at The Dalles and Vancouver, and at Whitman's in the upper country...Oregon City was the capital and center for which all steered from the moment of leaving Missouri, and from Oregon City they radiated, taking up the unsettled country. Oregon City has never lost this characteristic of a floating population looking for a place to settle.*

With men's top hats, made from luxurious beaver pelts, going out of fashion and the beaver populations





## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

declining, the fur trade was dwindling. Yet HBC wanted to keep control of the territory and refused to help American settlers, many of whom arrived sick and destitute. HBC Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin, who had a keen sense of justice and had kept peace over the territory ranging from California to Alaska for 21 years, refused to follow the company's harsh policies and was severely reprimanded for helping those in need. The acrimony continued as McLoughlin sold goods to the settlers, assisted the ill and poor, and was engaged in enterprises at the Falls. Even though McLoughlin was strongly against the annexation of British territory by the United States, he could not abide HBC's insensitive treatment of the settlers. In 1845 he resigned his HBC post and settled in Oregon City.

### **Western Expansion Completed**

Recognizing the power of the overwhelming number of American settlers and after tense negotiations with the United States, Britain finally agreed to divide the region along the 49th parallel—today's border between Washington State and British Columbia. The Oregon Treaty was signed June 15, 1846 and settled the boundary dispute. With the Provisional Government in place, Britain had no claim on the land and Hudson's Bay Company no longer held power in the Oregon Territory. Because of the industry, spirit, and tenacity of the settlers at Willamette Falls at the end of the Oregon Trail in Oregon City, America's western expansion was completed and its boundaries solidified 'from sea to shining sea.'

The bustling city at Willamette Falls was now the center of education, literacy, government, commerce, and industry spawning powerful leaders and innovation that would affect the United States ever after. It was the natural abundance at end of the Oregon Trail that made it all possible.



*Fishing in canoes at the Falls - 1900 postcard.*

### **The Oregon Country becomes part of the United States**

With the U.S. border secured and the Provisional Government in place, emigrants poured into Oregon City, the majority of whom were farmers. Most came overland via the Oregon Trail and the Barlow Road arriving at Willamette Falls and then dispersing to claim their acres of paradise in the Willamette Valley and surrounding areas. With this explosion of emigrants the responsibility for procuring supplies, processing claims, and trading goods fell to Oregon City, which by 1846 was the center for grist milling, sawmilling, blacksmithing, tailoring, and many other trades. Shipping exports to San Francisco, Hawaii and China was ongoing. Harnessing of the Falls made possible flour, lumber, wool, and paper mills creating a huge industrial center that would influence U.S. and world markets and economies.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### Oregon City is the Capital of the Oregon Territory

The Provisional Legislature struggled over land claims and protection from Indian attacks --in particular, the attack on the Whitman Mission on November 29, 1847. Although an isolated incident, it generated widespread fear among whites that had settled in the Oregon Country and accelerated efforts to designate the region a United States territory to protect the American settlers. The killings, which came to be called the Whitman Massacre, happened at a Protestant mission in a remote part of the Oregon frontier near what is now Walla Walla, Washington.

For years, politicians in Washington, D.C. had debated whether or not to proclaim the Oregon Country as a U.S. territory. The Whitman tragedy and the need to protect U.S. citizens from Indian uprisings was the catalyst that prompted Congress to cease debate and take action. A delegation of leading citizens from Oregon City, led by former fur trapper Joseph L. "Joe" Meek, made the months-long journey to Washington, DC to demand that Congress act on a long-delayed bill to establish the Oregon Territory. The bill had been stalled because of a dispute over whether slavery would be permitted in the new territory. The demands worked and on August 14, 1848, President James K. Polk signed into law the Organic Act, which created the Oregon Territory and disbanded the Provisional Government. Its passage extended federal protection to all of the Oregon Country—present-day states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and parts of Montana and Wyoming.

In order to dispense justice to the new U.S. possession, President James K. Polk appointed the Territory's first governor, Joseph Lane, as well as a judge, prosecutor, marshal, and militia. They were instructed to bring the Whitman murderers called the "Cayuse Five," to justice.

*[Insert photo: Called Rose Farm, Governor Joseph Lane's elegant home stills stands in Oregon City today. He gave his seven hour inaugural address from the balcony.]*

The jail in Oregon City where the five were held was a one-room structure on Abernethy Island (formerly John McLoughlin's Mill Island), at the foot of Willamette Falls. There was no courthouse yet so the trial took place in a hotel saloon crowded with about 300 onlookers. This trial was the first attempt by the newly created Oregon Territory to move away from makeshift, frontier justice and to conduct a disciplined trial following formal and proper judicial procedures such as: a written summary of proceedings, appointment of defense counsel, pretrial motions, organized selection of jurors, provision for interpreters, right of cross-examination, and observance of other decorum and safeguards. In spite of these protocols, former folk ways surfaced and the trial reflected just the beginnings of a new order yet to be fully embraced. The trial also foreshadowed the degree to which U.S. courts would go in prosecuting Indians for crimes committed against U.S. citizens on Indian lands.

The trial participants included names famous in Oregon Territorial history, including Judge Orville C. Pratt (businessman, politician, and millionaire), Prosecutor Amory Holbrook, U.S. Marshal and Bailiff Joe Meek, Frank Holland and George Law Curry as court clerks, and Francis Pettygrove as foreman of the grand jury. U. S. President Polk was involved from afar. First territorial governor Joseph Lane stopped by the trial for a short time. The five Cayuse Indians convicted and hung in Oregon City were: Tomohas, Clokomas, Telokite, Isaasheluckas, and Kiamasumkin, some with doubtful and questionable ties to the killings. This was the first public execution in the Oregon Territory.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### The First Newspaper on the West Coast

With settlement, came literacy. Volume 1, Number 1 of *The Oregon Spectator* was published on February 5, 1846. This first newspaper, created by the Willamette Falls Lyceum and Debating Society, marked **the birth of journalism not only in Oregon but also on the entire West Coast** (California's first paper wouldn't appear for another seven months, while the future state of Washington would wait until 1852.)

It was more than a journalistic enterprise. In the words of historian George Turnbull:

*The Oregon Spectator was not the creature of some early journalist looking for a location; it was rather the project of a distinguished group of pioneers who saw the need for official publication of the corporate acts of the new American territory.*

The paper's publishers were among the prominent leaders of the new Oregon Territory. The four-page broadsheet—published biweekly in Oregon City—primarily contained official notices, texts of laws, and some modest advertising. The bulk of the advertising was for “patent medicines,” purported to cure everything from ulcers to erysipelas. The small amount of news and current affairs included accounts of meetings and reports from travelers. Anonymous sources (often called “respectable gentlemen”) were regularly quoted.

*The Spectator* provided the new territory with a hand press, a scarcity in frontier times that was also used to turn out materials such as the territory's first spelling book. *The Spectator* changed to a weekly publication in 1850 and it survived until March 1855. It was never a powerful political organ in the manner of the early *The Oregonian* of Portland or *The Statesman* which began in March 1851 in Oregon City (now publishing in Salem). Founded in 1850, *The Oregonian* newspaper took off under the guidance of Henry Pittock, who assumed operations in 1861 as compensation for unpaid wages and began to distribute the paper daily during the 1860s. *The Oregonian* is the oldest continually published newspaper on the west coast of the United States and was instrumental in furthering the Willamette Falls and surrounding area's reputation as a leader in technological and industrial innovation in the American West.

### Federal Land Claims in the new Territory

As citizens of a United States Territory, settlers could expect land grants for public schools and the prohibition of slavery in the area. This federal status brought with it federally appointed judges and other officials, but also the specter of voided land claims that had been authorized under the organic codes of the Provisional Government.

The land claim issue was highly contentious. Settlers did not want to survive the grueling Oregon Trail only to have their land taken away from them at a later date. In response to the voided land claim law, Samuel R. Thurston, **Oregon's first territorial delegate to Congress** and resident of Linn City across the river from Oregon City, worked to pass the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850. He is known as the **Father of the Donation Land Claim Act**. It guaranteed 320 acres of land to every white male that applied for it and 640 acres of land to every white couple, including married women and widowed women in their own name. **This was the first opportunity for women to own land in the United States.** Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, the Act reinforced the legality of land already claimed in the original Organic Laws provision. This calmed the nerves of those settlers who were unhappy with the Territorial Government's temporary abolition of their land claims. The Act also furthered the population boom and settlement of the area, with an estimated 25-30,000 people arriving in Oregon City before the Act expired in 1855.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Act legitimized pioneer settlement but before the United States had secured the land and the rights to sell land claims from the tribes. In 1851, the Indian Superintendent of the Oregon Territory, Anson Dart, began the process of signing treaties with the tribes. The process was not completed in western Oregon until 1855, when Joel Palmer negotiated the Kalapuya etc. treaty with Chinook, Kalapuya and Molalla tribes. The treaty ceded the Willamette Valley to the United States, including the Willamette Falls area.

The crux of the situation for the tribes in signing the treaties was uttered by Chief Alquema of the Santiam Kalapuya in 1851 during the treaty negotiation at Champog: *they had once been a great people but now they had decreased to nothing, and in a short time the whites would have all their lands, without their removing.*

Since Oregon City, as capital of the Oregon Territorial Government, was the home of the Territory's first General Land Office, the office was charged with the important task of assigning all land claims to settlers in the west, including, most famously, **the 1849 plat for the City of San Francisco**. Today the original plat is on exhibit at the Museum of the Oregon Territory in Oregon City.

### **STATEHOOD -- But Salem stole the capital !**

Oregon City, being both an economic sensation and the seat of the Territorial Government, saw a conflict typical in American history at the time: the big business and industrial boosters (The Whigs) versus the more hands-off, farm-minded folks (The Democrats). While many of Oregon City's industrialists were of the Whig mindset, most of the representatives being elected to the Territorial legislature were Democrat farmers. Over time, this dichotomy developed into quite a conflict. By the time Democratic Governor Joseph Lane resigned and newly elected Whig President Zachary Taylor appointed John Gaines (also a Whig) to be his replacement, the Democrats in the Oregon City-based Legislature had had enough. The Democrats began holding secret sessions across the river and Falls in Linn City. These meetings eventually developed into sessions held upriver in Salem. Soon enough, the legislature passed an Omnibus Bill in 1851 that made Salem the official capital of the Oregon Territory. By the end of the decade, a Constitutional Convention was held to draft a constitution and prepare for statehood and on February 14, 1859, Oregon became an official state of the United States of America, with Salem, not Oregon City, its capital.

Despite the theft of the capital by Salem, Oregon City was pivotal in the development of modern-day Oregon. Sited at the foot of Willamette Falls, Oregon City grew from a small trading outpost to become the first American industrial center in the West.



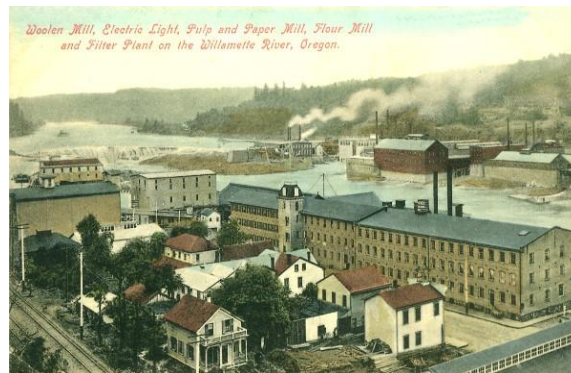
*Fig. 2-3 Oregon State Seal*



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### **The Settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail is the Birthplace of Industry in the American West**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century exploration and settlement of the Willamette Falls area solidified the United States' westward push across the country to the Pacific Ocean. With the boom in settlement and farming, and with a government in place, the area was growing into an economic powerhouse through industrialization and technological innovation.



*Oregon City 1890's postcard inscription reads: Woolen mill, Electric Light, Pulp & Paper Mill, Flour Mill and Filter Plant on the Willamette River, Oregon*

*Oregon City, situated on the east bank of the Willamette, immediately below the Great Falls, is destined to be one of the greatest manufacturing cities in the Western world....there are now two flouring mills and two saw mills doing an immense business.*  
A.N. Armstrong, 1857

Willamette Falls was, of course, a natural source of power for mill activity. John McLoughlin, on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company, erected a water-powered sawmill in 1831 on a small island at the base of the Falls in order to export cargo on a regular basis. McLoughlin also opened and operated a gristmill that, according to Oregon Trail pioneer and journalist General Joel Palmer, "compared well with most of the mills in the States." We honor **McLoughlin as the West's first industrialist!**

Methodist missionaries, while not very successful in their original goal of converting Indians to Christianity, contributed to the industrialization and innovation of mill activity around the Falls. Alvin Waller and the Methodists with their belief in "divine right," attempted to usurp McLoughlin's Mill Island and all of his land in the area—a contentious situation for years. When the Provisional Government was established, McLoughlin's island was renamed Governor's Island, then subsequently Abernethy Island after the first provisional governor, George Abernethy.

Even though McLoughlin was instrumental in building the new community of Oregon City, offering assistance and employment to settlers, building housing, grist and lumber mills, exporting goods, and establishing the city as a center of trade, production, and commerce, as a British citizen he was denied any rights. His property and enterprises were confiscated. An overwhelming majority elected him mayor of Oregon City in 1851 but he was treated so harshly that he resigned before finishing his term. He became a U.S. citizen in 1855 and still his holdings were disputed. He died in his Oregon City home in 1857, a sad and embittered man. He would never know that later he would be lauded by the Oregon State Legislature as the "grand, noble, generous Father of





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Oregon."

### Dr. John McLoughlin



*Called the ‘Father of Oregon,’ McLoughlin was the West’s first industrialist. His imposing statue in Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol, honors his national contributions. He was called ‘The Great White Eagle’ by the Indians.*

The State of Oregon returned Dr. McLoughlin’s confiscated property to his heirs in 1862. His son-in-law Daniel Harvey, as executor of the estate, gradually disposed of his properties, first deeding land and water rights to The Imperial Flour Company in 1863, then in 1864 property and water rights to Oregon City Manufacturing Company.

McLoughlin’s Oregon City ‘stately mansion’ with many of its original furnishings can be visited today. Since 2003, it has been part of the National Park Service as a unit of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site.

## The Mills Powered the Industrial Revolution at Willamette Falls

### Oregon City Woolen Mills

The Oregon City Manufacturing Company (OCWM) was incorporated on Feb. 3, 1864, only the third corporation in the young state. The investors hoped to cash in on the growing national demand for Oregon woolen textiles. At an organizational meeting were two German immigrants, 21-year old Isaac Jacob and his 19-year old brother Ralph. Their expertise in the woolen business coupled with their drive and energy would soon take them to ownership of the entire mill complex. As money became available, they purchased two blocks of land on Main Street from the estate of Dr John McLoughlin. The best milling equipment was shipped around the Horn and installed in a two and a half story wooden building across Main Street from the home of Daniel and Eloisa McLoughlin Harvey. The mill came on line July 5, 1865 with a second line in 1866, when the Jacobs brothers gained controlling interest. In November 1872, a fire destroyed the mill. It was replaced by a three-story block-long brick structure. By 1900, production was up to 14 lines with annual sales of \$600,000. During the first 34 years of manufacturing woolen products, OCWM had consumed 40 million pounds of wool valued at \$6 million. Salaries of at least \$4.32 million were put into the pockets of local workers. For fuel, 150,000 cords of wood were consumed.

Isaac and Ralph Jacob’s mill was now operated by their sons, Adolph and GB Jacobs. The original building was



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

doubled to two blocks in 1890. In the Garment Factory, robes and other woolen products with the Oregon City Woolens label were exported down the Willamette and Columbia rivers to the Pacific Ocean and shipped worldwide. Oregon woolens put Oregon City on the map and furthered the importance of this remote, yet blossoming industrial center of the west. Now, the eastern seaboard had a rival in contributing to America's Industrial Revolution and significance in the world marketplace.

Business boomed during WWI with large government contracts for blankets. In 1917, the mill employed 1,125 workers and operated 109 looms. Following the war was a period of prosperity never before or since seen in Oregon City history. Using the slogan "woven where the wool is grown," sales boomed. Thirty salesmen fanned out across the U.S. to over 5,000 retail outlets. The mill had a contract in 1931 for the new ocean liners *President Hoover* and *President Coolidge*. The order of 2,000 blankets and 1,000 steam robes was one of the woolen mill's last major contracts. The downward slide started in 1934 with the Great Depression and the death of owner Adolph Jacobs. After WWII, new wool industries in Australia and South America caused Oregon farmers to abandon sheep-raising. New clothing manufacturers were competing for the textile market, including Salem's Thomas Kay Mission Mill and the Pendleton Woolen Mill. The buildings and machinery in Oregon City were rapidly aging, so land and water rights were sold to Publisher's Paper mill in 1954. After 97 years, the Oregon City Woolens label disappeared from the shelves. Remaining today are the thick basalt base and walls of the Oregon City Woolen Mill surrounded by the Blue Heron Paper Mill site, and the Ralph and Adolph Jacobs Foundation, created to grant money from the Jacobs Estate to charitable, educational and cultural organizations in Oregon

### Paper Mills

In 1866, the first paper mill in Oregon, Pioneer Paper Manufacturing, started operations with used rags, ropes, and old sails for raw materials. Owned by William Buck and his partner Henry Pittock, publisher of *The Oregonian*, it operated only briefly because of technical problems. Its equipment was transferred to a new Clackamas River mill near what is now Gladstone (Park Place) in 1868. Pittock bought the mill and renamed it Clackamas Paper Mills in 1870 and Clackamas Paper Co. in 1879.

It was understandable that paper mills would use the power of the Falls for paper manufacturing and in 1889, Willamette Pulp and Paper Company, designed by T.W. Sullivan, was built on the West Linn side of the Falls. Early products included newsprint, creped toweling, and gun cotton. The company merged with Crown Columbia in 1914 to become the Crown-Willamette Paper Company, then in 1928 the company merged again with Zellerbach Paper Company of San Francisco and the mill was known as Crown-Zellerbach. In 1947, Crown-Zellerbach pioneered the coated paper process—revolutionizing paper manufacturing across the west. After other changes in ownership, the mill was reopened in 1997 as the West Linn Paper Company. Today the company is a continuation of what is most certainly the longest operating industrial site in the state of Oregon.

Not to be outdone, W. P. Hawley, Sr., past manager of the short-lived Crown Paper Company in West Linn, organized the Hawley Pulp & Paper Co. in 1903 across the Falls at Oregon City. Hawley's operation lasted until 1948 when the Times Mirror and Deseret Publishing Co. purchased the mill and formed Publishers Paper Co., a major employer in the Willamette Falls area. In 1975, the company opened up a de-inking plant that led the Northwest in newspaper recycling efforts. Eventually becoming the Blue Heron Paper Mill in 2000, this landmark served as homage to Oregon City's past and to modern sustainability efforts. The Blue Heron mill closed in 2011, but the site is undergoing planning for unique redevelopment and preservation of its historic properties.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Paper mills at the Willamette Falls contributed to the booming growth of the national newspaper and paper-making industries throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Papermaking at the Falls was fundamental to the area's economy. News in print now connected the two sides of the country and papermaking at the Falls represented a coast-to-coast link between the west and the east, an economic and symbolic completion of the United States.



*Oregon City Suspension bridge with ferry and Falls in background.*

### **It Happened at the Falls: First Long Distance Transmission of Electricity**

While mill activity was extremely important to the industrialization and modernization of the Willamette Falls area, innovation in hydroelectric power and transmission was crucial in expanding the western embodiment of the American Industrial Revolution. Not that electricity wasn't already in use around the United States in the 1880s but until this venture, electrical distribution was limited to a few city blocks from any source of power. The tremendous potential of Willamette Falls inspired innovative Oregon businessmen to take the unprecedented risk of building a transmission line from Willamette Falls to Portland, 14 miles away. By successfully proving the feasibility of long-distance transmission of electricity, **these Oregon entrepreneurs became the pioneers of the electric power industry.**

The bridge spanning the Willamette that connected Oregon City to the west bank and West Linn was designed to carry more than people. It was designed to carry power lines.

Oregon City banker and attorney Edward L. Eastham installed a 200-horse, 450 light Edison dynamo in the Excelsior and Shoddy Mill on the west bank of the river. Power lines strung across the top of the bridge transmitted electricity across the river to Oregon City. On the first of November 1888, Oregon City streets were brilliantly lit by power from Willamette Falls.

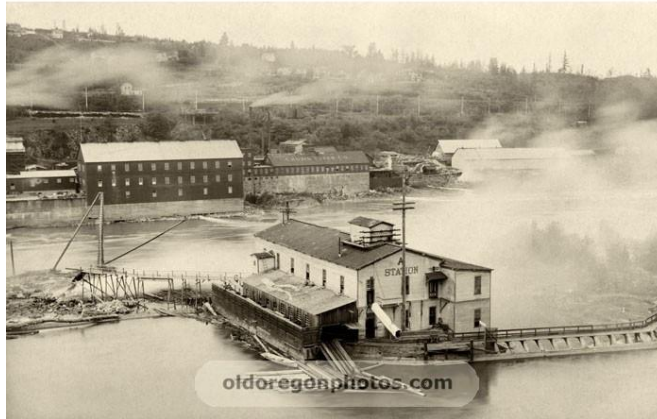
Within a week, Eastham and Portland businessman Parker Morey forged a partnership with the intention to tap the resources of the Falls to light the dark streets of Portland. The company they founded on June 20, 1888 was the Willamette Falls Electric Company. It would become Portland General Electric, still in operation today at the Falls and in the Pacific Northwest .

But transmitting the power from Oregon City to Portland would be no easy task. First, a dynamo house



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

(generating plant) would have to be built within the river bed. Construction began on the east bank of a new powerhouse, named "Station A," over a basalt ledge on Abernethy Island called Black Point.



***Station A generates electricity to Portland, the first long-distance transmission in North America***

A second and bigger problem was how to construct a power line 14 miles in length. In 1889, no endeavor of that magnitude had ever been attempted in North America. What kind of insulators could be used? How much power could be transmitted over a single wire?

