



Columbia Riverkeeper protects and restores the water quality of the Columbia River and all life connected to it, from the headwaters to the Pacific Ocean.

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Join the conversation and keep up with the latest from Columbia Riverkeeper!



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RIVER NOTES

A Letter from the Executive Director



Brett VandenHeuvel

I love that moment just before you jump off a dock. No matter how many times you've jumped, there is a tinge of apprehension—some part of your brain asking, "Do you really want to do this?"

But you make the leap anyway, trading fear for a second of freedom and a splash.

We appreciate all the Columbia Riverkeeper members who have made the leap to protect clean water and our communities. You truly power this work with your donations, volunteer time, and ideas.

You can read about Jennifer Elling (p. 13) taking the leap by including Columbia Riverkeeper in her will to leave a legacy for clean water. Learn more about Legacy Giving, including our partnership with FreeWill that—you guessed it—helps you make a valid will for free.

We are thrilled to have two new staff members who took a career leap: Priya Judge is the Power Past Fracked Gas coalition coordinator and Karina Sahlin is our communications coordinator. Karina's interview with author Michelle Nijhuis is on page 14.

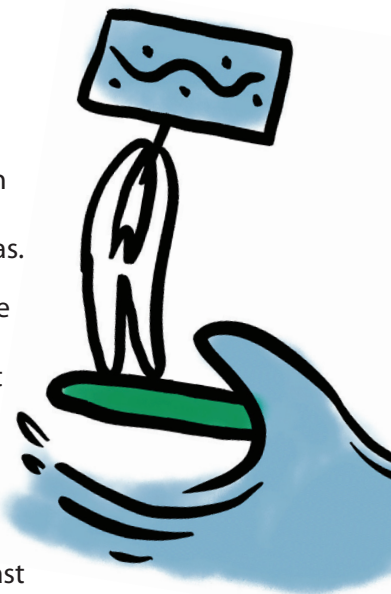
Fifteen years ago, Columbia Riverkeeper made the leap to somehow, some way fight every fossil fuel terminal on the Columbia. We've had an amazing year—the splashdown moment when fear of jumping pays off. The U.S. Supreme Court dismissed the coal industry's final appeal of Washington's denial of the Millennium coal export terminal in Longview, WA. Backers of the fracked gas methanol refinery proposed in Kalama, WA, pulled out after Washington denied a key permit. So did backers of the Perennial fracked gas power plant in Hermiston, OR (though they may have a mystery buyer). That's three big milestones in protecting the Pacific Northwest and our climate.

Our partners at Comunidades also took the leap this summer, coordinating two successful COVID-19 vaccination events in White Salmon, WA, and engaging Columbia Gorge residents in successful campaigns to pass clean-energy and energy-affordability legislation in Oregon. The mission of Comunidades is ambitious: to amplify voices for environmental and social justice while increasing Latina/o/x engagement and leadership in Columbia River Gorge communities. We're proud to sponsor Comunidades; check out the group's Facebook page (@ComunidadesPNW) to learn more.

I encourage each of you to make the leap to stay engaged in Columbia Riverkeeper's work. You are needed and the water is nice!

Brett VandenHeuvel

Brett VandenHeuvel, Executive Director



5 REASONS TO WATCH “LOVE YOUR COLUMBIA”



Get inspired to fight for clean water and our climate. Check out recordings from our virtual event series, “Love Your Columbia.” The webinars feature our incredible environmental lawyers, community organizers, scientists, and partners who work every day to protect the Columbia. Visit bit.ly/LoveYourColumbia2021 to register for upcoming webinars and view the archive.

1. Renowned Authors and Poets Inspire

Award-winning author Michelle Nijhuis joins Columbia Riverkeeper for an intimate discussion on the history of modern conservation, from the early battles to save “fuzzy mammals” to the current fight to shift global priorities from extinction to abundance. And Claudia Castro Luna and Tyrone Thompson Ross (Wyampum Nez Perce) offer poetry readings inspired by the Columbia.

2. Indigenous People and Tribal Government Leaders Share Insights

Yakama Nation science and cultural experts share the untold story of how the U.S. government dumped toxic waste near Bonneville Dam for decades in “Forgotten Toxic Waste Dump: The Bradford Island Story.” Also check out “Debate on Tribal Rights Heats Up” featuring the chair of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and a Yakama Nation traditional food gatherer as they detail the cultural underpinnings for opposition to Rye Development’s pumped-storage hydroelectric development.