The builders of the line took no chances on the power question. On March 5, 1889, Willamette Falls Electric let a contract for setting poles and stringing six wires from Oregon City to Portland. Approximately 14 miles of high tension transmission line ran across the bridge to the west bank, north along River Road, and along Portland Boulevard. This project was completed in less than three months.

Multiple lines at low voltage were used to transmit the power. The original construction consisted of 18 wires per pole on three cross arms. That makes a grand total of 40 wires and insulators per pole for the 14 mile length of the line. If the poles were spaced 150' apart, then 490 poles were used for the 14 mile line. That means something in the neighborhood of 20,000 insulators were in use on the line by 1890. (Keep in mind, this is a power line and not a telephone or telegraph line.)



***Power Station A was located on the east side of the Willamette River. Transmission lines ran first through downtown Oregon City before heading over this bridge and on to Portland.***

At 10 pm on June 3, 1889, a switch was thrown in the newly built powerhouse at Willamette Falls and one of four 32.5 kilowatt "No. 8 Brush arc light dynamos" pumped enough electricity over 14 miles of wire to light 55



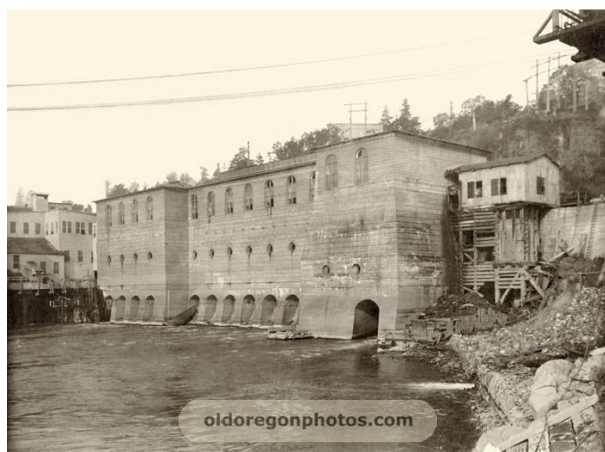
## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

carbon arc street lamps in downtown Portland—the first long distance transmission of electricity in the North America.

Before the year was over, 11 direct-current arc lighting generators were drawing power from the Falls and lighting the streets of Portland. Unfortunately in early February of 1890, floodwaters ravaged the structures built at Willamette Falls. But the innovators had paved the way. Station A was brought back online within a few months and the tiny powerhouse was fortified, expanded and remodeled. Experimental alternating current (AC) generators ordered from George Westinghouse were shipped in the spring of 1890 to Oregon City. The first long-distance transmission of alternating current was from Station A at Willamette Falls, but the date is not certain. One source claims the AC generators were online in late June of 1890; another speculates that it was in early September of that year.

**Regardless, this event is almost certainly the first long distance transmission and distribution of alternating current in the world.**

Construction of a new power plant began in 1893 on the west bank of Willamette Falls. Called Station B (later named the T. W. Sullivan Plant), this power plant was online transmitting electricity throughout the region December 1, 1895, almost one year before power was tapped at Niagara Falls for transmission and distribution to Buffalo, New York.



*PGE's T. W. Sullivan Plant, on the west bank of Willamette Falls*

The T. W. Sullivan plant is still in operation. By 1903 this station had 13 power generating sections and a generating capacity of 5,740 kW. It is the second oldest operating hydroelectric plant in the United States and the oldest hydroelectric plant west of the Mississippi.

Not only did The Falls contribute to the earliest hydroelectric power development in the nation, preceding that of Niagara Falls, they also generated four to six times more hydropower than the industrial hub of Lowell, Massachusetts. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, a number of publications referred to the Willamette Falls as the “Niagara of the Pacific” or the “Lowell of the Pacific Coast.”

The Willamette Falls Electric Company and the tenacious spirit of these early entrepreneurs, aside from providing power to Oregon City and Portland, helped usher in a new era of electric innovation in the United





## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

States and the world. What happened at Willamette Falls changed life in America.

### ***The Willamette Falls Locks Remove a Trade Barrier***

The 19<sup>th</sup> century settlement and industrial innovations at Willamette Falls would not have been possible without corresponding innovations in transportation. Ships, ferries, locks, bridges, and trains helped fuel the area's development and made the area's products exportable to the new nation and to world markets.

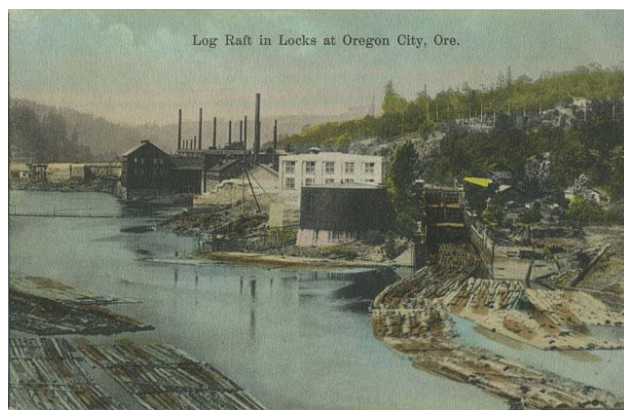
The decline of the west coast fur trade led to an increased reliance on fishing. As the business grew and became more commercial, the need for larger ships to handle the increase in fish volume became readily apparent. Canemah, located adjacent to the Willamette Falls and within the NHA study area, became the shipbuilding center for the region. In the 27 years between 1851 and 1878, 27 steamships were built in the city, to transport wheat, beef, agriculture and timber products of the Willamette Valley to distant markets in California, Asia, and throughout the world.

However, there was one huge obstacle: Willamette Falls.

Water travel above the Falls was almost exclusively conducted by the tribes using canoes when Euro-American settlement began. By 1851, more than 70 ferry and steamship landings existed between Milwaukie and Butteville, above and below the Falls. But even with the advent of more efficient water transport, farm products and goods transported from the Willamette Valley had to be off-loaded at Canemah, then loaded onto ox-carts and carried (portaged) around the Falls to Oregon City. Once in town loaded with supplies, travelers had to be hauled back up the hill to Canemah for river transport back to their towns and farms. As production increased, so did the frustration with portaging.



**Fig. 2-9 Willamette Falls Locks with ferries**



**Fig. 2-10 Locks, power plant, paper mill, log rafts 1870s.**

The boom of the products from the valley and the fishing industry created the need for larger ships to be able to navigate around the Falls. Water-based freight and passenger service played a major role in Oregon's developing economy in the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But powerful interests opposed any construction at the Locks that would break their stranglehold on shipping between the upper and lower parts of the Willamette River. Moving freight and people between Eugene and Portland created many fortunes. It also made river captains and the steamboat companies they operated some of Oregon's most influential entities.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

As early as 1844, Dr. McLoughlin envisioned building a system of locks, but plans were never realized. By 1861, a route for locks was surveyed. Despite opposition and competition by influential men such as Ben Holladay, a national transportation tycoon busily laying tracks southward along the eastern bank of the Willamette River. The 1872 Oregon Legislature eventually approved a \$200,000 subsidy to the Willamette Locks and Canal Company to help finish the project. Completed in 1873, the Willamette Falls Navigational Canal and Locks were hugely important for upriver freight transport, especially for moving immense log rafts in later years. Over 100,000 tons of goods went through the Canal and Locks in the first four months of 1940 alone. Commercial traffic peaked in 1943.

**The locks are constructed of the most enduring, massive, and substantial materials...built not merely for the present, but with direct and express reference to future results (Oregonian, Jan 3, 1873, 3:1)**

The Locks were the oldest continuously commercially operating locks system in the United States, until shuttered in late 2011 due to a low federal priority for funding. Efforts to repair and reopen the locks are currently underway, including a potential transfer of ownership from the Army Corps of Engineers.

Ben Holladay's Oregon and California Railroad operated a 20-mile stretch south of Portland to Oregon City in 1869. In 1887, the line was completed to California under control of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which greatly advanced the reach of travel, communication and commerce for Oregon City and the Willamette Valley. The railroad officially became Southern Pacific January 3, 1927.

Not only did the railroad set Oregon City's place as central to the U. S. Pacific Coast development, but bridge building would enhance connections to the rest of the country. In 1888, a timber and steel suspension bridge was constructed across the Willamette River in Oregon City. This bridge effectively linked industry on both sides of the river and carried the electrical power lines that were key to the early innovations in electrical transmission.

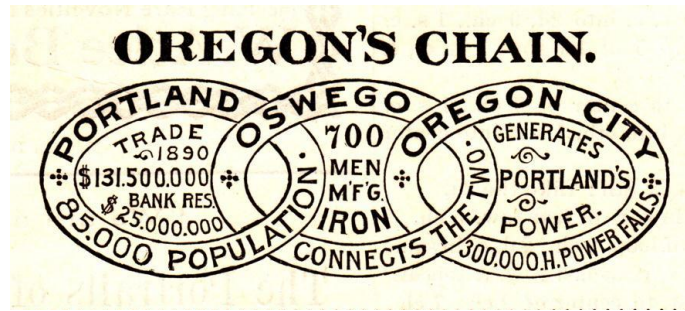
In 1922, the Oregon State Highway Department (ODOT) completed the Oregon City/West Linn Arch Bridge designed by ODOT's famous bridge engineer, Conde McCulloch, the designer of 500 Oregon bridges. It is the only Oregon bridge (and likely the one bridge in the United States) to be encased in gunite rather than concrete as a coating, which protected it from corrosive emissions from the paper mills south of the bridge. The completion of the Arch Bridge was a link on the Pacific Highway, which runs from Mexico to Canada. In 2012, the Oregon Department of Transportation completed an award-winning renovation of the bridge while retaining its historic design integrity and appearance.

## Iron Smelting Industry Transforms the U.S. West Coast

The Oswego Iron Furnace in Lake Oswego is a rare industrial landmark in a state whose traditional industries are fishing, forestry and agriculture. Built in 1866 at the mouth of Sucker Creek on the Willamette River, it was the first iron furnace on the Pacific Coast and is the only surviving Civil War era furnace west of the Rocky Mountains. Before the furnace was built, all iron on the West Coast had to be shipped 14,000 miles around the Horn of South America.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY



1890 Image of Oregon's Chain connecting Portland's commerce, Oswego's iron & Oregon City's power – BothwickBatty

The discovery of mineral wealth in Oswego and the expectation that the town would become the “Pittsburg of the West” attracted workers from across the nation after the Civil War. The company employed 700 workers at its peak in the 1890s. Skilled workers were drawn mainly from the Northeast and Midwest. Others came from Germany, France, and Belgium.

Iron from Oswego helped build the infrastructure of the Pacific Northwest. “Oregon Brand Pig Iron” was sold to foundries in San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, British Columbia. It was used in the Central Pacific Railway, in San Francisco's first City Hall, and in Portland's magnificent cast iron architecture. The Oswego Pipe Foundry, which operated until 1928, was the first pipe works west of St. Louis. It manufactured pipe for the San Francisco Gaslight Company and for Portland's Bull Run Water System.

The furnace was the centerpiece of an industry that included more than 23,000 acres of timberlands, two company-owned town sites, workers' housing, mines, railroads and power generating facilities. In 1879 the second owners of the company acquired the water rights to Oswego Lake and the canal linking it to the Tualatin River. This was the first navigation canal in Oregon, completed in October 1872, two months before the canal and locks at Willamette Falls. In 1888 the third owners of the company built a much larger furnace and pipe foundry half a mile north of the original furnace.

### Important People in the Willamette Falls National Story

Willamette Falls was a catalyst for entrepreneurs and innovation. This place generated power and produced powerful people with great ideas and entrepreneurial energy. Pioneering leaders such as Dr John McLoughlin (now called the Father of Oregon), Peter Skene Ogden, Francis Ermatinger, author Eva Emery Dye, poet Edwin Markham, Dr Forbes Barclay, suffragist Abigail Scott Duniway, U.S. Marshall Joe Meek, and many others, built homes, industries, schools, churches, libraries and hospitals.

- Dr. John McLoughlin, founder of Oregon City, Chief Factor for Hudson's Bay Company, Father of Oregon  
**Existing resource: McLoughlin House 1846 – unit of National Park Service**
- Dr. Forbes Barclay, Chief Factor of HBC, mayor, doctor, school superintendent  
**Existing resource: Barclay House 1850 – unit of National Park Service**
- Morton Matthew McCarver arrived in Oregon City in 1844. Founded Tacoma, Washington  
**Existing resource: Morton Matthew McCarver House, 19000 S Central Pt Rd, Oregon City**
- Medorum Crawford, lived in Oregon City, leader of the Emigrant Escort Service  
**Existing resource: Stevens-Crawford House 1906**



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

- Francis Ermatinger’s home in Oregon City – said to be the site of the historic coin toss deciding the name for City of Portland.  
**Existing resource: Ermatinger House 1842**
- Hiram Straight, elected representative to legislature of the Territorial Government  
**Existing resource: Straight Pioneer Cemetery (Oregon City)**
- Captain Ainsworth, founder of Redondo Beach, CA, the Oregon Steamship Navigation Company, and a banker  
**Existing resource: Ainsworth House, 1851 (Oregon City)**
- Sam Barlow, established a route of the Oregon Trail from Mt Hood to Oregon City  
**Existing resource: the Barlow Road, Tollgate, Philip Foster Farm**
- Samuel Thurston lived in Linn City, Oregon’s first elected representative to the US Congress in 1849 where he pioneered the Donation Land Claim Act in 1850
- Edward Hamilton, resident of Linn City, first Oregon Territorial Secretary. Oregon’s first lawbook named after him (The Hamilton Code)
- Joseph Meek, trapper, early sheriff, known for his role at Champoeg (1843) urging a vote to form a provisional government (often stayed in Linn City with his family, even though his permanent home was Hillsboro)
- Ben Holladay, responsible for railroad through Oregon City to California (partnered with Forbes Barclay)
- Eva Emery Dye: (1855–1947) an American writer, historian, and prominent member of the [Women's Suffrage](#) movement. As the author of several historical novels, fictional yet thoroughly researched, she is credited with "romanticizing the historic West, turning it into a poetic epic of expanding civilization."<sup>[1]</sup> Her best known work, *Conquest: The True Story of Lewis & Clark* (1902), is notable for being the first to present [Sacagawea](#) as a historically significant character in her own right.
- Joseph Meek



**Fig. 1-3 Joseph “Joe” Meek --Envoy extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary**

Joseph Meek, a flamboyant fur trapper from Virginia, was active in the Champoeg meetings and in favor of creating a Provisional Government. He is famous for rousing the men at the May 2, 1843 meeting to vote ‘aye’ for the new government. He traveled east in the late 1840s to forcefully ask the federal government to make Oregon a U.S. territory. Later, elevated to the status of U.S. Marshal, he lived in Linn City (now West Linn). This self-titled “Envoy extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Oregon” was typical of the gutsy and proud settlers around Willamette Falls.

### **Abraham Lincoln influences Oregon politics**

Even though Abraham Lincoln refused President Taylor’s offer to be secretary, then governor of the vast Oregon Territory, he maintained close ties to the area. In fact he appointed more than 50 people to positions in the



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Oregon Country during his presidency, making Lincoln the founding father of the Republican party (Whigs) in the five-state Oregon Territory.

The village of Oswego (now Lake Oswego) was founded in 1850 by Albert Alonzo Durham. A pioneer on the Oregon Trail, Durham immigrated to Oregon with his wife and son on the advice of his family lawyer, Abraham Lincoln. Taking advantage of the waterpower from the lake, Durham built a sawmill on Sucker Creek. The iron company eventually acquired all of his property, which included the east end of the lake, the creek, and the landing on the Willamette River.

### **Linus Pauling, nobel laureate**

One of those drawn to Oregon by the iron industry was the grandfather of Nobel Laureate **Linus Pauling**, the only person awarded two unshared Nobel Prizes (for chemistry in 1954 and for peace in 1962). Charles (Carl) Pauling and his German brother-in-law Martin Blanken brought their families to Oregon from Missouri. Linus spent part of his childhood in Oswego where his father grew up. Like his parents and grandparents, Linus is buried in the cemetery once owned by the Oregon Iron & Steel Company. At least 80 men who worked for the iron company are buried in the Oswego Pioneer Cemetery and seven of them (like Charles Pauling) were veterans of the Civil War.

### **Bankers and Railroad Barons**

Major investors in the Oregon iron industry included some of America's most powerful bankers and industrialists:

**Louis McLane Jr.** of Baltimore and San Francisco

(President of Wells Fargo Bank, the Nevada Bank of San Francisco, and the Mercantile Trust Co.)

**Darius Ogden Mills** of San Francisco and New York

(Founder of the Bank of California; principal stockholder of the Pacific Rolling Mills.)

**Henry Villard** of Wiesbaden, Germany and New York City

(Principal shareholder and chairman of Northern Pacific Railroad; helped Thomas Edison found Edison General Electric Company (which became GE); owner of the *New York Evening Post* and *The Nation*; philanthropist to Harvard University, Columbia University, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the American Museum of Natural History.)

Villard held the controlling interest in the Oregon Steam Navigation Company which owned the Locks from shortly after completion until about 1884. This helps explain his interest in the development of water power at the Falls. An Oswego connection to power generation at the Falls is Parker Morey, who co-founded Willamette Falls Electric Company with Edward Eastham. Morey became president of Willamette Falls Electric and later of Portland General Electric. His large estate just south of George Rogers Park became Lake Oswego's Glenmorrie Neighborhood. Glenmorrie is bordered on its north side by the Crown Willamette Paper Company property where the log hoist is located. Years later, Morey married Eastham's widow.





## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### Important immigrant groups arrived during the Industrial period

#### Iron Workers Came from England and US East Coast

Many of the iron miners, such as James H. Pomeroy, the Cornish Superintendent of the Mines, came from the British Isles. Five of his sons became mining engineers. The Pomeroy boys were close friends and business associates with fellow Stanford graduate, Herbert Hoover, who became the 31<sup>st</sup> President of the United States.

The second owners of the iron works were experienced iron men from Ohio's Hanging Rock Iron Region. They recruited many workers from their old stamping ground. In 1883, one party of 50 immigrants from Ironton, Ohio made the long journey to Oswego by ship and by rail.

#### Chinese workers

One important group of workers on the Locks and iron industry came from China. The iron company was a major employer of Chinese labor. As many as 150 Chinese woodcutters worked in its charcoal industry. The protests against employing Chinese laborers in the iron industry and building the Willamette Falls Locks helps explain why they weren't given the higher-paid jobs that white men wanted such as mining and masonry work. The Chinese were hired for the worst jobs like wood chopping, digging ditches, and clearing away dynamite rubble. The Chinese laborers also worked on the Willamette Falls Locks and Navigational Canal, doing jobs such as loading loose rock from the dynamiting into a container called a "scale" so it could be hauled away.

**“Work on the canal and locks progresses well. We have a large force of Whitemen and Chinamen at work...”  
(King, Sept 15, 1872)**

#### Excerpts from early newspaper articles:

- Wa Kee and Company furnished The People's Transportation Company with more than 100 Chinese to work on the Oregon City Canal. --Oct 1, 1869
- Four Chinamen killed/12 injured in blast at canal excavation site. Weak place in rocks. Gang of 30-400 Chinamen working. Two Chinamen in care of Dr. Barclay. --Aug 01, 1872
- Sixty Chinamen are now employed on the locks at Linn City.-- Oregonian, July 27, 1872, p. 2
- Chinese Lodge of Mason's organized at Oregon City – Oct. 9, 1872
- Stone cutter labor at locks: \$6 a day and Chinamen \$25-30 a month – Nov 2-Dec 18, 1872
- Oswego Iron Company cut all of its wood with Chinamen – 1881. Journal of the U.S. Association of Charcoal Iron Makers (E.E. Crichton)

#### **1870-1872 Oregon City Chinese Industries**

Average age of Oregon City Chinese: 27 years old

- Oregon Iron Company in Oregon City: 18 Chinese employed
- Tub and Pail Factory in Oregon City
- Woolen Mills at Oregon City: 160 Chinese employed
- Canal Works at Oregon City: 30-40 Chinese employed
- Lake Oswego Iron Company Mines: 150 Chinese employed
- Oregon Central Railroad: 1,000 Chinese (\$36 a month for the Chinese)



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### Chapter 3: Themes of the **WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA**

#### **End of the Oregon Trail & Beginning of America's Pacific Destiny** **Where Settlement & Industry Secured the Nation's Boundaries from Sea to Shining Sea** *....because Willamette Falls provided power and resources in abundance.*

**T**he great Falls of the Willamette River are the main attraction in the proposed Willamette Falls National Heritage Area. In the 1800s, Willamette Falls was said to be the most beautiful place in the Willamette Valley. Visit today to see wispy spray rise with the morning mist and brilliantly shimmer in the setting sun. The symphonic thundering of the water creates music of its own. It sings to us of power and abundance, of continuity and ingenuity.

**THEME DEVELOPMENT: It's all about the waterfall.** The stories here are unique because an abundance of human history concentrates around a natural feature. Because of the Ice Age Floods and deposits of rich soil, Willamette Falls became a magnet for settlement, from the first tribal gatherings to the settlers arriving at the End of the Oregon Trail. Because of the actions around the Falls area, the entire Oregon Country became part of the United States and not a part of Great Britain or another exploring nation.

As our citizens and experts discussed possible themes, it quickly became apparent that all of our themes flow from the power and significance of Willamette Falls. We wouldn't be considering a National Heritage Area in this place if no Falls existed.

Motivated by stories of the area's abundant natural resources, rich farmland, mild climate, and access to world markets, Euro-Americans walked and rode 2,000-miles to the End of the Oregon Trail at Willamette Falls, the primary destination of the largest human migration in American history and one of the largest in world history. They pursued a dream that they could live free from oppression, believing that they were moving to a literal Land at Eden's Gate. Many believed it was America's God-given right to populate a vast country from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, a concept called Manifest Destiny. These pioneers were key to securing United States boundaries, creating new institutions and birthing transformative industries.

**Theme: U.S. Western Expansion happened because of Settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail**

**Sub-theme: The settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail became the center of government, commerce, culture and industry west of the Rocky Mountains.**

There is only ONE end of the Oregon Trail recognized by the United States Congress -- and it is Oregon City. There was only ONE capital of the Oregon Territory -- and it was Oregon City. There was only ONE federal land office west of the Rockies, so today Oregon City proudly displays the original city plat map of San Francisco. Oregon City was the first and most important city, center of government, commerce, and industry in 19<sup>th</sup> century western America. Because of actions here, western United States from the Rockies westward is not part of Great Britain, France, Spain or Russia. We are Americans.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### **Opportunity, Ingenuity, Innovation**

This place generated power and spawned powerful leaders who founded industries, cities, and traditions that created northwestern United States as we know it today. The power generated at the Falls allowed agricultural and manufactured products to be processed into vast wealth for the United States.

Our American story is the history of United States western expansion, 'manifest destiny,' and settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail. Because of Willamette Falls, industry in the American West was born and revolutionary changes in American life were brought by electricity – electricity sent 14 miles from Willamette Falls to Portland. These stories are ripe for coordinated interpretation. They present an interpretive framework for understanding the national importance of the Willamette Falls and the key role of the settlements at the End of the Oregon Trail in shaping the nation's boundaries, industries and way of living.

### **THEME: Willamette Falls is the birthplace of industry in the American Northwest**

Harnessing Willamette Falls created the first industrialization of the American Northwest and a culture of innovation related to the land and its resources. The Falls also provided the power to run industries year-round, a unique situation not found elsewhere in the west. From here products were shipped to the world and helped establish American economic dominance in the Pacific rim region, including support for nascent colonies of Americans in California, Hawaii, and Seattle.

### **Sub-theme: Long distance transmission of electricity at Willamette Falls changed the future of the nation.**

The Willamette Falls area was at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution, with the first long distance electrical transmission in the nation, a variety of milling, and an eventual focus on paper-making, still continuing today.

Because of the Falls, huge mills occupied the landscape along the river and prosperity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was defined by their productivity. The legacy of harnessing the Falls represents both the first industrialization of the American Northwest and a culture of innovation related to the land and its resources. Many remnants of this innovation and industry are still visible, and innovations in land use and environmental sustainability are at the heart of Willamette Valley culture today.

Those early pioneers laid the foundations of American government, industrialization, commerce, and innovation unrivalled in the western United States.

### **Sub-theme: The cataclysmic Ice Age Floods brought abundant resources**

Here we will tell the incredible story of the largest floods in the world that shaped the Willamette Falls area and deposited the soils that are legendary in the nation for their fertility and productivity. Without the Falls and their rich abundance, the End of the Oregon Trail would have been someplace else.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### **Sub-theme: Native tribes and bands were first to the Falls and now work to restore traditional Lamprey and Salmon runs**

Chinookan tribes and others have been drawn to Willamette Falls to fish and dance and barter for 15,000 years. They will tell stories of tribal living and intertribal commerce in the Falls area; their stewardship of the salmon and lamprey harvest; their traditions and complex cultural influences; and their assistance with guiding and transporting explorers, trappers and missionaries.

#### **Themes Development Process**

The themes presented here first emerged as part of a workshop exercise with key stakeholders in the Study Area in the fall of 2010. From the ideas recorded at this workshop, the Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC) identified six initial themes with supporting arguments. Based on these themes and descriptions, the WFHAC requested narratives, historical documents, photos and references from experts, interested citizens, and others knowledgeable about the area and its history. The narratives and themes contributed to the development of the History of the Falls Area found in Chapter 2 of this report.

Residents, property owners, and businesses in the study area reviewed and provided comments on these themes throughout the process. The themes gradually evolved and became more focused with this community input. They commented and contributed stories, themes, and associated timelines at NHA planning workshops, community forums, and informal conversations, as well as through our WFHAC booth at many public festivals. However, through the public process and ongoing review by Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition's Themes Committee and subsequent expert reviews, including discussions with National Park Service representatives, it was apparent that WFHAC needed to refocus our themes and concentrate our stories on national significance, while setting aside topics and stories of importance primarily to Oregonians. We established a broad-based Feasibility Study Review Team (representatives of three tribes, Ice Age Floods, historic preservation, industrial expertise, local history) to pour over the chapters of the document, to rethink and agree on how to present our national Themes, History and Future Projects.

Through the developmental process, the story quickly evolved into one major focus on Willamette Falls as the catalyst for western expansion: **End of the Oregon Trail & Beginning of America's Pacific Destiny**. Two primary themes have been proposed: **U.S. Western Expansion Happened Because of Settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail** and the **Birthplace of Industry in Western United States**. These two themes are major contributing factors in securing the nation's boundaries from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Of course, neither theme would exist without the waterfall itself, thundering Willamette Falls.

The results of our public workshops determined that the Willamette Valley continues to be a destination for immigrants because of the quality of its lifestyles, quality of its landscape and its unique history. This means that those who come to the area and their descendants have a fundamental relationship with the land, its use, and its conservation, as did travelers to the Falls from the beginning of human settlement.

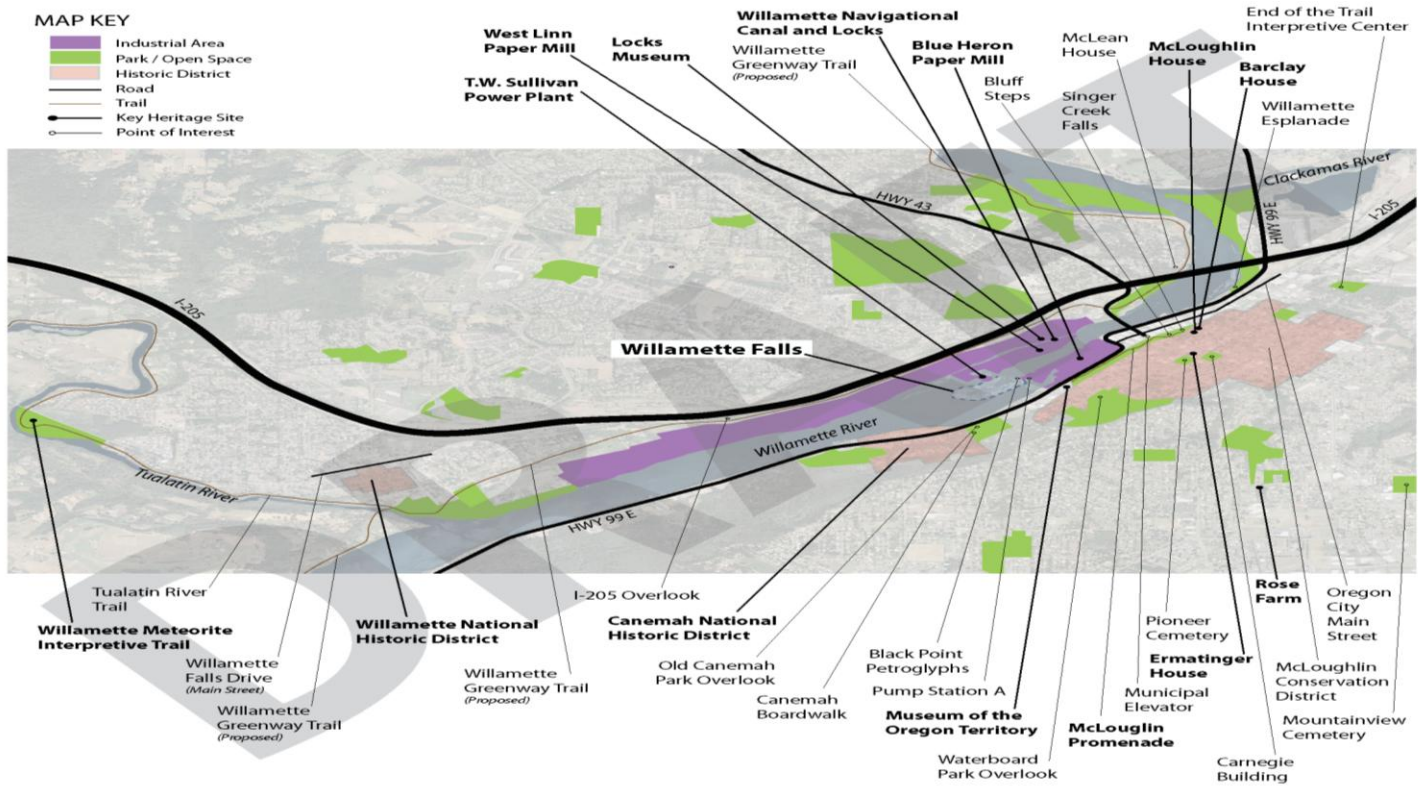


WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

# Chapter 4: Affected Environment

**WILLAMETTE FALLS.** It’s all about the waterfall. The roaring waters over Willamette Falls lured tribal nations to its banks centuries ago to fish during momentous runs of salmon and Pacific lamprey. You can still see tribal members fishing there today. Willamette Falls was the reason that the area became the catalyst for American western expansion in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Falls lured settlers to cross the Oregon Trail and provided power for milling (flour, lumber, paper, wool), generated electricity that transformed homes and commerce, and birthed the Industrial Revolution in western United States.

This natural feature is the largest waterfall in the Pacific Northwest by water volume, second largest in the U.S. behind Niagara Falls, and the 18<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. Horseshoe in shape, it sits majestically on the Willamette River, one of the 14 American Heritage Rivers in the United States, designated by the Environmental Protection Agency. The Willamette River flows through the heart of the Study Area, joins the Columbia River 26 miles downstream, and carries 12-15% of the Columbia’s flow or about 30,849 cu ft/s.



## 4.1 – Willamette Falls Heritage Area





## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

The 2012 Theiss International Riverprize, the world's most prestigious environmental award, was recently given to the Willamette River (via Meyer Memorial Trust) in recognition of river restoration activities.

### **U.S. Expedition Describes Willamette Falls in 1834:**

John K. Townsend, a naturalist and ornithologist on the Wyeth trading expedition, canoed up the Willamette River in search of species and describes the Falls as they appeared in 1834:

*There are here three falls on a line of rocks extending across the river, which forms the bed of the upper channel. The water is precipitated through deep abraded gorges, and falls perhaps forty feet at an angle of about twenty degrees. It was a beautiful sight when viewed from a distance, but it became grand and almost sublime as we approached it nearer. I mounted the rocks and stood over the highest fall, and although the roar of the cataract was almost deafening, and the rays of the bright sun reflected from the white and glittering foam threatened to deprive me of sight, yet I became so absorbed in the contemplation of the scene, and the reflections which were involuntarily excited, as to forget every thing else for the time, and was only aroused by Captain W[yeth] tapping me on the shoulder, and telling me that every thing was arranged for our return.*

### **Importance of the Geology**

Geologic good fortune created the Willamette Valley, one of America's most productive agricultural areas. Willamette Falls and its surrounding geology resulted from repeated flows of volcanic basalt originating in eastern Oregon and northern Idaho over 15 million years ago. Then 12,000-15,000 years ago, a series of cataclysmic Ice Age floods, the largest on earth, originated from a gigantic glacial lake in Montana. These Missoula Floods inundated this stretch of the Willamette River, deepening the Falls and depositing the legendary Willamette Valley fertile soils, among the best in the world and over 100' deep in some places.

### **Natural Environment Resource Inventory:**

1. **Willamette River.** The beautiful Willamette River is a major tributary of the Columbia River and drains a region of 11,478 square miles. The Willamette's main stem is 187 miles long, lying entirely in NW Oregon. The free-flowing river was named one of 14 American Heritage Rivers in 1998 and a National Water Trail in 2012. The 50+ bridges crossing the Willamette include many historic structures, plus three ferries which continue to provide transit. The name "Willamette" came from the French pronunciation of the name of a Clackamas Native American village. Today we have HUNDREDS of places, businesses and items that bear the Willamette moniker.
2. **Willamette Falls 99E Viewpoint and I-205 Falls Overlook.** State waysides on both sides of the river have interpretive signage and spectacular viewpoints overlooking the Falls, the river, and the industrial facilities surrounding the Falls. Many visitors stop to take photographs, watch boat and tribal fishing, or view the river and Falls in various seasonal displays. Upstream views remain in natural, undeveloped riparian states.
3. **Fields Bridge Park,** a beautiful 19 acres on the Tualatin River, exhibits several huge Ice Age boulders brought to the area by the Missoula Floods. An Interpretive Trail explains the floods and the story of the **largest meteorite ever found in North America.** Glaciations and the floods brought many erratic rocks to the valley and also deposited the Willamette Meteorite. The 15.5-ton giant was discovered nearby and was passed through the 1873 Locks canal on a barge to be exhibited at the 1905 Lewis & Clark



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

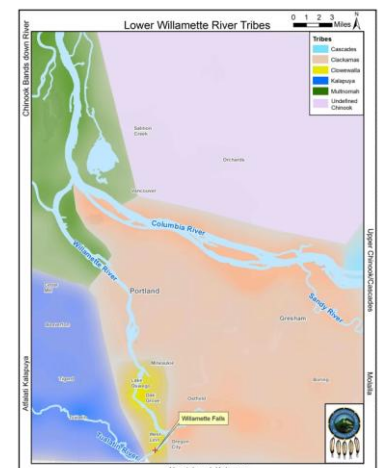
Exposition in Portland. It now rests in the American Museum of Natural History in New York. However, the Museum of the Oregon Territory in Oregon City displays a piece of the famous meteorite.

4. **Canemah Bluff Natural Area**, 330 acres and **Camassia Natural Area**, 22.5 acres. These parks within walking distance of the Falls are great places to see plant life found by tribal nations and early explorers: rare Oregon white oak, Pacific Madrone, Douglas fir, maple and alder, plus Camas, Brodiaea lilies, white larkspur and rosy Plectritus.
5. **Goat Island**: At the confluence of the Clackamas & Willamette rivers below the Falls, this small island contains a fantastic blue heron rookery of at least 30 nests.
6. **Hogg Island**: This 10-acre island in the Willamette River (at river mile 22) hosts several acres of Oregon white oak, once numerous in the Willamette Valley and a focus for restoration today.
7. **Tributaries of the Willamette River** contribute more nearby heritage sites and recreation opportunities: Clackamas, Tualatin, Abernethy Creek, and Oswego Creek. Several trail systems are being developed along the Willamette & Tualatin rivers.
8. **Coalca Pillar**: A basalt oddity about three miles south of Oregon City along Hwy 99E, perched on a bluff overlooking the Willamette River.

The three cities (Oregon City, West Linn and Lake Oswego), through both local and regional initiatives, maintain approximately 10-15% of overall city land as **public open space** within their city limits. Some of these spaces stretch along the bluffs overlooking the Falls as well as along the riverfronts downstream from the Falls. These particular open spaces offer great opportunities for scenic views of the Falls and mills as well as recreational opportunities for boaters, hikers, and cyclists. Some of these spaces, such as Goat & Hogg islands, provide key wildlife habitat for large and endangered species that traditionally populated the area.

With the abundant rainfall, the river, and the Falls, water plays an active role in this landscape –and the residents of the area place a high value on water quality. Despite the heavy agricultural and industrial uses along the river, the Institute for Water and Watersheds at Oregon State University identifies the water quality of the Willamette River just below the Falls as “good” with a rating of 85 out of 100 possible points. The water quality is improving due to environmental efforts such as restoration of riparian edges and wetlands as well as chemical application regulations on upper river farmlands. Wetland restoration is of particular importance, as merely 1% of the original wetlands exist in this wetland-prairie ecosystem. Despite the manmade flood controls that replaced the natural flood control features of the wetlands, flooding is still an occasional issue in the low-lying areas of the cities in periods of heavy rainfall and/or snowmelt, most recently in 1996. Most of the historical city centers now lie on higher ground and are the survivors of dozens of great floods throughout their history.

The proposed Willamette Falls NHA will support ecological preservation and restoration efforts in the area. One heritage area partner, Metro, currently



4.4 – Tribal Groups of the Lower Willamette River



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

leads the improvement and conservation efforts. NHA status can further enhance the natural abundance of the landscape upon which the area's traditional major commercial markets depend, including fishing, timber, and agriculture. A targeted ecological strategy can help prevent flooding, improve the health and well being of local residents, provide healthier and more abundant local food sources, increase recreational options, and acquire more open space and parkland for preservation and restoration of riparian systems.

### **Cultural Resources**

The Willamette Falls area has always been a magnet. For at least 15,000 years, the resident Chinookan tribes and other tribal visitors to the Falls, have fished for salmon and other fish as part of their traditional cultural practices, continuing to the present day. Because the Falls create a natural impediment for travel and transport, they became a gathering place, a 'place where 'things stopped or paused' -- humans and fish alike. The natural stricture in the river funneled anadromous salmon and Pacific lamprey into a small area where they were forced to leap or climb to their spawning grounds. The Clackamas people who lived near the Falls, and their guests, took advantage of the momentary concentration and vulnerability of these fish and caught them in nets or with their hands as they attempted ascent of the Falls. Tribes engaged in trade at the Falls, using surpluses of dried and smoked fish and lamprey.

When the pioneers arrived, their systems for managing the land differed from traditional native stewardship. But emigrant farmers soon learned agricultural techniques such as field burning from the native tribes. More recently, they all recognized their dependence upon the bounty of the land which led Oregon residents to enact some of America's first major farmland and forestland protection laws in the 1960-70's. A keen awareness of the tenuous balance of the environment with modern life remains a defining element of the culture along the length of the Willamette today. A state-of-the-art fish ladder and monitoring station wraps around historic mill buildings and experimental lamprey 'ramps' flank the Falls, expediting fish movement between the upper and lower Willamette River.

In the proposed Heritage Area, 20 buildings and/or districts are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, with many more deemed eligible by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. A number of heritage groups steward historical collections and support museums detailing the Settlement period and Industrial legacies.

### **Settlement Theme Resources:**

- 1. End of the Oregon Trail:** Recognized by Congress as the official terminus of the Oregon Trail in 1978, this historic place was the destination for hundreds of thousands of overland emigrants in the 1840-60's, our nation's greatest overland migration, the Oregon National Historic Trail. Once a marshy area, Abernethy Green in Oregon City now hosts an engaging visitor center, interpretive exhibits about the epic Oregon Trail experience, and plaques marking the end of the pioneers' iconic journey. Open to the public – free.
- 2. Petroglyphs:** a short paddle or motor boat trip to Black Point immediately below Willamette Falls will deliver views of indigenous art.
- 3. McLoughlin House:** Home of the Father of Oregon, Dr. John McLoughlin's 1846 "stately mansion" is a unit of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site since 2003. The graves of McLoughlin and his wife Marguerite lie next to the house which is filled with period furnishings. McLoughlin was Chief Factor for Hudson's Bay Company, platted Oregon City, assisted pioneer settlers, and was the area's first industrialist with construction of his mill race in 1832. Open to the public – free.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

4. **Barclay House:** 1850 home of Dr. Forbes Barclay, HBC Chief Factor, physician, mayor, county coroner, school superintendent – also a unit of the National Park Service. Open to the public – free.
5. **Ermatinger House:** 1845 Federal-style home of Francis Ermatinger who married McLoughlin's granddaughter, Catherine. He ran Hudson's Bay Company store in Oregon City. One of the oldest homes in Oregon, it is also where a famous coin toss determined the name of the city of Portland. Closed temporarily for repairs.
6. **Museum of the Oregon Territory:** Contains artifacts, exhibits and programs from Settlement period, including the plat map of San Francisco filed in 1850 in Oregon City, at the time the only federal land office west of the Rocky Mountains. It also exhibits a piece of the Willamette Meteorite. Open to the public - free
7. **Oregon Trail markers:** 12 interpretive exhibits mark three miles of the Barlow Road, the final overland segment of the Oregon Trail.
8. **Captain John C Ainsworth House:** 1851 Greek Revival style home, called Mount Pleasant, is listed on National Register. American pioneer businessman John Commingers Ainsworth was a banker, steamboat pilot and founder of the Oregon Steam & Navigation Company. Open by request.
9. **Abernethy Elm marker:** On Oregon City's waterfront is the spot where Anne Abernethy planted an American Elm in 1850 next to the home she shared with her husband George, the first and only Provisional Governor of Oregon. The big tree survived floods and storms, the building of an interstate highway and bridge, the modernization of Oregon City, only to succumb to the weight of a deep split in its trunk in 2001. Many pieces of art made from its beautiful wood are on display throughout Oregon City.
10. **Rose Farm:** 1847 Classic Revival-style home of Louisa and William Holmes was where Gov. Joseph Lane, the first Territorial Governor, appointed by President Polk, gave his Inaugural address, seven hours long, from the balcony on June 17, 1849. The first meeting of the Territorial Legislature also met here on July 16. It's the oldest American home in Oregon City. Open to the public in the summer.
11. **Mountain View Cemetery:** Here is the final resting place of many celebrated pioneers and settlers who helped build the Pacific Northwest, its government, industry, commerce, and institutions. This Oregon City cemetery has markers for Peter Skene Ogden, Sidney Moss, W.L. Holmes, L.D.C. Latourette, Absalom Hedges, Robert Caufield, Dr. Forbes Barclay and Baby Josephine. Open daily.
12. **McLoughlin Promenade:** This historically significant walkway overlooking the Falls area was constructed in 1938 through a Works Progress Administration project, a public works employment program established by U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt. Donated to the public by Dr. McLoughlin in the 1850's for use as a public park, it serves as an outstanding viewpoint and pedestrian connection to historic old town Oregon City. Open daily.
13. **Willamette Main Street and Historic District:** When Willamette Falls Electric Company (forerunner of Portland General Electric) was formed to produce power at the Falls, it established the town of Willamette in 1893 for company employees. Willamette was incorporated in 1908, but due to a typhoid epidemic tracked to a contaminated town water supply, it annexed to the new city of West Linn in 1916. The historic Willamette District was designated as a National Register Historic District in 2009, listed nationally as the Willamette Neighborhood Historic District, and is filled with a charming collection of vintage homes. A walking tour map is available for exploring the area and its history.
14. **Main Street Oregon City:** For 169 years, downtown Oregon City has been a place that reflects Oregon's 'roll up your sleeves' work ethic. First Steps Walking Tour down Main Street takes you past 36 historical markers that describe early commercial buildings and entertainment facilities of historic Oregon City.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

15. **Masonic Temple:** Multnomah Lodge #1 charter (first Masonic Lodge west of the Rockies) was delivered to Oregon City via the Oregon Trail in September 1848. Located: 707 Main Street, OC.
16. **Willamette Falls Heritage Trail:** This driving and walking trail leads to exploration of 30 sites of significance to the Settlement and Industrial periods.
17. **McLean House & Park:** Built by country doctor Edward & Anne McLean in 1927, this 3-story colonial style home has 17 rooms, two fireplaces, three full baths and lovely gardens. Park open daily.
18. **Clackamas County Courthouse**
19. **Oregon City Railroad Depot**
20. **Willamette Falls Locks Museum:** Operated by the Army Corps of Engineers in the original lock house. Open by appointment
21. **Oregon City-West Linn Arch Bridge:** built by Conde McCullough in 1922, renovated in 2012.