3. Get the Inside Scoop on Campaigns and Lawsuits

From fighting fossil fuels to saving salmon threatened by aging hydroelectric dams, get the skinny on how we’re mobilizing grassroots action and winning in court. Our most recent webinar breaks down the oil industry’s dismal year, how Tribes and Columbia River communities stopped the nation’s largest oil-by-rail terminal in 2018, and how we can stop the Zenith Energy oil-by-rail terminal.

4. La Comunidad Latina Shares Perspectives

Columbia Riverkeeper Senior Organizer Ubaldo Hernández hosts a panel discussion with staff from Comunidades, Beyond Toxics, and Northwest Alternatives to Pesticides. Panelists share perspectives on the environmental advocacy movement and how their organizations are working to prevent pollution and protect people’s health.

5. Scientists Break Down the Latest on Toxic Pollution

Dr. Arlene Blum, executive director with the Green Science Policy Institute, details impacts from harmful chemicals found in household items, how they end up in the river, and what you can do.

Stream “Love Your Columbia” Webinars for Free

bit.ly/LoveYourColumbia2021



OIL-BY-RAIL HEATING UP



By Erin Saylor,
Staff Attorney

Anyone who has spent any time in the Columbia River Gorge has spotted one. Their long, black, snake-like bodies are as ubiquitous as windsurfers on a breezy summer afternoon. I'm referring, of course, to oil trains.

Carrying crude oil from Canada and North Dakota, the trains are often 70 to 80 tank cars in length and can stretch over a mile long. Destined for refineries and export facilities in Portland and throughout western Washington, these trains pose a considerable risk to the communities they pass through.

Derailments are not unheard of—in the last eight years, the U.S. and Canada have seen 21 oil train derailments—and often result in massive, difficult-to-extinguish fires, hazardous oil spills, and even explosions. Unfortunately, the small town of Mosier, OR, experienced this risk firsthand. On June 3, 2016, an oil train derailed as it passed by the town, spilling 42,000 gallons of oil and igniting a fire that took 14 hours to extinguish. Fortunately, no one was hurt, but the next community may not be so lucky.

U.S. OIL INDUSTRY HEADED OFF THE RAILS

Worldwide, the demand for oil is falling as calls to combat climate change grow louder and as greener energy options—including electric vehicles—become more affordable and widespread. Thanks to rapidly improving technology, a dollar spent on wind and solar energy development today produces four times more electricity than a dollar spent on the same technologies a decade ago.

How is Big Oil responding? European oil companies are starting to see the writing on the wall, making considerable investments in offshore wind and solar energy to keep their businesses relevant. U.S. oil companies, however, have largely responded to calls to revise their business models by sticking their heads in the sand. But investors won't have it. Financial risks tied to climate change are prompting unprecedented responses from investors. For example, in spring 2021, a small, climate-focused hedge fund secured two seats on Exxon's 12-member board of directors.

Investors' concerns are warranted. In 2020, large oil companies collectively lost tens of billions of dollars worldwide, posting their worst performance in years. According to industry analysts, the COVID-19 pandemic was largely to blame for last year's losses, but in many ways the pandemic only accelerated what has been a consistent, slow decline for the oil industry over the past decade. Last year's considerable losses are likely a harbinger of what awaits as growing concerns about climate change, tighter regulations, and the electric vehicle boom continue.





The oil train derailment in Mosier, OR, on June 3, 2016, highlights the need to do everything we can to stop dangerous oil trains running near our waterways and communities. Photo: Paloma Ayala.

OIL TRAINS KEEP CHUGGING DOWN THE GORGE

The science is clear: we need to immediately move from fossil energy to clean energy alternatives. Does that translate into fewer oil trains rumbling along the Columbia anytime soon? No. According to the Washington Dept. of Ecology, on average, close to a million barrels of oil travel by rail through the state each week. Most of those trains come from the Bakken region of North Dakota, but many are also exporting oil from Canada. In the near term, experts are not predicting a drop in oil-by-rail traffic along the Columbia.

The U.S. gobbles up 98 percent of Canada's oil exports. Canada exports a large proportion of oil in the form of "tar sands"—a mixture of sand, clay, water, and bitumen (a thick, sticky, black oil). Extracting and refining tar sands oil is energy intensive; in turn, its production generates three times as much greenhouse gas emissions as conventional crude oil. Much of Canada's tar sands oil makes its way to the U.S. via cross-border pipelines—the recently cancelled Keystone XL pipeline, for example, would have transported 830,000 barrels per day of Canadian tar sands oil to Gulf Coast refineries. With cross-border pipeline projects ensnared in opposition, Canada started quietly moving more and more of its tar sands into the U.S. by rail. Although transporting oil by rail is significantly more expensive than using a cross-border pipeline, the Canadian oil industry is eager to get its product into the hands of U.S. consumers.