### Our Industrial Legacy

Upon their initial arrival in the area, Euro-American explorers immediately recognized the potential at the Falls for hydropower. Soon after first settlement in 1829, Dr. John McLoughlin built a mill race, then a sawmill, which stimulated a multitude of big industry endeavors that together created a major industrial complex.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Willamette Falls area boasted two paper mills, iron smelter, woolen mill, grist mills, and lumber mills. The famous Oregon City Woolen Mill once employed 1,125 workers and operated 109 looms. It had a contract in 1931 for the new ocean liners *President Hoover* and *President Coolidge* for 2000 blankets and 1000 steam robes.



4.6 – Mill buildings at Willamette Falls

This role for the Oregon Territory was similar to the industrial heritage of Lowell, Mass., now Lowell National Historical Park. Willamette Falls was called ‘the Lowell of the West’ and produced four to six times more hydropower than the Lowell industrial hub.

### An Industry That Changed the World

Without a doubt, the most significant national and international contribution from Willamette Falls was **Electricity**. The first long distance transmission of direct current occurred at Willamette Falls in June, 1889. The next year (1890) George Westinghouse selected powerful Willamette Falls to test the transmission of alternating current over a long distance, 14 miles to downtown Portland, beating Thomas Edison to the punch at Niagara Falls. Little did anyone realize that **this first long-distance commercial transmission of alternating current electricity in the United States would change the face of not only the nation but the world.**

Westinghouse chose Willamette Falls because it was the single most reliable source of raw hydropower in the region. To this day, manufacturing and hydropower thrive at the Falls, shaping a rich industrial heritage and the livelihoods of many local residents.

Today at Willamette Falls, West Linn Paper Company still manufactures 700 tons of paper, 24 hours a day and Portland General Electric still supplies the region with ‘green’ electricity.





## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### Redevelopment of 23-acre former Paper Mill Site

The most significant opportunity in the proposed NHA today is the redevelopment of the former Blue Heron Paper Mill site called the Willamette Falls Legacy Project. This 23-acre historic location is currently undergoing a public Master Planning process with partner jurisdictions Oregon City, Clackamas County, and Metro regional government. Four values shape the project, which WFHAC strongly supports: public access to Willamette Falls, economic development, habitat restoration, and cultural and historical interpretation. A study for the Willamette Falls Legacy Project estimates that redevelopment would create 560 to 1,110 construction jobs, and 550 to 1,090 office and retail jobs. The project would attract some 660,000 visitors per year, driving demand for an additional 600 local jobs. Redevelopment would boost property values in Oregon City, both on-site and by generating at least \$7.5 million in additional value in the surrounding area.

WFHAC has been involved in advocacy as well as every phase of the Legacy Project at the former mill site. Preservation of historically important buildings, creation of public spaces for cultural interpretation and river access, and focus on WFHAC's Birthplace of Industry theme, are rich possibilities and promising opportunities for a potential NHA.

### Iron Builds Northwest Infrastructure

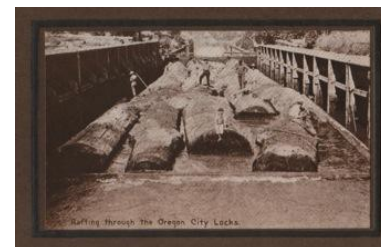
Originally, the industries of the area used raw materials from the land. Although timber and agriculture were dominant, iron from Lake Oswego's iron smelters, fueled by charcoal from nearby wooded hillsides, helped build the infrastructure of the Pacific Northwest. The discovery of mineral wealth in Lake Oswego and the expectation that the town would become the "Pittsburg of the West" attracted workers from across the nation after the Civil War. The iron company employed 700 workers at its peak in the 1890's. Skilled workers came from Germany, France, Belgium and the British Isles.

"Oregon Brand Pig Iron" was used in the Central Pacific Railway, in San Francisco's first city hall, and was sold to foundries up and down the west coast.

### The Agricultural Industry

Raw materials, which originated in the lush agricultural fields of the Willamette Valley, were the result of thousands of years of native landscape management and several decades of American pioneer settlement and agricultural production.

Families and small companies cultivated crops or harvested timber from the region's vast forests of Douglas fir. These crops would be brought to the Willamette River and shipped down river to the Columbia and then to the Pacific Ocean, destined for markets in California and Asia. Businesses catering to these industries grew up along the river, including transportation and shipping empires as well as factories that could take the raw materials and create marketable products. Many factories were located in the Willamette Falls area to maximize the potential horsepower generated by the Falls.



4.11 – Timber Passing Through Willamette Falls Navigational Canal and Locks

### Transportation & Trade

Due to its prime location on the Willamette River next to the Falls, the area always was a major crossroads, a key inland navigation center. Tribes would travel to the Falls annually to net, smoke and trade fish. It became a



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

tribal gathering place where goods were exchanged, 'First Salmon' were celebrated, and festivals occurred. They used well-established trails and river routes. When British fur trappers and American settlers arrived, they immediately used similar routes for transport and for delivery of goods and services throughout the Willamette Valley.

Large steamboat operations thrived on this water highway, carrying wheat, apples, and other agricultural products down the Willamette River to the Columbia to the Pacific Ocean, destined for markets in San Francisco, China, Canada, Manilla and the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii).

The area is home to a multitude of historical transportation innovations, including steamboats and sternwheelers built above the Falls at Canemah in the 1850s, and especially the historic Willamette Navigational Canal and Locks built in 1873. Unfortunately, after nearly 140 years of uninterrupted commercial and recreational use, the historically intact Locks were closed. They await funding and transfer of ownership from the US Army Corps of Engineers to another entity.

### **Getting Freight & People Around the Falls**

Of course, in the early years of settlement, the Falls were a huge obstacle for trade and transportation. Before 1873, the bottleneck at Willamette Falls divided the trade routes and required the portage of goods between the upper and lower sections of the river which added to the expense and stifled competition. As early as 1844, Dr. John McLoughlin sought a franchise from the Territorial Legislature to build a canal around the Falls.

In 1845, the community of Canemah, above the Falls, was founded to take advantage of a natural basin enlarged to permit multiple ships to anchor. "Canemah...was the loading and unloading point for the portage around Willamette Falls." (McArthur, 2003:155)

In 1850, Peter Hatch invested \$20,000 and blasted a portage road out of the rocky bluffs between Canemah and Oregon City, replacing traditional backpacking trails established by tribal nations centuries before. This endeavor was soon topped by a wooden-strap track. Others attempted to avoid the Falls altogether, including steamboat routes up the Tualatin River and around Linn City and other original west bank settlements. Log hoists were built to move logs around the Falls. Remnants of these transport systems are still visible in the Study Area today, though often unmarked and in a state of neglect.

Agitation for a navigable canal around Willamette Falls increased after statehood in 1859. The Portland newspaper promoted the plan:

***What our Farmers want is a market...at this time wheat will not pay the cost of hauling it to (Portland) ...We have already spoken of a canal at Oregon City, which would enable farmers at small cost to bring down their produce...What a blessing and advantage would such a work be to the country above and below the Falls...It would triple the amount of produce brought to market. [Oregonian, Oct 5, 1861, 3:1]***

In 1865, Capt. Joseph Kellogg, of the People's Transportation Company (PTC), incorporated Sucker Lake and Tualatin River Rail Road. This was a horse drawn wooden rail line that took goods and passengers from the Colfax landing on the Tualatin River to the west end of Sucker Lake (now Oswego Lake). Passengers then took a



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

small steam boat to the other end of the lake and from there it was a short distance to the Willamette. In this way people on the upper Willamette and in the Tualatin Valley were able to get around the barrier of the Falls.

In 1868, the PTC had seven steamboats above Willamette Falls and two below the Falls. With high capital costs and obvious collusion between the limited number of steamboat operators, freight costs rose to astronomical levels. The end of this boom and monopoly came when the Oregon and California Railroad reached Salem in 1870. (MacColl, 1988: 150: *Capital Journal*, Sept. 28, 1870)

In 1868, Ben Holladay, a national figure in the development of America's transportation system, arrived in Oregon, intent on connecting Oregon and California with a new rail line and used his wealth and power to try to stop or delay the construction of the canal and locks.

### The Willamette Falls Locks

After many failed attempts to establish a lock system to bypass the Falls, private investors finally opened the Willamette Falls Locks in 1873. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers purchased the Locks in 1915. Until November of 2011, the Locks were the oldest, smallest continuously operational multiple-lift locks system in the United States. Then the Corps shuttered the locks due to lack of funding for repairs. But a very active One Willamette River Coalition is seeking both funding and a transfer of ownership to enable the operation of this historic resource once again.

The Willamette Falls Locks were the first significant navigational improvement on the Willamette and in the greater Columbia River drainage. Today it is unique in Oregon and a rare example of an intact piece of America's canal building era.

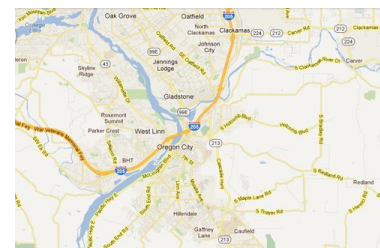
### Major Crossroads

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Willamette Falls area continued to be a major cross road and transportation corridor. In 1922, completion of the Oregon City Arch Bridge and the Pacific Highway through Oregon City made possible a 1,600-mile continuous U.S. route reaching from Canada to the Mexican border. This road and its successor, Interstate 5, became the most important highways on the West Coast, and gradually took the lion's share of shipping off the Willamette River.

### The Bridge that Carried the First Electricity

A wooden bridge opened Nov. 1, 1888 between Oregon City and today's West Linn, supplanting the ferry. This was the first suspension bridge west of the Mississippi and used Roebling wire cables. But its great importance lies in the fact that it carried the power cables across the river in June of 1889 that lit downtown Portland at night for the first time: the first long distance transmission of electricity in North America. The successor bridge, the strikingly designed 1922 Conde McCullough Arch Bridge, was Oregon's only Gunitite covered steel arch and likely the only one of its kind in the United States. The Bridge offers the only direct connection between West Linn and Oregon City for automobiles and pedestrians and has a spectacular view of the Falls area. It still carries power and water across the 120' deep river below.

The Arch Bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was spectacularly and extensively renovated by the Oregon Department of



4.12 – Transportation Network



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Transportation in 2012. The Bridge renovation project won an award from the International Bridge Conference for “outstanding achievement in bridge engineering demonstrating artistic merit and innovation in the restoration and rehabilitation of bridges of historic or engineering significance.” The project also received an Oregon Heritage Excellence Award in May 2013 from the Oregon Heritage Commission.

### Industrial and Business Outlook

Major property owners in the area are proud stewards of the assets relating to the Falls industrial history: City of West Linn, City of Oregon City, City of Lake Oswego, Portland General Electric, West Linn Paper Company, Metro (regional government), Providence Willamette Falls Medical Center, and Clackamas County. National Heritage Area designation does nothing to inhibit continued operations of these important businesses. The bankruptcy of Blue Heron Paper Company, which disrupted the lives of 175 workers, is a symbol of the challenges facing the large industries remaining adjacent to the Falls and near growing cities. Other businesses have significantly reduced staffing due to the economic downturn and the movement to offshore operations. Many workers must leave the local area to find employment by commuting to employment centers in metropolitan Portland or Salem.

The proposed Willamette Falls NHA will expand employment opportunities by boosting tourist and local visitation to the area’s sites and the spin-off expansion of food, beverage, lodging, entertainment and retail business.

### Existing Industry and Transportation Resources

1. **Canemah:** town known for ship-building, now part of Oregon City – many historic homes and parks.
2. **West Linn Paper Mill and Sullivan Power plant** – tours during Lock Fest & by appointment
3. **Willamette Falls Navigational Canal & Locks** –currently closed but visible from many viewpoints
4. **McLoughlin Promenade** – an historic walkway with great views of the river and industrial activity
5. **Oregon City-West Linn Arch Bridge** –Conde McCullough’s 1922 masterpiece, recently restored
6. **Amtrak station** – route to Seattle and beyond
7. **Vintage style trolleys** – free rides to historic sites & other points of interest during summer months in Oregon City
8. **1915 Log Hoist** – visible on the river and at George Rogers Park. Used until 1930, logs were pulled out of the river, hoisted onto rail cars at Oswego and transported above the Falls to the Paper mill.
9. **1866 Iron Furnace** (recipient of National Trust for Historic Preservation’s 2012 National Preservation Honor Award) – the first iron furnace on the Pacific Coast and the only surviving Civil War era furnace west of the Rockies.
10. **Oswego Iron Heritage Trail:** seven heritage sites important to the iron smelting industry
  - 1866 Iron Furnace (recipient of a 2012 National Preservation Award)
  - Blast House foundation
  - Worker’s Cottage (listed on the National Register & currently undergoing restoration)
  - Remnants of the Second Furnace (a stone wall and crucible)
  - Prosser Iron Mines
  - Mine railroad (now a hiking trail)
  - Oswego-Tualatin Canal
  - Oswego Lake Dam
  - Oswego Pioneer Cemetery (owned by the iron company for 40 years)



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Many natural features also remain intact: the creek, the river landing, the charging terrace, and the mine site. All of these assets (manmade and natural) are in city parks or on public property and are linked in an interpretive walking route called the Oswego Iron Heritage Trail.

<http://www.ci.oswego.or.us/parksrec/oswego-iron-heritage-trail>

### Educational Resources

All of the heritage education resources within the area are limited in their reach because most rely chiefly upon volunteer staffing and can only offer limited public access hours. In the past five years, three of the area's history museums and sites closed temporarily for lack of funding. Through intense and heroic volunteer efforts, two of the museums are now refocused and have re-opened with new programming. The potential for increased educational offerings is limitless.

The county's largest museum, the Museum of the Oregon Territory (MOOT), maintains permanent exhibits and special exhibits pertaining to county heritage and history. The museum houses a well-used research & genealogy library maintained by Clackamas County Family History Society. MOOT recently began a series of popular education programs aimed at school children, featuring skills used by tribal people and early pioneers.

Many of the museums and historic sites in the proposed NHA offer seasonal programming and outreach to schools and groups:

1. **McLoughlin House and Barclay House:** The NHA's most distinguished historical icons and a unit of the National Park Service's Fort Vancouver National Historical Site offers seasonal heritage programming, handcraft demonstrations, tours for school groups
2. **End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center:** programs for students & groups about the Oregon Trail
3. **Rose Farm** – targeted educational programming
4. **McLean House and Park** – educational displays
5. **Museum of the Oregon Territory and Stevens-Crawford Heritage House** – tours, programs for students and groups, and hands-on activities.



4.8 – Flintknapping workshop



*Museum of the Oregon Territory*





## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

During the summer months, the cities of West Linn, Lake Oswego and Oregon City typically host a number of heritage –themed festivals and events. They include: First City Celebration in Oregon City, West Linn Old Fashioned Fair, Willamette Living History Lantern Light Tour, Oswego Festival of the Arts, Lock Fest and Oregon City's Open Air Antique Fair. Attendance at these events range from 2,000 to 15,000 people annually.

WFHAC's premier event, **Willamette Falls Festival**, drew 30,000 people to the proposed NHA in 2012, exposing attendees to river-related issues while celebrating the reopening of the renovated Arch Bridge. This year's festival will carry a heritage area theme: Celebrating Our Industrial Legacy. The Festival is unique in that it encompasses three communities, three rivers, and county assets.

Attendance at festivals and events proves there is strong interest in heritage, but the small and disjointed nature of current efforts to provide heritage access and education threatens its future. The proposed NHA has the potential to reverse this trend by combining efforts and strengthening its reach in the community. WFHAC intends to emphasize heritage education and physical access to heritage sites as key aspects of the proposed NHA.

### **Demographics of the Proposed NHA**

The communities in the Willamette Falls area are typical of United States demographics. The 2010 U.S. Census shows 90,000 people living in the cities of West Linn, Oregon City and Lake Oswego. Over the past 10 years, Clackamas County's population grew by 13.6% and is projected to continue to grow in coming years.

Native Oregonians make up 52% of the population with 91% native to the United States. Nearly one third of the county's residents are schoolchildren or college students, half are between the ages of 25-65, and 14% are over 65. Age distribution is similar to nationwide averages. Median age for the county is 40.6. Veterans comprise 10% of the county's residents and 12% are disabled, similar to national averages.

Of the working population, 25% finished high school, 25% attended some college, 20% hold bachelor's degrees, and 10% have graduate or professional degrees. About 65% of households are double-income households, matching the national average. Median household income is \$57,928, or is slightly higher than the national average of \$50,046. Three-fourths of workers commute by automobile with an average commute time of 26 minutes, matching the national average. The local unemployment rate equals the national rate of 8.2% as of November 2011.

Occupational distributions also match national averages, with nearly 50% of the population employed in education, health and social services, retail, and manufacturing. Arts and entertainment employ 7.4% of local residents, slightly less than the national average of 9.2%.

The proposed NHA is predicted to bring an influx of national attention to the local area and affect both its population and local markets. Increased tourism may foster increased employment in heritage, the arts and associated service industries. Stronger local markets due to NHA programs and tourism may also retain and increase local employment, thereby reducing travel time to other destinations. Most importantly, strong local markets provide ample opportunities that will help the community retain youth and attract population diversity that will reinforce the vibrancy of the local community.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### Tourism

Our tourism partners are important to the success of our destination, especially Travel Oregon and Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs. A study conducted by Mandala Research LLC showed that Oregon’s cultural heritage travelers spend nearly 60% more per person than they do nationally.

The State of Oregon annually hosts 73 million visitor trips. Nearly 39% of these trips are overnight, with an average of two nights spent away from home. Most visitors are from the Pacific Northwest, 55% originating from Oregon. Visitors typically spend their vacation time touring and spending time outdoors enjoying Oregon’s scenic beauty. **The foremost activity of interest is visiting historic places, followed by cultural activities,** culinary experiences, ecotourism, and winery tours. Trending reports indicate that both heritage tourism and eco-tourism are on the rise. Currently, nearly 85% of Oregon tourists self-identify as “environmentally conscious,” while 87% or 47.5 million in 2012, consider themselves to be “cultural heritage” tourists.

The tourism industry in Oregon currently generates \$9.2 billion in economic impact, \$2.2 billion in earnings, and \$363 million in state and local taxes. Over 91,000 Oregonians are directly employed by the tourism industry, and another 41,000 are indirectly employed.

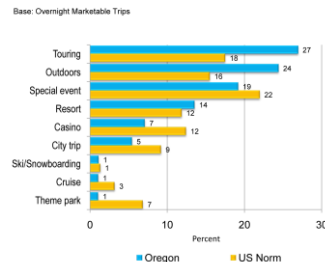
Using the figure of \$470 million in direct visitor spending reported by the Dean Runyan Economic Impact Study for 2012 and the collection in that year of Transit Room Tax (TRT) of \$2,800,000, it is calculated that for every \$1 of TRT received \$169 in visitor spending was generated as a return on the investment of the county’s tourism programs, which increased by 8.5% over 2011.

With 18,000 visits with an average stay of 2.4 days and party size of 2.7 equaling 116,640 visitor days, each spending \$164/day (results from BN Research in Clackamas County) creates an economic impact of \$19,128,960.

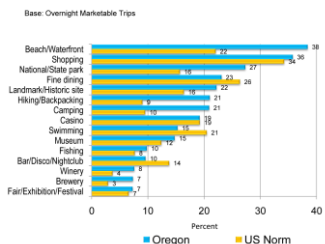
The Willamette Falls area is home to a bevy of exciting and diverse historic places, cultural events, and outdoor recreational activities.

**Recreational opportunities in the Study Area:** Three public golf courses; kayaking, canoeing, boating, water sports, and fishing on the three rivers; walking trails in the Camassia & Canemah Nature Preserves, three state parks and 60 municipal parks; a multitude of trails and bicycle paths; and geocaching.

**Historic Places:** The Willamette Falls and River, the End of the Oregon Trail, Willamette Falls Heritage Trail, the Iron Furnace Trail, the Barlow Road segment of the Oregon Trail, the Willamette Falls Navigational Canal & Locks, the T.W. Sullivan Power plant, the historic Main Streets of Oregon City and West Linn, 25 places on the National Register of Historic Places, and other points of historic and cultural interest.



**4.9 – Purpose of Trips: Oregon and United States Norm**



**4.10 – Activities while Visiting: Oregon and United States Norm**



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Cultural Activities:** First City Celebration, Willamette Falls Festival, Old Time Fair, Festival of the Arts, Concerts in the Parks, Pioneer Family Festival, Lock Fest, and more.

National heritage areas can significantly increase tourism through projects, programming, and advertising. The establishment of the Willamette Falls National Heritage Area has the potential to increase the contributions of the tourism industry to the local economy, increasing revenues and sales, creating and sustaining new jobs in the local community.

### Food and Agriculture

The Willamette Falls area is famous for its temperate climate, moderate rainfall, and rich soils. Many types of plants grow easily and prolifically throughout the area. In fact, Clackamas County ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in sales of agricultural products in Oregon and is a national leader in the production of nursery and greenhouse products, berries and Christmas trees.

Clackamas County is the *Christmas Tree Capital of the World*, growing more than any other county or region in the world. In 2010, 16,900 acres of Christmas trees were in the ground and sales topped \$25 million. The county features nearly 4,000 farms, including vegetables, grain, hay and forage, grass and legume seeds, tree fruits and nuts, small fruit and berries farms, nursery, livestock, horse, and Christmas trees. Value added products such as jams, and agritourism are also important market attractions. More than 90% of the nation's supply of grass seed is grown in the Willamette Valley.

The county is also a top producer of fruit, including apples, blackberries, blueberries, and cherries. The *Bing cherry, the most produced variety of sweet cherry in the United States, was first created in Clackamas County in 1875.*

Products are in great demand throughout the region, country and abroad. A majority of the nation's blackberries, boysenberries, loganberries, and raspberries, as well as hazelnuts, are produced in Clackamas County and the Willamette Valley. The region is becoming nationally known for its wine and beer, brewed from locally grown grapes and hops. Today, the Willamette Valley produces nearly 200 different commodities, contributing to Oregon's agricultural production income of \$5.2 billion (2012, Oregon Department of Agriculture).

Oregon Trail pioneers came to this veritable "Garden of Eden" carrying seeds and saplings to start new gardens in a new land. From 1834 to 1855, the agricultural production of the Willamette Valley increased tenfold and quickly became one of the major agricultural production centers in the country, shipping wheat, apples, hops, and other crops to San Francisco, China, Manilla, Canada, and the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii). *During the California gold rush, agricultural products from the Willamette Valley supplied the gold fields as well as Asian markets that had developed a taste for American goods in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

The proposed NHA is home to three municipal farmers' markets that offer residents the opportunity to buy local products directly from local producers. However, none of the markets have a permanent, year-round location, which provides an opportunity for growth in the future.



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With its heightened focus on local heritage and community, the proposed Willamette Falls NHA will be a catalyst that can increase awareness of local agricultural products and heritage foods as well. A rich opportunity awaits for heritage area branding and promotion of locally grown and locally made products.

### **Destination Willamette Falls National Heritage Area**

The area is easily accessible by plane, train, mass transit, boat and automobile. Interstate 205 and US Highway 99 traverse the study area, providing regional connections to Washington, California and beyond. A viewpoint with interpretive signage for the Willamette Falls and Locks is located directly off northbound I-205. Portland International Airport is 30 minutes away via I-205. Oregon City also hosts an Amtrak station with connections to many major West Coast cities, including Portland, Seattle, Vancouver BC, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. A free trolley service transports riders to historic sites and points of interest in Oregon City during the summer months. The Portland Spirit cruise line offers weekly heritage cruises from Portland to the Falls in the summer season.

### **Opportunities for the NHA**

NHA designation will help to preserve and protect the area's heritage, heighten awareness through greater accessibility, and build local pride in the resources of the local community, including local cultural activities, recreation, and markets.

Through direct action, advocacy, and education, a NHA team can help to protect and preserve the environmental and cultural identity of a place. NHA designation would hasten and focus those actions, whether it be river clean-ups or public access and historically sensitive redevelopment of the 23-acre Blue Heron site. Our environmental and cultural identities are closely intertwined, so the potential here is remarkable. The opportunities to preserve, protect and enhance this rich environment are obvious and urgent.

The proposed Willamette Falls NHA is an area of majestic natural beauty, unique nationally significant stories and themes, and a distinctive landscape. Its cultural identity is shaped by the land itself. This so-called "Garden of Eden" is the birthplace of the continental United States as we know it today. Because of the Falls, tribal nations first gathered, then settlers arrived who did not want to be British, Russian, Spanish or French. All peoples put down deep roots that cry out for cultural interpretation today. Because of the Falls, great industries became possible, powered by entrepreneurs who sent electricity 14 miles to Portland and changed the landscape of the world irrevocably and brilliantly.

The opportunities to share our NHA themes through educational activities, cultural interpretation, preservation projects, environmental attention, and direct experiences are limited only by our creativity!



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### Chapter 5: Management Alternatives

From the first meetings in 2006, Willamette Falls National Heritage Area (NHA) stakeholders sought ways to enhance and preserve the rich resources around Willamette Falls. They quickly came to understand the strength in collaboration and working across political boundaries. When it came time to discuss management of the heritage area, the preferred Management Alternatives were cooperative, community-based, inclusive and focused on strengthening partnerships, resource stewardship, cultural interpretation, public accessibility and education.

This chapter considers three courses of action for management of the Willamette Falls NHA. The first alternative explores the challenges and constraints of resource management and heritage protection if no NHA designation occurs; the second considers the potential future if the Willamette Falls NHA becomes a reality; and the third alternative explores the benefits of a State Heritage Area designation.

#### **Alternative 1: No National Heritage Area Designation**

The greatest challenge to heritage in the Willamette Falls area is the uncoordinated and piecemeal nature of the efforts to develop its heritage resources. The Willamette River divides the study area and creates a natural barrier, a physical, political, social and sometimes psychological impediment between jurisdictions and sites. Lack of coordination toward common goals in the proposed NHA has resulted in several heritage organizations and sites undergoing severe struggles. These challenges highlight the difficulties of working across boundaries, without a coordinating agency or organization.

Without NHA designation for the Willamette Falls area, we foresee little positive change to current heritage resource management in the area. Organizations and authorities would continue to operate and seek funding independently and in competition with each other. State and local governments would continue to provide limited and intermittent funding, based on the vagaries of budgeting and grant cycles. No organization currently has the flexibility or the mission to coordinate efforts across jurisdictional and traditional boundaries. With NHA designation, Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC) would fulfill its mission to create public-private partnerships to transcend traditional barriers and work across boundaries to implement common goals. Without NHA designation, current negative trends in the study area would likely continue. In the past five years, some of the major museums and heritage sites, as well as key industries, have closed or operated with limited hours due to lack of funding or leadership.

In December 2011, the US Army Corps of Engineers ceased operation of the historic Willamette Falls Locks due to insufficient funds for needed repairs and operations. For the past decade, transit through the Locks has been sporadic based upon available federal funding, a low federal priority. The Locks were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Last year, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Historic Preservation League of Oregon each declared the 1873 locks and navigation canal to be national and state "treasures" that are irreplaceable and critically threatened places. Both nonprofit preservation organizations have pledged to work with local groups and One Willamette River Coalition to tap expert preservation resources, legal assistance, marketing and fundraising in an effort to transfer the Locks out of Corps ownership and into the hands of a local operating authority. Without NHA designation, restoration of operational Locks may be problematic.





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Also in 2011, the changing economic landscape forced bankruptcy and closure of the historic Blue Heron Paper Mill, one of the top 10 employers in the area. The mill closing left 23 acres of land with abandoned industrial buildings stretching from Willamette Falls to the southern doorstep of Oregon City's historic downtown. Given the site's significant historic associations and strong connections to the Willamette River and Falls, the site has been identified as a "legacy opportunity" to support multiple public aspirations. Several public agencies, led by the City of Oregon City, have partnered to support planning and visioning of the site to broaden public benefit. WFHAC has been involved with these activities and strongly supports the four Partner Values: public access, economic development, habitat restoration, and cultural and historical interpretation. WFHAC believes that redevelopment of the Blue Heron site is a critical and significant opportunity in the proposed heritage area. Without NHA designation, the partnership lacks the supportive clout needed to enhance tourism, connect across jurisdictions, attract capital, and focus on historic preservation.

Even the National Park Service took devastating cuts in the Study Area. One of the most visited and celebrated historic sites in Oregon, McLoughlin House, a unit of NPS in Oregon City, is open to the public only two days a week, beginning in March 2013. Without NHA designation, change is not foreseen in the near term. Sincere community and governmental efforts to reverse the negative trends and provide heritage protection and enhancement are ongoing, but these initiatives largely operate independently. As a result, positive changes tend to be small and slow, limiting their long term effectiveness. If no NHA occurs, we predict these trends will continue.

### **Alternative 2: National Heritage Area Designation**

NHA designation would bring together under one roof many of the divergent efforts to develop cultural heritage sites and economic revitalization around the Willamette Falls area, and would provide a renewed focus on the amazing character of this unique region.

The creation of Willamette Falls National Heritage Area would be the foundation for sustainability and growth for our many heritage sites and organizations. With NHA designation, the potential for partnerships among the many independent entities currently in operation increases and provides a mechanism for these entities to combine and share efforts, to reduce competition among them, and to craft a broader, more effective collaborative approach. Cooperative marketing would make limited funding stretch farther into targeted markets.

NHA designation would enhance the economic potential of the area and begin to address the challenges and negative trends of heritage resource management around Willamette Falls. The NHA designation would provide a cohesive national identity, a singular management entity and foster strategic planning of the area. Collaboration under one management plan would better protect resources and promote public accessibility, increase opportunities to establish more effective programs and activities, expand funding opportunities, and increase public awareness and patronage. An NHA designation strengthens the case for restoration of operational Willamette Falls Locks, and the Locks provide an intact, historical resource for site-based interpretation and authentic experience. It offers a collaborative approach to conservation that does not compromise local control over and use of the landscape.



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### Alternative 3: State Heritage Area Designation

As beneficial as the NHA designation would be, such designation is not the area's sole opportunity, although it is clearly the optimal one. The Oregon Heritage Commission developed criteria and adopted guidelines in 2012 for a State Heritage Area (SHA) program. WFHAC is currently completing an application with the goal of becoming Oregon's first official State Heritage Area. Similar to NHA status, state designation will provide a cohesive identity and 'brand' for the area, promote tourism and marketing of SHA assets and stories, encourage partnerships, and provide an incentive to foster coordination between many competing sites and organizations to avoid duplication of efforts. A positive cycle of increased public awareness, expanded funding opportunities, and coordinated marketing campaigns would be a great benefit of either National or State Heritage Area designation. Finally, SHA status would foster the development of unique contextual stories of place and of Oregon heritage that may not normally be programmed for National Heritage Area sites. These stories of place will resonate with people of the region, but not necessarily interest a national audience. However, the SHA designation does not come with funding or the technical support and resources available through NPS, so progress would happen more slowly and in smaller bits than through NHA designation.

### Impacts of the Three Management Alternatives:

#### ***Impact on the Natural Environment***

*No NHA: No additional natural resource protection, conservation or enhancement is likely to occur.*

*NHA: Coordination leads to conservation, restoration and increased environmental advocacy*

*SHA Only: Limited participation or funding from federal partner agencies, less coordinated efforts, less stringent performance standards and less technical support.*

Without additional funding or a management plan provided by NHA designation, current trends in the study area's natural environment would likely continue. No additional protections or conservation would occur except through occasional private and public funding. Many natural and attractive sites of interest, including the Willamette Falls, would continue to be physically inaccessible to the general public.

A NHA designation would encourage partnerships among environmental advocacy groups, public agencies, and private industry, and provide a mechanism to focus conservation and restoration efforts in the Willamette Falls area. Habitat restoration, particularly relating to salmon and Pacific lamprey eels, would happen more quickly. Community access to the natural landscape and its resources would be enhanced through recreational and scenic upgrades.

#### ***Impact on Cultural Identity***

*No NHA: Lack of coordination would continue to inhibit public awareness of cultural resources.*

*NHA: Cultural heritage coordination enhances interpretive programming, public awareness & support.*

*SHA Only: Showcases little known stories of the local area's cultural heritage, with statewide interest.*

Without NHA designation, a continued lack of coordination of services, opportunities, and programming between institutions and jurisdictions will provide the same, restricted level of resource protection, education, and promotion in the study area. Public awareness of the rich and nationally distinctive cultural landscape and



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history will remain limited and inaccessible for future generations. Patronage levels would likely continue flat, or decrease due to lack of awareness, interpretation, and interest.

The NHA designation would help to showcase the nationally significant stories and contributions of the native peoples, Chinese workers, inventors, industrialists and settlements at Willamette Falls. Public awareness of the area's American cultural heritage would increase due to visual and physical accessibility to historic sites, programming and educational activities. NHA designation would raise the caliber of professional management practices of our cultural and heritage entities. NHA designation would allow the communities to show the nation the uniqueness of the area, develop its national profile and role in the growth and development of the United States.

### **Impact on Local Communities**

*No NHA: Separate community programs and projects continue to fragment and limit successes.*

*NHA: Coordination of activities and programs around common themes, common stories & across jurisdictional boundaries; collaboration in pursuit of grant funding, projects of mutual interest, consistency of interpretation, and help in solving challenges within the NHA boundaries. Tourism would increase through focused & coordinated efforts, as would job growth. NPS affiliation would provide high standards for site-based, educational programming and familiar identity for visitor recognition.*

*SHA Only: Would not bring economic or heritage results very quickly.*

Without a NHA designation, current socio-economic trends in the local community would persist. Economic development efforts around heritage themes and heritage tourism would continue within local political and geographic boundaries, with intermittent success. Separate programs would continue to operate with limited collective benefits to community building. Local plans and dreams would remain largely local. Inter-jurisdictional projects would be difficult to implement.

With NHA designation and a concurrent increase in heritage awareness, the local communities would experience a resurgence in local pride. Restoration of a traditional tribal identity at the Falls would be possible. Greater visibility of the area's resources would increase heritage and recreational tourism and encourage greater resource protection and promotion. Local businesses, particularly those supporting heritage and with heritage connections, would experience increased revenue and demand. This economic impact would create jobs and help the area retain talent and youth. Most importantly, this economic revitalization would be community and locally-focused, thereby increasing the liveliness of the downtown areas and developing local identity and pride-of-place.

### **Impact on Agriculture**

*No NHA: Uncoordinated efforts in agri-tourism would continue to inhibit industry growth and impact.*

*NHA: Promotion of local products would expand local markets and sales.*

*SHA Only: Promotion of local products would be less visible, less frequent, and continuously hunting for funding.*

Without the NHA designation and overarching management plan, local agriculture programs and markets would continue to operate independently of each other. Without the coordination and planning of a NHA, the impacts of local farmers' markets, agricultural tours, wine industry sales, and native handcrafts would remain much less effective, efficient and visible.



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A goal of a NHA would be to promote local products and markets on a national and regional stage. Increased visibility of local agriculture and produce would encourage positive market expansion and provide opportunities to increase agri-tourism, especially round the wine industry and local foods.. Reopening of the Locks would allow transport of commodities, including agricultural products, from upriver and enhance market opportunities.

### **Impact on Tourism/Visitation to the Falls Area**

*No NHA: Visitation to the Willamette Falls area has no added incentive for growth.*

*NHA: Visibility and access to the area is greatly increased, so tourism grows and visitors are motivated to stay longer and spend more, creating a positive economic impact for the area.*

*SHA Only: Tourism planning would be closely tied to Oregon programs and statewide initiatives.*

Without a NHA, current tourism trends in Clackamas County would continue. The Willamette Falls, as well as other cultural heritage resources in the area, would remain largely overlooked by tourists due to ongoing lack of physical access, visibility, coordination and marketing. Visitation is also limited by lack of coordinated signage (both directional and interpretive), lack of parking, and no clear or distinguishing gateways into the area. With a NHA designation, the visibility of the area as a visitor destination is immediately increased and familiar NPS branding, interpretation and programming standards would assist in showcasing the region. With more patronage, the area would experience a positive economic impact that would encourage business expansion, particularly in downtown areas, as well as an expansion of heritage tourism-related sites and activities, and an increase of overnight lodging facilities. Currently, no Bed and Breakfast facility operates within the study area.

### **Impact on Transportation**

*No NHA: Lack of coordinated planning and connections continue to plague access to heritage destinations.*

*NHA: Opportunities to expand and improve transportation corridors, bike and ped lanes, and river usage increase with creative alternatives such as shuttles, water taxis, sternwheelers and trolleys.*

*SHA Only: Local opportunities would lack the incentive, cache and support of national distinction.*

Transportation patterns would continue along current trends without the addition of the NHA designation and subsequent coordination. Transportation routes would continue to lack connection to the Willamette Falls, viewpoints, and important heritage sites and facilities. Pedestrian pathways, bicycle paths, water routes for canoeing, kayaking and other water sports, would remain disconnected in the Willamette Falls area without a coordinating effort that NHA designation would foster.

A NHA designation would provide opportunities to create connection and increase visibility to heritage sites through better signage and gateways. It would also create the opportunity to increase physical access to and between sites through new trails and walkways as well as parking coordination and improvements to the major corridors, such as 99E and McLoughlin Blvd. Creative transportation options would be possible, such as water taxis, shuttles, carriages, sternwheelers, and kayaks to enhance the local resident and visitor experience.

### **Coordinating Entity**

When the Willamette Falls National Heritage Area is created, Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC) is structured to be the coordinating entity. WFHAC has a board of directors of 18 and a part-time executive



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director. It was certified as a (501)(c)(3) nonprofit in 2012 to facilitate the establishment of the Willamette Falls NHA. WFHAC includes representatives of three cities, a county, a tribal nation, nonprofit arts and heritage organizations, business groups, industry, and key community leaders.

WFHAC has developed a strategic plan and budget for the initial years of the NHA, during which WFHAC will be required by the designating legislation to establish a long-term management plan for the NHA and begin to develop programs and initiatives to promote the themes and vision of the heritage area.

Locally administered and planned, a NHA designation does not come with regulatory or zoning authority. Development of public-private partnerships would be a high management priority and would assist in strengthening long range sustainability prospects.

### Potential NHA Investments

While the management plan is in development, WFHAC will begin to implement catalyst programs and projects that have the potential to advance historic preservation projects, heritage tourism, and marketing in the area.

WFHAC is committed to 'acting like a heritage area' even prior to designation.

WFHAC held a brainstorming session at one of its public planning workshops to collect and vet ideas for catalyst projects and investments that could most benefit the area. From these suggestions, WFHAC has compiled a list of potential projects:

- Create physical access to the Willamette River above and below the Falls
- Develop coordinated educational programs for schoolchildren and adults on heritage themes
- Complete the Willamette Falls Heritage Trail, brochure and signage
- Support active recreation; link walking trail systems and bike paths to provide multiple access points to the river and heritage sites
- Promote redevelopment of Blue Heron Paper Mill sites, with preservation of historic areas and public spaces
- Support habitat restoration around Falls area, including river clean-ups, site restoration, stream shading
- Coordinate Festivals and Events, such as the successful annual Willamette Falls Festival
- Encourage coordinated and accurate interpretive art and signage
- Research & develop deeper interpretive stories of the whole region to add to interpretive signage, local museum exhibits, genealogic and educational programs
- Seek value-added heritage area branding for Main Street businesses
- Create sponsorship programs for specific sites
- Support Volunteer programs (wildlife and plant monitoring, weed pulls, riverbank restoration and cleanup, roving interpretation programs)
- Seek National Natural Landmark designations
- Advocate for reopening the Willamette Falls Navigation Canal and Locks and support transfer of ownership
- Promote Historic Building Improvement program
- Seek National Register Nominations





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- Secure Permanent locations for year round farmers markets
- Create a Pedestrian river crossing
- Develop visitor parking facilities
- Foster regional transit and trail connections into the greater Portland Metro area and Willamette Valley
- Employ water taxi system to connect industrial & heritage sites on the Willamette River
- Encourage re-enactors to research and portray significant individuals active in the Western Expansion, Settlement and Industrial periods
- Support year round use of vintage-style trolleys or carriages throughout the region
- With the tribes, develop tours of the region using tribal canoe travel routes; re- establish old-time portage operations



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# Chapter 6: Application of National Heritage Area Criteria

The Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition has demonstrated that the structure and support for a National Heritage Area exists --because the WFHAC Board of Directors has been operating as a heritage area board for the past six years with widespread community support. WFHAC is recognized as a heritage leader in the area and in the State of Oregon. WFHAC was selected by the Oregon Department of Transportation to administer the 3-day Willamette Falls Festival and Arch Bridge Opening because of the expertise and proven success of the organization.

After three intensive years of research, collaboration, and public input, Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC) has completed the necessary four steps toward Congressional designation as Willamette Falls National Heritage Area (NHA).

### Feasibility Study Criteria

- 1. Completion of a suitability/feasibility study;**
- 2. Public involvement in the suitability/feasibility study;**
- 3. Demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed designation; and**
- 4. Commitment to the proposal from the appropriate stakeholders, which may include governments, industry, and private nonprofit organizations, in addition to the local citizenry.**

Without public involvement, no Feasibility Study would exist! WFHAC developed strategies to seek public involvement and input during each developmental phase of the feasibility study. From initial outreach by Board members and staff of WFHAC to inform and engage our communities to the feedback loops required to receive comments on the Draft Feasibility Study, WFHAC has been pleased with the depth and breadth of public engagement that has enriched this final document.

When we compiled attendance at our public workshops, community events, targeted forums, website and other its components.

Virtually all verbal, written and face-to-face communications have been positive! Stakeholders and the general public clearly understand the importance of preserving and enhancing this historic area, acknowledge that only through collaboration and combining resources will conditions improve, and they have embraced the vision and goals of the proposed NHA. They have provided creative and important suggestions for future heritage area programming.



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### How did WFHAC involve the public?

WFHAC Board of Directors (18 members) attended community events and meetings, held periodic NHA planning workshops and community celebrations during which the public could ask questions and provide comment on the proposal. The workshops averaged 100 attendees each and the community events attracted from 700 to 30,000 participants. WFHAC's website averages 100 visitors a month and provides information and contact opportunities through a listserv and social media, averaging over 300 hits directly and hundreds more indirectly with each update.

WFHAC also sought and received the assistance of local experts and researchers in developing the history and themes portions of the Feasibility Study.

### Demonstrations of Community Support

Significant financial and in-kind contributions were given early on from 14 key stakeholders businesses, organizations, and governments. They all signed a **Declaration of Cooperation** and agreed to work together "*in partnership toward the shared vision of creating a Willamette Falls National Heritage Area.*" Each partner entity provided a formal resolution, board vote, or authorized signature that affirmed their endorsement of WFHAC's vision. They also provided significant financial and in-kind contributions to the development of this proposal and committed to future assistance.