PORTLAND, OR: OIL TRAINS, U.S.A.?

With the North American oil industry on a snail's pace to adapt to the reality of falling demand for fossil energy, we've had to get creative to find ways to protect our climate and our communities from the steady flow of oil trains.

In our view, the best way to stem the flow of trains along the Columbia is to fight the facilities they're heading for, including Zenith Energy Terminal Holdings LLP in Portland. This is a shift from our usual tactic of stopping facilities before they are constructed, and a far more difficult fight.

Unlike new fossil fuel proposals—which must undergo rigorous permitting processes that provide opportunities for public engagement—there are far fewer opportunities for the public to weigh in on changes to existing facilities. Our advocacy efforts are often met with resistance from regulatory agencies that are reticent to make decisions they view as inconsistent with past actions. However, we are passionate and persistent: these fights are important for our climate, our communities, and the Columbia.

Zenith's oil-by-rail facility—located in Portland's Critical Energy Infrastructure hub on the banks of the Willamette River—was originally constructed as an asphalt refinery shortly after the end of World War II. When Zenith quietly took over the facility in December 2017, the asphalt refinery had been shuttered for close to a decade. Immediately,



Over 500 people gathered in June 2021, in downtown Portland, OR, for the Zenith Solstice Parade. Activists from Columbia Riverkeeper, 350PDX, and Willamette Riverkeeper delivered 2,000 petition signatures to the City Council.

Zenith began using the existing infrastructure to transload tar sands and Bakken crude oil from mile-long trains onto tanker ships that transport the oil to refineries up and down the West Coast.

Zenith started looking for ways to expand its operations as soon as it rolled into town. When Zenith purchased the facility, it inherited a building permit for the construction of three new rail car platforms and unloading racks that would expand its unloading capacity from 12 rail cars per day to 44. The story Zenith told to the Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) about construction seemed harmless: an efficiency project with “no new throughput.” Low and behold, the new infrastructure allowed Zenith to increase its throughput dramatically.

Zenith has separately been pursuing an expansion project it claims will solely be used for transloading bio- and renewable fuels. Initially, Zenith planned to build new pipes either under or over the road adjacent to its facility to reach the tankers docked across the street. Although neither of the application processes provided for public engagement, we were vocal in our opposition. Luckily, the City of Portland shared our concern that, if constructed, nothing would prevent Zenith from reneging on its renewable fuels plan and using the pipes instead to further expand their crude oil operations. After those proposals fell through, Zenith doggedly devised a new plan to build the infrastructure entirely on its own property—thereby significantly narrowing the scope of the city's review and the city's ability to deny the project permits.

Meanwhile, last spring, we noticed that Zenith had started clearing and grading the area where it planned to build

whether Zenith had obtained a necessary stormwater permit from DEQ before it started work. After confirming with DEQ that Zenith had, in fact, not obtained that crucial water quality permit, we teamed up with Willamette Riverkeeper to file a Clean Water Act enforcement action against Zenith in federal court. That case is ongoing.

UP FOR THE CHALLENGE

Next up: the renewal of Zenith's Title V air pollution permit. Zenith's current permit is woefully outdated; it was issued to the asphalt refinery back in 2007 and has been expired for close to a decade. There will be a public process associated with the air permit renewal, but before DEQ can put a draft permit out for public comment, Zenith must first obtain a Land Use Compatibility Statement (LUCS) from the City of Portland. The LUCS process provides the City with a rare opportunity to evaluate Zenith's operations as a whole to determine whether the facility is in compliance with Portland's land use goals, policies, and regulations. Once again, there is no opportunity for formal public involvement, but we will continue to advocate that city leaders use this opportunity to compel Zenith to phase out its crude oil operation in the not-too-distant future.

Fighting an existing terminal is certainly an uphill battle, but we are up for the challenge. Buoyed by support from our members, our partner organizations, and the legions of devoted Portland-area activists who have been passionately speaking out against Zenith from the beginning, we will continue to fight Zenith's terminal until it no longer poses a threat to our communities, our river, and our climate.



Coloring Book for All-Ages

Do you like to color? Did you enjoy the art and icons throughout this issue by Artist Eliza Carver? Check out this free download today! bit.ly/ColumbiaColoringBook:



DIVE IN: SECRET BEACHES ON THE COLUMBIA



By Miya Burke, Intern



Lorri Epstein,
Water Quality Director



Refreshing waters. Breathtaking sunsets. Summer on the Lower Columbia abounds with beauty and good times. Whether reconnecting with friends and family, or looking for a quiet spot for a beach towel and summer read, we have just the spot for you.