**Letters of support** also came from 31 additional organizations and businesses, indicating ongoing commitment to the vision for the Willamette Falls NHA.

WFHAC has received letters of support and commitments from all municipalities within the proposed boundaries, the county government, tribal government, Chambers of Commerce, civic organizations, nonprofits, heritage groups, and businesses and industries in the area.

WFHAC has received significant **in-kind donations and financial contributions** from businesses and organizations with interests in the study area, including:

The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, B&B Leasing, Clackamas County Historical Society, Main Street Oregon City, Wrightberry Cakes, Vanessa Flowers, Floral Forte, Wildish Standard Paving Co, OBEC, Coffee Rush, Oregon Department of Transportation, City of Oregon City, City of West Linn, Clackamas County, Happy Rock Coffee, Portland General Electric, West Linn Paper Company, Metro West Ambulance, Stein Oil; Wiss, Janney, Elstner Assoc. Inc., Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs Department.

### Commitments from Stakeholders

Not only have stakeholders shown solid support by signing a Declaration of Cooperation, but the tribal, municipal and county governments, as well as heritage institutions and industrial businesses have donated hundreds of hours of staff time to WFHAC activities and programs. Board member volunteers have come from all sectors. Staff from all member organizations have given evening hours and weekends to help WFHAC pursue its goals, through community gatherings, presentations, plan rollouts and festivals. This widespread base of support gives confidence that WFHAC will succeed in creating and maintaining the Willamette Falls National and State Heritage Area.



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### Support from Grantors

WFHAC has received positive affirmation from grantors, who supported the NHA concept by awarding funding toward development of this feasibility study, including:

- Spirit Mountain Community Fund – Funding for Feasibility Study
- Clackamas County Tourism Development – Opportunity Grant
- Clackamas County Tourism Development – Development Grant
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Oregon City Metro Enhancement Grant (for development of the Willamette Falls Heritage Trail)
- Community Partnership Project funding from Clackamas County Tourism – for 2013 Willamette Falls Festival

### Criteria for Designation as a National Heritage Area

To become a National Heritage Area (NHA), a proposal must meet ten criteria used by National Park Service (NPS), Congress and the public to evaluate NHA candidates. After thorough evaluation, WFHAC believes all ten criteria are met.

**1. Does the area have an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed as such an assemblage through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities?**

With powerful Willamette Falls as the centerpiece, our study area was the catalyst for U.S. Western Expansion. Settlement occurred here because of the power of the Falls and the fertility of the valleys around it. The early tribes and bands gathered here because the Falls guaranteed stability and abundance: fish and other natural resources. Settlement happened around the Falls as thousands of Euro-American pioneers came to the End of the Oregon Trail, seeking a better life. Because of the Falls, this place was the birthplace of industry in the western U.S., rivaling Lowell, Massachusetts, in size and output during the Industrial Revolution. Because of the Falls and George Westinghouse's singular innovation, streets, homes and businesses were powered by electricity from 14 miles away, the first time in the world. As the capital of the Oregon Territory, Oregon City was the center of culture, government, commerce and industry for a few significant decades in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Activities at the Falls secured a young nation's boundaries from coast to coast.

The active communities of Oregon City, West Linn, Lake Oswego, Clackamas County and the tribes oversee the many natural, historic and cultural resources that form the nationally significant stories and landscapes of the region. Managed together, these resources highlight the importance of Western Expansion, Settlement, and Birthplace of Industry.

Significant remnants of early settlement can be found on the newly created Willamette Falls Heritage Trail. Thirty heritage and industrial sites offer opportunities for exploration, photos, and historical immersion. Perhaps the most important sites, and already recognized as nationally significant, are the 19<sup>th</sup> century homes of Dr. John McLoughlin and Dr. Forbes Barclay, administered by the National Park Service as part of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. These well-maintained and furnished house museums establish the links and competition between the British and the Americans. Both men were huge contributors in determining the future of the



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pioneering settlers and both were Chief Factors of Hudson’s Bay Company at Fort Vancouver. Other house museums and sites, such as Ermatinger House, Rose Farm, Philip Foster Farm, Baker Cabin and the National Register community of Willamette in West Linn, are powerful reminders of the early battles for the rights to this abundant land.

The End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center is located on Abernethy Green, the historic last rendezvous spot for Oregon Trail pioneers at the end of a six month arduous overland journey, an emigration unique in the world. Markers denote the nationally recognized terminus of the Oregon Trail.

The industrial theme is obvious when viewing Willamette Falls. Two paper mills and a hydroelectric power plant are perched alongside the horseshoe-shaped Falls, demonstrating the harnessing and use of the once cheap water power of the Willamette River, now an American Heritage River. These are the remnants of an influential milling center. Visitors today can still view one working paper mill and envision the redevelopment of one closed paper mill site, touch the basalt walls of a formerly world famous woolen mill, see an early canal and locks system workable today, view the active site of early electrical transmission, and walk the Oswego Iron Furnace trail to learn about the first iron manufacturing on the west coast.

Oregon entrepreneurs also became pioneers of the electric power industry. Two events-- unique in the nation-- happened here. The first in 1889 was the first long distance transmission of **direct current** for commercial purposes in the United States. The second occurred when George Westinghouse chose the Willamette Falls location and the transmission lines to Portland as his first demonstration project for the long distance transmission of **alternating current** electricity in 1890.

Here existed some of the earliest hydroelectric plants in the nation, and one of the plants, now called the Sullivan Power Plant, still remains in service 88 years later.

The Willamette Falls area is a geologic wonder. Walk along the Ice Age Floods Interpretive Trail in Field’s Bridge Park and see the scars left by the biggest floods on earth, floods that dropped the mineral-laden soils that created the Willamette Valley’s legendary fertility. Nineteenth century settlers referred to the Willamette Valley as “the land at Eden’s Gate.” Today more than 170 crops –from grass seed, grains, hays and hazelnuts to Christmas trees, berries, hops and wine grapes---are harvested in the lush valley. No wonder it was the gathering place for Native American tribes for millennia.

***“If not for the Missoula Floods, the Oregon Trail might have gone somewhere else!”***

Jim O’Connor, USGS

This area is part of the national Ice Age Floods Geologic Region and is included in the 2009 federal legislation that created the Ice Age Floods Geologic Trail from Missoula, Montana, through Idaho, Washington and Oregon to the Pacific Ocean. The NPS and other federal and state partners have entered into Memorandums of Understanding to “develop a coordinated and scientifically accepted interpretation of the nationally significant values and features of the Glacial Lake Missoula Ice Age floods.” The Ice Age Trail, waysides, interpretive centers, and markers are in the planning stages and include the Willamette River and its tributaries in the region.

Another geologic wonder is the ancient Willamette Meteorite first discovered resting on a hillside in West Linn by the Clackamas Tribe. This 15.5 ton extraterrestrial was likely a passenger on an iceberg carried by the gigantic floods from north of the Canadian border. Called “Tomanowos,” meaning “spirit-power” for the Clackamas people (now part of the Grand Ronde community and Siletz tribe), the biggest piece of the meteorite now





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resides in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, under an agreement with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, but a piece of it is on display at the Museum of the Oregon Territory in Oregon City.

The area is rich with a variety of natural, historic and cultural resources available for heritage interpretation and programming. As a group, they tell the story of U.S. Western Expansion, Settlement at the End of the Oregon Trail, and the Birthplace of Industry in the American West.

Some of the sites important to the interpretation of this significant place are currently physically inaccessible. We believe that NHA designation can lead to solutions for these challenging issues. From an Oregon State Wayside, Willamette Falls is viewable but not optimally accessible. The Locks are closed and waiting for operating funding. Some house museums have limited hours. Previous efforts to enhance the heritage of the area have focused upon the pieces rather than the whole, thereby limiting their effectiveness and keeping the story of the area incomplete and disjointed. NHA designation would create an entity that could bring the pieces together across jurisdictional boundaries and tell a complete story, through a singular, effective management plan.

Based the supporting information, WFHAC's study team concluded that criterion #1 is met.

### **2. Does it reflect traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life that are a valuable part of the national story?**

Willamette Falls remains an ever-present touchstone for native people as well as the ancestors of pioneer settlers. Descendents of the same tribes who gathered at Willamette Falls to share, trade, socialize and honor their heritage, have harvested fish continuously at Willamette Falls for at least 15,000 years and have carried forward their respective cultural and religious values, customs and beliefs. Tribes with reserved fishing rights at the Falls, co-managers of the fisheries resource, work with other fisheries managers to restore and enhance fish and Pacific lamprey populations.

Descendents of the settlers are still attracted to the area by the same attributes that drew the original pioneers. Many are active in local museums, heritage sites and festivals. One of the significant national stories existing here revolves around the intensity of the settlers' commitment to secure the nation's boundaries, and prevent Britain, Russia, Spain and France from gaining a foothold. Unfortunately, by so doing, they disrupted tribal communities, weakened them through 'white man's diseases,' and drove them from traditional lands and waterways. Fortunately, tribal members are also active in local civic and cultural endeavors, and maintain a strong tribal presence in our communities, especially in heritage-related activities.

Chinese workers were brought to Oregon to work in the area's heavy industry and manufacturing businesses, the Willamette Falls Canal and Locks in particular, as well as the Oswego iron mines.

Oregonian May 21, 1872, p. 2 *The week before last Jo. Teal publicly stated in the Cliff House that he intended to put 250 Chinamen at work on the Locks as soon as he could get them. This statement was in the presence of Ex-Gov. A. C. Gibbs, A. F. Forbes, Attorney at law, Oregon City, and others. The Locks Company has already contracted for over 200 Chinamen to come on the works on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of June. That day all the white laborers will be discharged.*



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### **1870-1872 Oregon City CHINESE INDUSTRIES – Average age of Oregon City Chinese: 27 years old**

- Oregon Iron Company in Oregon City: 18 Chinese employed
- Woolen Mills at Oregon City: 160 Chinese employed
- Canal Works at Oregon City: 30-40 Chinese employed
- Lake Oswego Iron Company Mines: 150 Chinese employed
- Oregon Central Railroad: 1,000 Chinese (\$36 a month for the Chinese)

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This place, once a hub for innovation, learning, agriculture, commerce and livability, is now rediscovering its roots, its potential and its unique history. Indian trails and routes for millworkers have been adapted as bike lanes and walking paths. Historic structures are being upgraded and reprogrammed. Farm produce has returned to the communities through weekly Farmers' Markets. Tribal members are actively teaching about history and traditions and new ways of respecting and enhancing the health of natural resources. History will be written every day as long as the water cascades over the falls.

The varied cultural traditions and vast interpretive possibilities led the WFHAC Study team to agree that Criterion #2 is met.

### **3. Does it provide outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and /or scenic features?**

The proposed NHA provides rich opportunities for conservation.

Abernethy Green is the site of the End of the Oregon Trail and its Interpretive Center. The Center has struggled in recent years and bringing renewed National Heritage attention to the importance of the Oregon Trail to the American history of Westward Expansion will help preserve and interpret the End of the Oregon Trail for future generations.

Although the area around the waterfall was once called a veritable Garden of Eden and a place of great beauty, its banks are now nearly obscured by the buildings of the important industries that were/are powered by its massive energy. The study area offers many sites of environmental value and several planning efforts are currently underway, including direct access to the Falls, via the Blue Heron Paper Mill property.

NHA status would also bring heightened awareness of the need to watch for, report and protect any historic or presettlement cultural resources exposed in the future, due to redevelopment or other activities.

The greatest opportunity in the region is the outstanding potential for redeveloping the 23-acre Blue Heron site on the banks of the Willamette River adjacent to Willamette Falls. After over 120 years of operation, the Blue Heron Paper Company ceased operations and permanently closed its paper manufacturing facility. Since the 1830's, the site was occupied by large industrial uses including a flour mill, sawmill, brick production, woolen mill and paper mill. Now government partners have deemed the site "a legacy project," a regionally significant development and cultural preservation opportunity. As a potential NHA, WFHAC is already weighing in on the site's critical cultural and archaeological resources and potential for repurposing and preservation. What a valuable opportunity to conserve historic sites, view corridors, and public areas!

The study area is ripe with potential for improving water quality, fisheries and habitat enhancement in and around the Willamette River and its tributaries, particularly the Tualatin and Clackamas Rivers.

The study area continues to be one of the most agriculturally productive areas in the United States, with great potential for continuing product development and distribution. Its many parks, trails, and open spaces offer



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spectacular viewpoints for the Falls, rivers, and heritage sites, but many are inaccessible or underdeveloped. WFHAC, an entity founded on the principles of preservation and conservation, is dedicated to raising awareness of the wealth of resources in the area and enhancing the region's physical identity.

Because of the outstanding opportunities for conservation, WFHAC has determined that Criterion #3 is met.

### **4. Does it provide outstanding recreational and educational opportunities?**

The Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs Department, with regional tourism expertise, has recognized the vast potential for river recreation, including white water kayaking, fishing, boating, waterskiing, and swimming. Huge opportunities also exist for hiking and bicycling in the Study Area. Many of those activities can be found today on or near the rivers in the Study Area, but have great potential for growth. Outstanding potential also exists for river signage, river tours and river taxis that move visitors between industrial sites, heritage sites and recreational activities.

The Study Area includes three municipalities that have plans for enhancing hiking paths and bike trails, but many efforts end at the boundaries of the governmental jurisdiction. The NHA potential would provide opportunities to link the transportation corridors across boundaries and between heritage sites, complete with interpretive and way-finding signage.

Beyond a few heritage museums and sites that focus on portions of our national narrative, i.e. Museum of the Oregon Territory, McLoughlin House, End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, and Oswego Iron Furnace, the potential for education and for telling the story of 'settlement at the end of the Oregon Trail' and the 'birthplace of industry' as the keys to U.S. Western Expansion is unlimited. Through partnerships and collaborative efforts, WFHAC envisions a range of future educational activities, from classroom visits to summer experiences, camps, activities, and workshops taught by skilled experts with knowledge about the themes of the heritage area.

After reviewing the outstanding opportunities for education and recreation, the Study team agrees that Criterion #4 is met.

### **5. Do the resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation?**

Many of the resources associated with America's western expansion and the development of major industries are still wonderfully intact, but are simply lacking in visibility, connectivity, interpretation, and public accessibility. The homes of Dr. John McLoughlin, Francis Ermatinger, Dr. Forbes Barclay, the Holmes family, Dr. Edward & Anne McLean still offer visitors a slice of life at the End of the Oregon Trail, and support the Western Expansion and Settlement themes. The Willamette Falls themselves, for example, are inaccessible and dominated by industrial buildings on both sides of the river. Important industrial resources that do have visibility, such as the Sullivan Power Plant, Blue Heron Mill site, Oswego Iron Furnace, Willamette Falls Locks, West Linn Paper Company, and Willamette Falls themselves, lack connection to each other and therefore fail to provide the overall visual and interpretive link to the history of the area. The Museum of the Oregon Territory has a piece of the Willamette Meteorite and other artifacts of early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but many of these are hidden in the archives of a museum that operates with limited public hours.

The NHA designation will empower the WFHAC as a management entity to create connections between the scattered resources, as well as direct funding to sites that can best promote and interpret the Western



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Expansion theme and the Industrial Heritage stories, with visible improvements in facilities and interpretation. Abernethy Green, the End of the Oregon Trail, still exists and covered wagon ruts still lie in the earth nearby. These significant cultural elements hold their integrity and are worth preserving and interpreting.

Based on the integrity of the thematic resources, the Study team has determined that Criterion #5 is met.

### **6. Have residents, business interests, non-profit organizations, and governments within the proposed area been involved in the planning, developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants including the federal government, and demonstrated support for designation of the area?**

Significant support for the designation of the Willamette Falls National Heritage Area exists among the residents, businesses, nonprofits, and governments of the Study Area, who also helped plan its future.

WFHAC itself is comprised of officials representing all the governmental agencies within the study area, leaders of nonprofit organizations, and executives from private businesses and business organizations that are key stakeholders in the proposed NHA. These stakeholders represent the arts, historic preservation and interpretation, parks and recreation, environmental stewardship, tourism, and industrial production. Government partners include three cities, a county, a regional government, the state, and a tribal nation. From its beginning, WFHAC has involved the broader community in the planning concepts and development of the NHA proposal. WFHAC has received 31 Letters of Support for the proposed Willamette Falls NHA and 14 signed Declarations of Cooperation that pledge ongoing financial and in-kind support for heritage area initiatives.

The public demonstrated overwhelming support for NHA designation in the many public scoping meetings and comments sent to the WFHAC planning team.

WFHAC has developed a three-year conceptual financial plan based on current economic conditions, as part of its proposal for the NHA. It indicates ongoing support from its partners as well as other key stakeholders. It anticipates pursuing funding from multiple sources, such as earned income, grants, foundations, lodging taxes, stakeholder organizations, and in-kind donations to match the expected NPS funding. WFHAC anticipates that funding from the federal government plus the local match will provide support for the development of the long term sustainability and management plan for the Willamette Falls NHA, as well as implementation of catalyst projects to jumpstart the NHA's immediate positive and physical impact on the local community.

WFHAC is the proposed management and coordinating entity. The financial plan and catalyst projects have undergone review by all partners of WFHAC, as well as the general public. Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that WFHAC has met Criterion #6.

### **7. Are the proposed management entity and units of government supporting the designation willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area?**

WFHAC is a partnership between key businesses, organizations, and governments that have significant holdings and operations within the proposed study area. Since early 2006, these partners have shown high levels of commitment to the vision of the Willamette Falls NHA through volunteer efforts, financial support and research activities. They have committed to a continued effort for the future through signed Declarations of Cooperation. WFHAC has received supportive commitments from 100% of the units of government within the study area.



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As the proposal has developed, WFHAC has received overwhelming levels of local support from the public and has developed a participation process to maximize continued participation in the planned NHA.

Because of the strong partnership committed to future NHA work, the Study team believes Criterion #7 is met.

### 8. Is the proposal consistent with continued economic activity in the area?

This proposal was developed with key economic development advisors at the table: directors of two municipal Main Street programs, Oregon City's Economic Development Manager, and the Director of Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs. Executives of the major industries in the area, Portland General Electric, West Linn Paper Company and Blue Heron Paper Mill (prior to mill closure), were also key participants in preparing this document. WFHAC's key focus has been on economic revitalization of the Study Area, alongside conservation and preservation. But one important heritage area goal has always been: *Enhance public appreciation for historical sites within the Heritage Area, while supporting existing industrial, commercial and recreational ventures.*

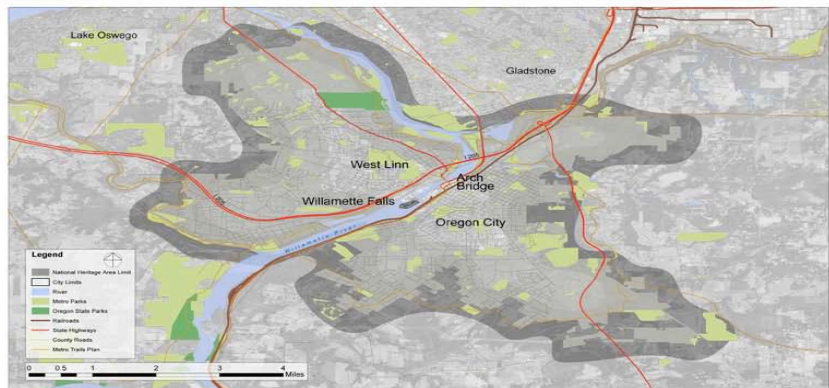
Communities must thrive in order to generate the money to invest in heritage preservation and recreation. NHA designation brings the potential to expand economic activity, particularly through increased tourism. Businesses and organizations serving visitors, and cultural heritage and recreational locations should experience an uptick in business activity due to the national focus, as well as the state spotlight. Increased business means better socio-economic well-being and increased tax revenues that contribute to the health of government.

Because this proposal strongly protects existing and expanding economic activity, WFHAC has determined that Criterion #8 is met.

## Willamette Falls National Heritage Area Boundary Map

### Major Goals for the National Heritage Area:

1. Strengthen the identity of Oregon City and West Linn area with the falls at the heart.
2. Share this unique place with others, local residents and outside visitors.
3. Make improved public access a priority.
4. Build the vision as an integral part of the community and who we are.
5. Create an easy to navigate approach to the area and the core site.







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### **9. Is a conceptual boundary map supported by the public?**

Public support is strong for the proposed boundary for the Willamette Falls NHA, which includes the significant historic portions of the cities of West Linn, Oregon City, Lake Oswego and Clackamas County, and all of the major early Settlement and Industrial era heritage sites. The boundary stretches along the Willamette River from the mouth of the Tualatin River north to the mouth of the Clackamas River, then down the river to Lake Oswego. After recently adding the Iron Furnace Trail boundaries in Lake Oswego, no changes or additions to the proposed boundary map were suggested during the public comment periods or public outreach workshops.

Because of the support for the conceptual boundary, the Study team determines that Criterion #9 is met.

### **10. The management entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described.**

WFHAC is structured to become the management entity of the proposed NHA. WFHAC evolved in 2006 to promote the establishment of a NHA as a partnership between key stakeholders in the area. WFHAC has since incorporated as an Oregon nonprofit corporation and received 501(c)(3) nonprofit status from the IRS. In the past 6 years, WFHAC has developed a governance structure with an 18-member Board of Directors, a long-term financial plan, strategic plan, marketing plan for community visibility, local and regional projects, and a participation process to encourage and maximize participation from parties who wish to be involved in the development and management of the NHA. WFHAC stands ready to begin work immediately on the Willamette Falls NHA management plan for long term sustainability as soon as the proposal is approved by Congress. WFHAC has identified catalyst projects that can be accomplished on the short term to bring immediate, visible positive changes to the Willamette Falls area. WFHAC has received overwhelming community support from individuals, businesses, organizations, and governments with a presence in the Study Area because they understand the national significance of the resources that form the themes and stories of our unique heritage and believe they cry out for interpretation, preservation and enhancement. WFHAC and its partners are poised to make the Willamette Falls NHA a success for the community.

Because WFHAC is ready to manage the NHA, the Study team determines that Criterion #10 is met.



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# Chapter 7: Vision Statement

A concerned and enthusiastic group of about 25 stakeholders started meeting in 2006 to begin a collaborative community process that supported the preservation and enhancement of the distinctive cultural and heritage facilities and sites in and around the Willamette Falls area.

In 2007, public and private sector organizations were invited to help to initiate the process to designate this unique and nationally significant landscape along the Willamette River as a National Heritage Area. This group became the Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition, a remarkable partnership of three cities, a county, a tribal nation, many cultural, heritage and civic organizations, as well as the private industries that continue to provide livelihoods at the Willamette Falls as humans have done for many thousands of years.

During workshops in January 2010 and October 2010, the vision to become a National Heritage Area was developed with community partners and public input. In June of 2013, after a community meeting in Lake Oswego, the proposed boundaries were enlarged to include the Oswego Iron Heritage Trail, an important part of the Birthplace of Pacific Northwest Industry theme.

**The Vision:** To become a National Heritage Area that draws visitors from all over the world to experience and enjoy the stories, activities, and unique landscape of Willamette Falls at the End of the Oregon Trail.

**The Mission:** Advocate for and strengthen the identity and economy of the communities surrounding Willamette Falls by preserving, enhancing and promoting the nationally significant and distinctive stories of the area, while cultivating public-private partnerships to develop its natural, cultural, industrial, scenic, recreational, and historic resources.

### **The Objectives:**

- 1. Strengthen the identities of Oregon City, West Linn, Lake Oswego and Clackamas County** as places with nationally significant cultural heritage, with Willamette Falls at the heart of the identity.
- 2. Enhance public appreciation for historical sites** within the Heritage Area, while supporting existing industrial, commercial and recreational ventures. Use education and interpretation to enhance the many-layered experience of the area, and thereby its attractiveness. Make it discoverable, memorable, inspiring, reachable, and aesthetically appealing.
- 3. Advocate strongly for preservation and enhancement of historic sites and structures.** Promote National Register designation for eligible properties.



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- 4. Develop public-private partnerships** to create and support interpretive, educational and economic opportunities in and around the Heritage Area, providing authentic learning experiences, while not disrupting the day-to-day activities of the industrial and commercial uses that remain vital to the local economy.
- 5. Develop & interpret the heritage area themes** to re-establish identification of the area with The Falls and nearby heritage sites. Translate the importance of the area to a national audience as a significant fishing resource for tribes, as a stable power source for generations of American homes and industry, and as an anchor of western United States civilization that ultimately put a lock on the expansion of the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans.
- 6. Share this unique place with others**, both local residents and visitors. Promote multi-day and linked explorations of the NHA themes, thereby increasing positive economic impact for the hospitality industry in Clackamas County. Incorporate “spin off” options and both interpretive and experiential links for visitors to explore themes in areas adjacent to the heritage area.
- 7. Affirm and advocate for continued natural resource co-management and traditional cultural use of the Falls and surrounding areas for tribal members** who have a long term cultural, political and economic affiliation with this special place.
- 8. Improve public access to the Falls area.** Create an easy way to navigate approach to the area and the core sites. Create welcoming gateways at major transportation interfaces. Find ways to safely allow visitors to see the Falls and industrial areas, without compromising the operations of the power plant or paper mill or natural resources.
- 9. Create a cultural heritage tourism destination.** Using our nationally significant heritage as a backdrop, promote the growth of active recreation opportunities, such as bicycling, hiking and kayaking. Incorporate and promote city, county, and Metro trails and bikeways. Support geo-tourism, farm to table markets, and locally grown and locally made products.



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- 10. Support and advocate for water health** in the rivers of the study area. Encourage good stewardship in river usage and river resources. Partner with organizations, such as We Love Clean Rivers, to assist in river clean-ups and habitat restoration activities.
  
- 11. Build the vision** as an integral part of the community. Oregonians are proud of their heritage and open to sharing it with others.



## Inventory of Resources

**[NOTE: See Chapter 4 for a listing of Natural Environment resources, Settlement resources, Industry and Transportation Resources, and Educational Resources.]**

The study area has many remnants of its rich and historic past. Many of these heritage sites and places are nationally recognized, and still more are eligible for national designations. These and others provide many opportunities for place-based interpretation. Educational institutions, heritage groups, historic sites, and museums offer some heritage-based educational opportunities in the area, with great potential for expansion.

The area also boasts many recreational opportunities for locals and visitors alike to supplement the heritage experiences of the area. Many of these opportunities, such as the Oregon National Historic Trail (which follows the Oregon Trail from Independence, MO. to its end in Oregon City) or the Camassia Nature Preserve (which nurtures the area’s native plants and wildlife), provide heritage education as well as recreational value for visitors.

While the area offers many resources, the main challenge to current interpretation efforts lies in their disjointed nature. Currently there is little to no coordination or connection between the vast array of resources. So this patchy and incomplete story of the area’s important heritage is ripe for a cohesive and robust interpretive program through a National Heritage Area designation.

Oregon is home to one National Park, nine National Natural Landmarks and 17 National Historic Landmarks, that receive nearly 900,000 visitors per year. The Oregon State Park System is one of the ten most popular state park systems in the United States, and receives nearly 40 million day and overnight visitors per year. The State of Oregon manages nearly 200 overnight and day-use parks.

Many of these places of interest are located within or close to the proposed Willamette Falls National Heritage Area. The state boasts 485 listings on the National Register of Historic Places. Twenty-one sites within the study area are currently on the National Register, with many more deemed eligible for the national designation by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. When approved, the Willamette Falls National Heritage Area will be the first National Heritage Area for the U.S. West Coast.

### Selected Places of Interest near Willamette Falls

#### **1. End of the Oregon Trail in Oregon City– part of the Oregon National Historic Trail**

The Oregon National Historic Trail is part of the National Park Service Trail System. The final segment of the Oregon Trail is known as Barlow Road and ends in Oregon City. The End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center on Abernethy Green marks the end of the historic journey, recognized by Congress as the official terminus in 1978.

#### **2. McLoughlin House –**

##### **--a unit of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site in Oregon City**

In 1829, Chief Factor John McLoughlin of the British Hudson’s Bay Company, recognized the potential of nearby Willamette Falls and founded the first official settlement at its base. Then known as

**A.3 – 1846 McLoughlin House**







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Willamette Falls, the settlement became present-day Oregon City. McLoughlin built the first mills as well as the first house at this site. McLoughlin House, moved from the base of the Falls to the bluff above to make way for industry in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, is now an important component of the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. The home bears the distinction of receiving the first National Heritage Site designation in the American West by Congress in 1941. The site was added to the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site in 2003 and continues to be open to the public as a museum

### 3. The Willamette River



*A.1 – Willamette Falls*

The Willamette River, designated an American Heritage River by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, sustains hundreds of plant and wildlife species. The Willamette Valley, fueled by the waters of the Willamette River and fertile soil left from Ice Age flooding, is one of the country's most productive agricultural areas. The river is traditionally home to abundant salmon runs, Pacific lamprey, sturgeon and many other fish. The river's banks support populations of bald eagles, blue herons, osprey, and beavers, among others.

### 4. Willamette Falls Navigational Canal and Locks

In 1873, private investors seeking to profit off the growing necessity to move goods from the Willamette Valley to world markets opened the Willamette Falls Locks. They provided the first portage system that did not require the removal of goods from the river in order to circumvent the Willamette Falls. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers purchased the locks in 1915, at which time all recreational and commercial traffic became free of charge. The locks were closed in late 2011 due to lack of funding for repairs. Until then, they remained the oldest continuously commercially operated locks in the Corps' system.



*A.4 – Willamette Navigational Canal and Locks*

The canal and locks maintain their original routing and design. The linear canal cuts through the rocky shelf on the West side of the Falls. Built as the first multi-lift navigation locks in the United States, the canal and lock system is comprised of seven gates that control four chambers. The locks can accommodate vessels up to 37 feet in width and 175 feet long. Commercial traffic through the Locks peaked in 1943 but moved over one million tons of goods per year well into the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 5. Camassia Nature Preserve

Camassia is a 26-acre natural area owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy. Located in the hills of West Linn, the site features the landscape of the natural basalt shelf first created by the same Ice Age floods that shaped the Willamette Valley. Over 300 plant species can be found in the preserve, including the Camas flower (a traditional food source for native peoples), quaking aspen, and the rare white rock lockspur. The Nature Conservancy maintains trails throughout the preserve for year-round public use.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### National Register of Historic Places

The proposed Willamette Falls National Heritage Area includes two National Register Historic Districts and 19 individually listed sites on the National Register of Historic Places. The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office estimates another 21 sites are readily eligible for the designation.

WFHAC Historic Resources from Oregon Historic Sites Database 5/31/11

“Elig” Column = Eligibility Evaluation for the National Register

“ES” = Eligible/Significant

“NR Status” Column = National Register status

“NRI” = Individually listed in the National Register

“NHD” = Contributing to a National Register Historic District

“NRB” = Individually listed in the National Register and contributing to a National Register Historic District

Property Name	Address or Location	City	County	Yr Built	Elig Status	NR
Canemah Historic District	[District]	Oregon City	Clackamas	1850	ES	NRI
Oregon City Downtown	[District]	Oregon City	Clackamas	c. 1867	ES	
Willamette Falls Industrial Area	Either side of the Willamette Falls	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1865	ES	
Harris, Mary, House	212 14th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1904	ES	
Clark, George, House	216 14th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1867	ES	
Healy, Catherine, House	220 14th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1900	ES	
Hackett, Erwin Charles, House	415 17th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1893	ES	NRI
Greyhound Bus Depot	214-218 6th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1949	ES	
Petzold, Richard, House	504 6th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1911	ES	NRI
Ermatinger, Francis, House	619 6th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1845	ES	NRI
First Congregational Church Of Oregon City	710 6th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1925	ES	NRI
Oregon City Municipal Elevator	300 7th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1954	ES	
Singer Creek Falls & Steps	300 8th St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1937	ES	
Engelbrecht, Gustav & Anna, House	500 Abernethy Rd	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1909	ES	
Milne, James, House	224 Center St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1869	ES	NRI
McLoughlin, John, House	713 Center St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1846	ES	NRI
Barclay, Dr Forbes, House	719 Center St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1849	ES	NRI
Ermatinger House	1018 Center	Oregon City	Clackamas		ES	
Straight, Hiram A, House	16000 S Depot Ln	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1856	ES	NRI
Latourette, Charles David, House	503 High St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1882	ES	NRI
Willamette River Bridge	Hwy 43	Oregon City	Clackamas	1922	ES	NRI
McLoughlin Promenade	Hwy 99	Oregon City	Clackamas	1938	ES	
Clark, Elizabeth, House	812 John Adams St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1930	ES	NRI
Steele Medical Clinic	1420 John Adams St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1955	ES	
Latourette, Dewitt Clinton, House	914 Madison St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1891	ES	NRI
Andresen Building	619-623 Main St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1902	ES	
Old City Hall - McCald Building	712 Main St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1925	ES	
Petzold, Richard B, Building	714 Main St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1905	ES	NRI



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Clackamas County Courthouse	801-807 Main St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1935	ES	
Storey, George Lincoln, House	910 Pierce St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1891	ES	NRI
McCarver, Morton Matthew, House	554 Warner-Parrott Rd	Oregon City	Clackamas	1850	ES	NRI
Cross, Harvey, House	809 Washington St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1888	ES	NRI
Babcock, Charles C, House	1214 Washington St	Oregon City	Clackamas	1892	ES	NRI
Tony's	1316 Washington St	Oregon City	Clackamas	c.1945	ES	
Willamette Falls Locks	West bank, Willamette River	West Linn	Clackamas	1873	ES	NRI
Willamette Falls Neighborhood Historic District	Roughly bound by Willamette Falls Dr to the north, 12th St to the east, 4th Ave to the south, and 15th st to the west	West Linn	Clackamas	1895	ES	NRI
Baker House	1822 SW 5th Ave	West Linn	Clackamas	c.1899	ES	NHD
Ralston, J H, House	1831 5th Ave	West Linn	Clackamas	c.1895	ES	NHD
Walden, Nicholas O, House	1847 SE 5th Ave	West Linn	Clackamas	c.1897	ES	NRB
Logan House	1731 SW 6th Ave	West Linn	Clackamas	c.1895	ES	NHD
Buckles-Elligsen House	1780 6th Ave	West Linn	Clackamas	c.1898	ES	NHD
[House]	5475 Grove	West Linn	Clackamas	c.1925	ES	
Jack, Glenn, House	5495 Grove	West Linn	Clackamas	c.1924	ES	
Lewthwaite-Moffat House	4891 Willamette Falls Dr	West Linn	Clackamas	1896	ES	NRI

### State Parks

The Willamette Falls National Heritage Area is within one to two hour's drive of more than 53 state parks. Four of these parks have heritage themes with place-based interpretation. These are:

- Champoeg State Park
- Willamette Mission State Park
- Thompson Mill State Park
- Fort Yamhill State Park

### Tribal Resources in the Study Area

The Willamette Falls is a traditional center of gathering for Native American peoples, dating back 15,000 years. At the advent of Euro-American settlement, the Willamette Valley was home to many Native American tribes. These tribes comprised three distinct linguistic groups: Chinookan, Waiilatpuan, and Kalapooian. Chinookan-speaking tribes, such as the Charcowa, the Clowwewalla, and the Cashhooks, and the Clackamas occupied the west bank of the Willamette River at and around the Falls. Three distinct bands of the Molalla, part of the Waiilatpuan linguistic family, extended south from the Falls through the southern plains to the base of the Cascade Mountains. Kalapooian-speaking people ranged throughout the Willamette Valley. The Willamette Falls was a place where tribes and band would come together to fish, trade, and celebrate. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, tribes signed treaties with the new United States government and were displaced to reservations away from their traditional lands around the Falls. Through treaties with the Federal Government, various tribes still maintain fishing rights as well as other rights at the Falls.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Few physical remnants of the years of native habitation remain, except for the natural landscape. The Powwow Tree, a big leaf maple that stands near the confluence of the Willamette and Clackamas Rivers, is believed to be a traditional meeting place for native civilizations. In 2007, the Cultural Landscape Foundation in Washington, D.C., dedicated the tree one of 17 “Heroes of Horticulture.” The tree is also listed as an Oregon Heritage Tree as well as a Bicentennial Tree. Other physical remnants of tribal activity in the Falls area prior to Euro-American contact include petroglyphs at the base of the Falls

### Recreational Resources

The Willamette Falls area has many opportunities for recreational activities. The area is known for its temperate climate, natural beauty and abundance. Year-round opportunities for outdoor recreation include tours, hiking, biking, picnicking, water sports, fishing, camping and hunting. The area is also home to many festivals during the summer as well as theatre and music concerts throughout the year.



Tribal youths scramble along the face of Willamette Falls on Tuesday, June 30, 2009, renewing the tradition of catching lampreys clinging to the face of the falls. (AP Photo/The Columbian, Erik Robinson)

**A.9 – Fishing for Lamprey Eels**



**Willamette Falls Kayak Tour**



**Great Blue Heron**

### Tours

The Willamette Falls area entices a variety of privately-owned and operated boat tours, ranging from jet boat tours to dinner and entertainment cruises to guided kayak and canoe tours.

Clackamas County provides information for farm and wine loop tours, many of which include century farms still in operation.

Walking tours of historic Oregon City and West Linn are provided by a variety of private businesses as well as non-profit associations. Tour themes include historic neighborhoods and homes, historical sites, museums, ghost tours, and eco-tours of local landscape features.

### Outdoor Recreation

The Willamette River boasts many opportunities for water sports, including recreational boating, waterskiing, kayaking, canoeing, swimming and floating. The Willamette River Greenway and the Tualatin River Trail run



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

alongside the rivers in the study area, offering opportunities for fishing, hiking, biking, running, and strolling along the riverfronts. The cities of West Linn and Oregon City, as well as regional and national entities such as Metro, the National Park Service, and the Nature Conservancy, maintain parks and natural areas with opportunities for hiking, picnicking, and wildlife viewing.

### **Plants and Wildlife**

The natural landscape of the proposed area was initially marketed to the American people as a veritable “Garden of Eden” with plenty of rain, rich soil deposited by Ice Age flooding, and a temperate climate that combined to create a place of lush beauty filled with abundant species of plants and wildlife. The area is home to the majestic Douglas fir as well as maple, alder, and oak trees, among others. Rare species include the Oregon white oak and Pacific madrone trees. During the spring, wildflowers including camas, lilies, trillium, and white larkspur bloom prolifically throughout the area.

Deer, raccoons, otter, beaver, nutria, red fox, coyote, and mink, along with other species of mammals, reside throughout the study area. Reptiles and amphibians include the gopher snake, garter snake, ring-neck snake, long-toed salamander, rough-skinned newt, tree frogs and bullfrogs as well as the now-rare western pond turtle and painted turtle.

Bird watchers along the Willamette River can spot the blue heron, bald eagles, osprey, Canada geese, red-tailed hawk, great horned owl as well as songbirds such as goldfinch, tree swallow, dark-eyed junco and common yellowthroat. Goat Island, located in the Willamette River in the middle of the Study Area, is a known nesting area for many of these species and others.

The river is home to many kinds of fish, including large annual runs of salmon. The Spring Chinook salmon run is the major salmon run of the year, with a smaller run of Chinook in the fall. Steelhead are caught in the summer and winter. These runs are fished commercially as well as recreationally. Cutthroat and rainbow trout, sturgeon, carp, sucker, squawfish and Pacific lamprey also populate the Willamette River in the Study Area. An astute observer will also find a sea lion or two fishing in the wake of the Falls.

In addition to the species listed above, the Willamette Valley is home to many rare botanical communities. A list of these has been provided by Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department.





## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Scientific Name
Abies grandis - Acer macrophyllum / Acer circinatum - Corylus cornuta
Abies grandis - Acer macrophyllum / Symphoricarpos albus
Abies grandis - Tsuga heterophylla / Polystichum munitum
Abies grandis / Acer circinatum / Polystichum munitum
Abies grandis / Corylus cornuta / Vancouveria hexandra
Abies grandis / Holodiscus discolor / Polystichum munitum
Abies grandis / Mahonia nervosa - Gaultheria shallon
Abies grandis / Toxicodendron diversilobum
Acer macrophyllum - Alnus rubra / Polystichum munitum - Tellima grandiflora
Acer macrophyllum - Pseudotsuga menziesii / Corylus cornuta / Hydrophyllum tenuipes
Acer macrophyllum / Acer circinatum
Acer macrophyllum / Carex deweyana
Acer macrophyllum / Rubus spectabilis
Acer macrophyllum / Rubus ursinus
Achnatherum lemmonii / Racomitrium ericoides
Alnus rubra / Athyrium filix-femina - Lysichiton americanus
Alnus rubra / Elymus glaucus
Bidens cernua
Carex aperta
Carex densa
Carex exsiccata
Carex unilateralis - Hordeum brachyantherum
Downingia elegans
Dulichium arundinaceum
Eleocharis (obtusata, ovata) - Ludwigia palustris
Eleocharis palustris - Carex unilateralis
Eragrostis hypnoides - Gnaphalium palustre
Eryngium petiolatum - Grindelia nana
Eryngium petiolatum - Lasthenia glaberrima
Euthamia occidentalis
Festuca roemerii - Sidalcea virgata
Fraxinus latifolia - Populus balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa / Acer circinatum
Fraxinus latifolia - Populus balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa / Corylus cornuta - Physocarpus capitatus
Fraxinus latifolia - Populus balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa / Rubus spectabilis
Fraxinus latifolia / Carex deweyana - Urtica dioica
Fraxinus latifolia / Juncus patens
Fraxinus latifolia / Spiraea douglasii
Hippuris vulgaris
Isoetes nuttallii
Lilaeopsis occidentalis
Ludwigia palustris - Polygonum hydropiperoides
Lupinus polyphyllus
Malus fusca / Carex obtupta
Myriophyllum hippuroides
North Pacific Bog and Fen
North Pacific Herbaceous Bald and Bluff
Oxbow lake on Willamette River, with aquatic beds and marshy shore
Paspalum distichum
Pinus ponderosa - Quercus garryana / Symphoricarpos albus
Plagiobothrys figuratus



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Scientific Name
<i>Polygonum amphibium</i>
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp. <i>trichocarpa</i> - <i>Acer macrophyllum</i> / <i>Equisetum hyemale</i>
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp. <i>trichocarpa</i> - <i>Acer macrophyllum</i> / <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp. <i>trichocarpa</i> - <i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp. <i>trichocarpa</i> - <i>Alnus rubra</i> / <i>Rubus spectabilis</i>
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp. <i>trichocarpa</i> - <i>Alnus rubra</i> / <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp. <i>trichocarpa</i> / <i>Cornus sericea</i> / <i>Impatiens capensis</i>
<i>Populus tremuloides</i> / <i>Carex obnupta</i>
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> - <i>Arbutus menziesii</i> - <i>Quercus</i> / <i>Toxicodendron diversilobum</i>
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Corylus cornuta</i> - <i>Symphoricarpos mollis</i> / <i>Polystichum munitum</i>
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Holodiscus discolor</i> - <i>Mahonia nervosa</i>
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Holodiscus discolor</i> - <i>Whipplea modesta</i>
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Mahonia nervosa</i>
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Mahonia nervosa</i> - <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Symphoricarpos hesperius</i>
<i>Quercus garryana</i> - <i>Acer macrophyllum</i> - <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Acer circinatum</i> - <i>Corylus cornuta</i>
<i>Quercus garryana</i> - <i>Fraxinus latifolia</i> / <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
<i>Quercus garryana</i> - <i>Quercus kelloggii</i> / <i>Toxicodendron diversilobum</i>
<i>Quercus garryana</i> / <i>Festuca roemerii</i>
<i>Quercus garryana</i> / <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i> / <i>Polystichum munitum</i>
<i>Quercus garryana</i> / <i>Toxicodendron diversilobum</i> / <i>Elymus glaucus</i>
<i>Ranunculus lobbii</i>
<i>Rosa nutkana</i> / <i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i>
<i>Rosa nutkana</i> / <i>Oenanthe sarmentosa</i>
<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>
<i>Salix</i> ( <i>hookeriana</i> , <i>sitchensis</i> ) - <i>Spiraea douglasii</i>
<i>Salix geyeriana</i> - <i>Salix hookeriana</i>
<i>Salix lucida</i> ssp. <i>lasiandra</i> / <i>Salix sitchensis</i> / <i>Lysichiton americanus</i>
<i>Salix lucida</i> ssp. <i>lasiandra</i> / <i>Salix x fluviatilis</i> HAS CEGL CODE; LUMP WITH SALLUCL/ URTDIOG
<i>Salix lucida</i> ssp. <i>lasiandra</i> / <i>Urtica dioica</i> ssp. <i>gracilis</i>
<i>Scirpus americanus</i> (freshwater association)
Shallow backwater lake on major river floodplain, with associated marsh and mudflats
<i>Sparganium angustifolium</i>
<i>Sparganium eurycarpum</i>
<i>Spiraea douglasii</i> / <i>Sphagnum</i>
<i>Thuja plicata</i> - <i>Tsuga heterophylla</i> / <i>Corylus cornuta</i> / <i>Polystichum munitum</i>
<i>Thuja plicata</i> - <i>Tsuga heterophylla</i> / <i>Lysichiton americanus</i>
<i>Thuja plicata</i> / <i>Lysichiton americanus</i>
<i>Triteleia hyacinthina</i>
<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i> / <i>Polystichum munitum</i>
<i>Utricularia macrorhiza</i>
<i>Vaccinium caespitosum</i>
<i>Veronica americana</i>
<i>Wolffia</i> ( <i>borealis</i> , <i>brasiliensis</i> , <i>columbiana</i> )

### *Rare Botanical Communities in the Willamette Valley*

### Fairs and Festivals

During the summer months, the proposed Willamette Falls National Heritage Area is home to a number of fairs and festivals, many of which maintain heritage themes. These include the Clackamas County Fair, First City Celebration, Oregon City Open Air Antique Fair, and the West Linn Old Time Fair. Other activities in the area include First Friday Art Walks, Oregon City Downtown Car Show, Teddy Bear Parade, Trick or Treat Main Street,



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

weekly Farmers Markets, West Linn Haunted Trail, West Linn Art Festival in the Forest, and the West Linn Arts Festival.

The Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition, in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Transportation, hosted a festival to celebrate the history of the Arch Bridge that has connected the cities of West Linn and Oregon City for nearly 100 years, and was being closed for renovations in 2011. Nearly 800 people attended despite rain and cold temperatures. The Coalition is currently planning a weekend festival to celebrate the Bridge's reopening in Fall 2012. The Coalition plans for the event to become annual.

### **Educational Resources**

The Willamette Falls area is home to many organizations that offer educational opportunities in local culture and history for both schoolchildren and adults. These organizations include a number of museums and heritage organizations. The area also features a number of community centers, public libraries, and a local community college where educational extension opportunities abound.

The largest museum in the area is the Museum of the Oregon Territory, operated by the Clackamas County Historical Society. The museum features permanent exhibits on local history and heritage, and a research library, operated by the Clackamas County Family History Society.



***A.12 – January 2011 NHA Study Launch: “The Falls. The Bridge. The Story. An Event to Remember.”***



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Name	Region	Type	Heritage Site	Collection	Educational Programming
American Association of Museums	National	Non-Profit			
American Association of State and Local History	National	Non-Profit			
Association for Living History, Farm & Agricultural Museums	National	Non-Profit			
Baker Cabin Historical Society	Local	Non-Profit	Baker Cabin Museum	Yes	Yes
BLM: Oregon Heritage Resources	National	Government Agency			
Bosco-Milligan Foundation / Architectural Heritage Center	State	Non-Profit		Yes	Yes
Bosky Dell Project	Local	Non-Profit	Site		Yes
Canby Historical Society	Local	Non-Profit	Depot Museum	Yes	Yes
Clackamas County Family History Society	Local	Non-Profit		Yes	Yes
Clackamas County Heritage Council	Local	Non-Profit			
Clackamas County Heritage Partners	Local	Non-Profit	End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center	Yes	
Clackamas County Historic Review Board	Local	Government Agency		Yes	Yes
Clackamas County Historical Society	Local	Non-Profit	Museum of the Oregon	Yes	Yes
Costume Society of America	National	Non-Profit		Yes	
Cultural Heritage Tourism	National	Non-Profit			
Damascus Historical Society	Local	Non-Profit		Yes	
Friends of McLean House	Local	Non-Profit	McLean House and Park		
Historic Oregon City Coordinating Committee	Local	Non-Profit			Yes
Historic Preservation League of Oregon	State	Non-Profit			Yes
Ice Age Floods Institute	National	Non-Profit			Yes
Institute of Museum & Library Services	National	Non-Profit			
Lake Oswego Historic Resources Advisory Board	Local	Government Agency		Yes	Yes
Lake Oswego Preservation Society	Local	Non-Profit			Yes
Main Street Preservation Programs	National	Non-Profit			
McLoughlin Memorial Association	Local	Non-Profit	Rose Farm, Barclay House	Yes	Yes
Molalla Area Historical Society	Local	Non-Profit	Museum	Yes	Yes
Mt. Hood Cultural Center	Local	Non-Profit	Museum	Yes	Yes
Mt. Hood National Forest		Government Agency			
National Park Service	National	Government Agency	McLoughlin House	Yes	
National Register for Historic Places	National	Government Agency			
National Trust for Historic Preservation	National	Non-Profit			
Northwest Forest Conservancy	Pacific Northwest	Non-Profit			
Oak Grove History Detectives	Local	Non-Profit			Yes
Old Home Forum	Local	Non-Profit			Yes
Oregon City Historic Review Board	Local	Government Agency		Yes	Yes
Oregon Historic Cemeteries Association	State	Non-Profit			
Oregon Historic Markers Committee	State	Government Agency			
Oregon Historical Society	State	Non-Profit		Yes	Yes
Oregon Military Museum Foundation	State	Government Agency	Oregon Military Museum	Yes	Yes
Oregon Museums Association	State	Non-Profit			
Oregon State Parks and Recreation	State	Government Agency		Yes	
Oswego Heritage Council	Local	Non-Profit		Yes	Yes
Oswego Iron Furnace & Oswego Iron Heritage Trail	Local	Government Agency			Yes
Philip Foster Farm	Local	Non-Profit	Philip Foster Farm	Yes	Yes
Sandy Historical Society	Local	Non-Profit	Museum	Yes	Yes
SHPO	State	Government Agency			
Small Museum Association	National	Non-Profit			
Smithsonian	National	Non-Profit		Yes	
West Linn Historic Review Board	Local	Government Agency		Yes	Yes
Western Museums Association	Pacific Northwest	Non-Profit			
Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation	Local	Non-Profit		Yes	
Wilsonville - Boones Ferry Historical Society	Local	Non-Profit		Yes	Yes

### A.13 – Heritage Organizations



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

# Appendix B: Public Involvement = Positive Feedback

## Letters of Support

The following organizations, businesses, and individuals have sent letters of support. The 30 letters include support from local businesses, key stakeholders, local non-profits and heritage groups, as well as individuals and elected officials.

### Index of letters (alphabetically)

- City of Oregon City
- City of West Linn
- Clackamas County Arts Alliance
- Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
- Clackamas County Business Alliance
- Clackamas County Family History Society, Inc
- Clackamas County Historical Society
- eNRG Kayaking
- Greater Oregon City Watershed Council
- Ice Age Floods Institute
- Lake Oswego Preservation Society
- Main Street Oregon City
- Metro
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Nick Dierckman, resident of Oregon City
- North Clackamas Chamber of Commerce
- One Willamette River Coalition
- Oregon City Chamber of Commerce
- Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council
- Oregon State Representative Bill Kennemer
- Oregon State Representative Carolyn Tomei
- Portland General Electric Company (PGE)
- Stevens –Crawford Heritage House
- Sunset Neighborhood Association
- Viking Management Group, LLC
- Wagging Tail Productions, LLC
- West Linn Chamber of Commerce
- West Linn Historic Review Board
- Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation
- Willamette Neighborhood Association





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### APPENDIX B – Public Involvement

For over two years, stakeholders of Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition have poured their knowledge, enthusiasm, comments, and ideas into a cascading abundance of information, interest and initiatives. Representatives of local jurisdictions, tribal nations, private industry, heritage organizations, business and commerce, transportation, tourism and economic development, and the general public have participated in workshops, forums, and open meetings.

The Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition (WFHAC) led a broad public involvement process in developing and refining the Willamette Falls National Heritage Area (NHA) feasibility study. From its initial formation around an idea from a public meeting in 2006 to adding partners in 2013, the WFHAC has made an extensive effort to keep its processes open and inclusive while seeking historical accuracy and diverse points of view.

After completing strategic community awareness initiatives aimed at getting the message to over 15,000 people, and directly involving 250 people in the study process, virtually all feedback for the NHA proposal is positive, with 25 letters written to the WFHAC in support of the NHA proposal.

This appendix provides documentation of the WFHAC's efforts to reach and include the local community, the areas inside and closest to the boundaries of the proposed NHA.

### Outreach

WFHAC organized and held myriad public meetings, events and workshops, sent speakers, Board members and staff to community events and meetings, and provided draft copies of the feasibility study in Clackamas County libraries in an effort to create general public awareness of the proposed Willamette Falls NHA and encourage participation in the process.

### Community Presentations

#### 2009 - 2010

- *Willamette Neighborhood Association (Jody Carson - annual presentations from 2009 to today)*
- *Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation (monthly updates from 2010)*
- *Ice Age Floods Institute, Local Chapter (presentation on Feb. 14, 2010)*
- *West Linn League of Neighborhoods (presentation Feb. 15, 2010)*
- *Western Museum Association Conference (Brian Scott presenter, staff, Oct. 20, 2010)*
- *Clackamas County Heritage Council (Alice Norris presentation – Nov 2010)*

#### 2012

- *West Linn Chamber of Commerce (monthly discussions from 2011)*
- *Oregon City Chamber of Commerce (Purdy – monthly update from 2011- Govt & Economic Affairs Committee)*
- *Willamette Main Street (Carson - informal discussions from 2011)*
- *Oregon City Downtown Business and Property Owners (Purdy updates from 2011)*
- *Office of Oregon State Rep Bill Kennemer (Mattson presented to legislative staff – Feb 21)*
- *Oregon Heritage Conference (Lewis presented proposal - April 7-9)*
- *National Tourism Week Trade Show – (WFHAC booth, Wilsonville, May 11)*



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

- **Leadership Luncheon -20 elected officials discussed NHA with Heritage Economic Dev specialist Donovan Rypkema – Oct 4**
- **Oregon City Chamber of Commerce (Purdy & Mattson, speakers, Oct 11)**
- **Main Street Oregon City – (Norris was annual meeting speaker to 60 business & community leaders, plus property owners – Oct 13)**
- **West Linn Centennial Committee (Norris, presenter, Dec 6)**
- **Oregon City Chamber of Commerce (Purdy & Mattson, speakers- Dec 13)**
- **Gerber Boes Architects (Carter, presented to Thomas Boes – Dec 15)**

### 2012-13

- **Clackamas County Legislative Appreciation Dinner – (Cowan asked 50 Clackamas County legislators for project support - Jan 12, 2012)**
- **Clackamas County Board of Commissioners (Norris & Cowan, speakers, asked for resolution of support - Jan 12, 2012)**
- **Willamette Falls Festival – organized event, with info booth, heritage tours, etc.**
- **Oregon Heritage Conference – Portland, OR – Keynote address by Norris - May 10**
- **Lake Oswego Community Meeting – presented NHA proposal, boundaries to 35 – June 25, 2013**

### Community Events – WFHAC Booth, literature and staffed by volunteer(s)

- **West Linn Old Time Fair (July 15-17, 2011) Attendance: 10,000 - 15,000**
- **First City Celebration – Oregon City (July 30, 2011) Attendance 2,000**
- **Clackamas County Fair (August 16-21, 2011) - Attendance 140,000.**
- **Oregon City Open Air Antique Fair (Aug 26, 2011) Attendance 7,500**

### Community Celebrations

#### **Willamette Falls Festival (Arch Bridge Reopening Celebration) Oct 12-14, 2012 Attendance: 30,000**

WFHAC planned, organized and presented a wildly successful 3-day extravaganza to celebrate the reopening of the famous and newly renovated Conde McCulloch Arch Bridge. Activities & programs highlighted the themes of the proposed National Heritage Area and included: a trolley heritage tour of cultural & historic sites, demonstrations and crafts by Grand Ronde tribal members, geocaching for a specially minted coin, a farmers' market featuring local agricultural products, music and art performances, a triathlon centered around the Willamette River, three outstanding speakers, a ceremonial Bridge reopening parade with celebrities and vintage autos, plus fireworks over the River. Multiple partners in business, government and industry joined with us to produce the event.

#### **Arch Bridge Closing Event (Jan 15, 2011) Attendance 750-1000**

WFHAC (with the support of the Oregon Department of Transportation) organized and hosted a 1-day event to celebrate the closing of the historic Conde McCullough Arch Bridge for a 2-year renovation.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Activities included heritage presentations, food, music, art, traditional Native American stories of the Willamette Falls from the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, and an Acorn Ceremony. Stories shared by the public were captured on video.

### **NHA Planning Workshops**

Stakeholder Workshop                      Attendance: 55              October 19, 2010

WFHAC held a planning workshop for key stakeholders identified in the study area. The stakeholders worked alongside the WFHAC Steering Committee to develop an initial timeline, themes and history of the study area. This workshop contributed greatly to final development of the themes and missing pieces of the history. During the session, a timeline began to emerge of the study area history, prompting the first draft of the narrative timeline. Final versions of this timeline can be found in our final Feasibility Study materials.

#### ***Willamette Falls National Heritage Area: Partners in Commerce***

#### ***Willamette Falls National Heritage Area: Partners in Community      Attendance: 84      June 21, 2011***

WFHAC presented two workshop sessions to update the public on its progress as well as collect feedback and input. Both workshops focused on addressing concerns of government regulation. The morning session catered to business and property owners in the area, and the evening session was geared to homeowners and community members. Their feedback, collected anonymously through written evaluations and interactive poster exhibits, was collated and documented by WFHAC. Nearly 100% of the participants supported the proposal. Their recorded comments highlighted the following key ideas:

- Get the word out better: Schools, Neighborhood Associations, etc.
- Who is funding the study?
- Keep the study focus broad.
- Don't impact the Mill or the Neighborhoods negatively.
- Be inclusive of:
  - People: Allow for more involvement (youth and adults)
  - Sites: Arch Bridge
- Focus on Industrial History
- Some limited uncertainty about whether tourism is the direction in which government funding is most useful. Some believed that there are more important things to fund, and more money might be needed to improve infrastructure.

#### ***'The Economics of Heritage' with Donovan Rypkema      - Oct 4, 2011              Attendance: 110***

WFHAC held two workshop sessions to highlight the economic benefits of NHAs with special guest Donovan Rypkema, a national expert on the economics of historic preservation. The workshop included roundtable discussions between Board members and the general public focusing on catalyst projects possible within the NHA. The workshop was funded in part by a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Along with general feedback on the proposal, WFHAC requested targeted feedback on



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

the study area boundaries, participation process, narrative timeline, management alternatives, and catalyst projects. Their feedback was collected through interactive poster exhibits, written anonymous evaluation forms, catalyst project worksheets, and roundtable discussion notes. The written evaluations were all supportive of the proposal, except for one that was “not sure.” Key ideas from the written anonymous evaluations included:

- Make connections
- Be inclusive, especially of various tribes
- Be organized
- Provide public education
- Build national significance and go after national media coverage

News coverage was provided by Willamette Falls Television and local newspapers.

### **Organizing Activities: 2005 – 2013**

#### ***June 3, 2005 One Willamette River United Conference***

Congresswoman Darlene Hooley held a conference with interested parties from communities and cities along the Willamette River in Oregon City. The purpose of the conference was to create a partnership between cities, businesses and people along the Willamette River that would lead to collaborative projects to stimulate sustainable economic development in the communities to preserve, energize and revitalize culture, heritage, conservation, business and agriculture.

#### ***June 2005 – October 2006 Oregon City-West Linn Willamette River Task Force Meetings (monthly)***

Stakeholders, including Clackamas County Tourism, City of Oregon City, City of West Linn, Clackamas Heritage Partners, Ice Age Floods Institute, West Linn Heritage Foundation, PGE, McLoughlin Memorial Association, Blue Heron Paper Company, West Linn Paper Company, Clackamas County, and Champoeg, began holding regular meetings to discuss the potential for a collaboration around major river projects. They determined to pursue the possibility of a National Heritage Area. Other stakeholders, including the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, river recreation leaders, the fishing industry, Willamette Riverkeeper, National Park Service, Oregon State Parks, Mission Mill in Salem, the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz, and the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde were identified and approached.

#### ***October 19, 2006 One Willamette River United II: Revitalizing River Communities Attendance: 100+***

Congresswoman Darlene Hooley held a second forum to discuss potential collaborative projects along the Willamette River. Clackamas County Tourism director Linda Bell, Oregon City Mayor Alice Norris, and West Linn Mayor Norm King and other stakeholders first presented the idea for a National Heritage Area and discussed collaborating with a group from the southern Willamette Valley who was also discussing the potential of a National Heritage Area.

#### ***October 2006 – October 2008 Oregon City-West Linn Willamette River Task Force Meetings (monthly)***

Stakeholder Meetings continue regularly between interested parties and new potential partners were identified and pursued.



## WILLAMETTE FALLS HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

### ***June 16, 2008 Oregon City - West Linn Task Force Planning Meeting***

Mark Davison, Oregon State Parks, leads interested stakeholders in a meeting to develop a project scope and develop conceptual agendas for two studios to be held at the University of Oregon regarding the vision of a Willamette Falls National Heritage Area.

### ***October 16, 2008 Oregon City - West Linn Task Force Planning Meeting***

The Task Force renames itself the Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition.

### ***October 2008 - September 2011 WFHAC Steering Committee Meetings (monthly)***

Steering Committee meetings continue regularly until the Board of Directors forms in September 2011. These meetings were monthly and open to the public.

### ***April 23, 2009 National Heritage Area Discussion***

The Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition holds a public meeting to discuss the possibility of a National Heritage Area for the Willamette Falls area.

### ***September 2011 – Present WFHAC Board of Directors Meetings (monthly)***

Board of Directors meetings continue regularly. These meetings were monthly, open to the public, and included time for public comment.

## **Outreach & Feedback Materials**

To support the verbal message, the WFHAC developed visuals and take-away materials to enable the public to learn more about the proposed NHA.

### ***Info Booth***

WFHAC created a transportable booth display that was taken fairs, events, and presentations and used as a visual aid to engage the public understanding of the proposed NHA. Board members manned the booth at every venue. They collected names and contact information for the Coalition's listserv and were available for conversation to booth visitors. The booth, together with the Clackamas County Booth, won a 3<sup>rd</sup> place ribbon for overall presentation at the 2011 Clackamas County Fair, a week-long fair with an attendance of more than 140,000. During the summer of 2011, the booth traveled to five major fairs in the area with a potential exposure to an estimated 15,000 people. The booth also appeared at all WFHAC workshops in 2011.





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Board member Jim Mattis in the Info Booth in West Linn



### ***Story Cards***

WFHAC created and distributed postcards to encourage the general public to contribute stories and memories to the WFHAC's inventory. The postcards, addressed to WFHAC, also provided the public another method in which they could easily contact WFHAC. First used at the Arch Bridge Closing event, the postcards were distributed to the public at events and workshops in 2011.

### ***Brochures***

In 2011, the WFHAC developed an informational brochure for distribution to the public. First developed for the Arch Bridge Closing event, the flyer was updated in Summer 2011. The brochure was available at all booth displays as well as at the public workshops.

### ***Website***

WFHAC maintains a consistent web presence as part of its efforts to promote the proposed NHA. The website includes information about the Coalition, upcoming and past events, an overview of the themes and history of the proposed NHA, and contact information for WFHAC. The website averages 100 visitors per month, with 62% of these visitors new to the site each month.

### ***Social Media***

WFHAC extended its outreach strategy to include Facebook, as well as maintain a public listserv for general updates and event announcements. Through these social media methods, WFHAC reaches more than 300 people with each update and announcement.



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### Feedback

Alongside the effort to build public awareness for the proposed NHA, the WFHAC has sought public input and evaluation of the draft feasibility study. Copies of the Feasibility Study and feedback notebooks were placed in five Clackamas County libraries. More than 250 people directly responded and participated in the development process for the Feasibility Study. Many of their ideas and comments were incorporated into the narratives.

### Information Collection

Beginning in June 2011, WFHAC requested assistance from the local community to build a database of stories, photos, documents and history of the area. Over 50 people responded to the request and sent valuable information to augment our historical record of the study area.

WFHAC also identified known experts on subjects important to the themes of the proposed NHA. These knowledgeable individuals provided historical narratives on Native Americans, settlement activities, paper mills, hydropower, lamprey eels and all topics related to Willamette Falls.. These efforts were of tremendous assistance in creating the Stories of the Falls, incorporated in the Feasibility Study.

**WFHAC hosted 3 design studios** in cooperation with the University of Oregon Landscape Architecture Department. Final results were shared in public open houses. Below is a sample of the design work offered as visual re-imagining for the Willamette waterfront, as might be implemented by a National Heritage Area.



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**Willamette Heritage Area Speculative Design Guide** Landscape Architecture Department  
University of Oregon, Eugene Oregon Edited by Robert Ribe and Rena Schlachter 2009



Scenic viewpoint of Rock Island



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