SAFETY FIRST

Columbia Riverkeeper is a strong proponent of playing in the river. We all have the right to swim and fish on the Columbia. But before we reveal our favorite swimming holes, let's tackle a common question: is it safe to swim in the Columbia? State and federal agencies collect very little site-specific data to help you decide how safe a particular part of the Columbia is for swimming. While much of the river is safe, some stretches suffer from toxic pollution and unsafe bacteria levels.

PROTECT YOUR HEALTH BY FOLLOWING THESE TIPS:

- Rinse off after swimming, and avoid entering the river with open cuts or wounds.
- Avoid industrial areas and discharge pipes.
- Use Columbia Riverkeeper's Swim Guide mobile app (bit.ly/swim-guide-2021) to get directions, alerts, and up-to-the-minute water quality updates on Columbia River recreation sites. We monitor E. coli (bacteria) levels at several Columbia River beaches in the Portland and Hood River areas.
- Beware of fast currents and steep drop-offs. Know your limits, and swim close to shore. Check for and adhere to any warning signs before you jump in.

Now, let's find you a chill swimming hole to enjoy the mighty Columbia.

BEST BEACHES FOR KIDS

Willow Grove in Longview, WA, has a sandy beach, paved walking paths, picnic areas, restrooms, playgrounds, and even a life jacket loaner program, making it our top pick for little ones.

Hood River Waterfront Park in Hood River, OR, is a family-oriented park and beach along the Columbia River. Along with a large, sandy beach and calm water, the park also features a playground with a miniature rock-climbing wall.

Marine Drive Beach (aka Broughton Beach) is a 1.3-mile-long beach located near Portland and Vancouver with views of Mt. Hood. The best time to go is in the late afternoon to catch a beautiful sunset. This is one of the more spacious beaches on our list, and an ideal spot to spread out the shovels and buckets for optimum sandcastle construction.

BEST BEACH FOR WIND SPORTS

The Spring Creek Hatchery in Underwood, WA, is a popular windsurfing and wing foiling spot along the Columbia. It experiences strong westerly winds and is well exposed, two good reasons advanced and pro athletes gather here. Even if you don't participate, it's worth a visit just to watch the action.

BEST BEACH FOR ROCKCLIMBERS

For rockclimbing in the morning and swimming in the afternoon, Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site is your place. Located within the park, Broughton's Bluff is one of the Portland area's best outdoor crags. The Bluff offers quality routes rated from 5.6 top ropes to 5.12 leads. After sending a route, cool off with a dip in the Sandy River near the confluence of the Columbia. Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site also has a picnic area and boat ramp.

BEST CLOTHING-OPTIONAL BEACH

If you like enjoying the river au natural, Collins Beach on Sauvie Island is our top pick. If you'd prefer to keep your clothes on, you can still enjoy this spacious 1.6-mile-long sandy beach. Only one section of the beach is clothing optional and it's easy to avoid.

Rooster Rock State Park in Corbett, OR, has many claims to fame. It's a challenging windsurfing and kiteboarding spot, it's a perfect place for a swim to escape the summer heat, and the eastern portion of the 3-mile-long beach is clothing-optional.

BEST BEACH TO ESCAPE THE CROWDS

Still within Portland city limits, Kelley Point Park offers the chance to experience the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers. Although swimming is discouraged due to dangerous rip currents, the river provides great entertainment with the opportunity to watch tugboats and barges chugging along. There are plenty of paved and unpaved walking trails and picnic spots.

BEST BEACHES FOR CAMPING

Looking for an adventure? This camping experience is like no other. Drive to the St. Helens Marina and have a free shuttle boat take you to Sand Island Marine Park Campground for an island adventure. A vehicle will transport the gear to your campsite and you are free to wander and explore the trails and beaches with views of the Columbia River, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Hood. You also can stop at Sand Island when paddling the Lower Columbia River Water Trail.

BEST BEACHES FOR A COOKOUT

With a long sandy beach, playground equipment, picnic tables, shelters, and nine grills available just 10 minutes from Vancouver, WA, Frenchman's Bar is the spot for a fun cookout.

Enjoy a picnic on a hot summer's day below the apple trees at St. Cloud. This small day use area in Stevenson, WA, offers fire pits, picnic tables, and bird watching for entertainment.

Cottonwood Beach at Captain William Clark Park in Washougal, WA, is an ideal beach for a picnic or a BBQ, with a sandy swimming beach that's safe for kids. Launch a kayak or canoe from the shore and explore Reed Island State Park, a great blue heron nesting site. To top it all off, Cottonwood Beach offers a picturesque view of Mt. Hood. Visit bit.ly/swim-guide-2021 or scan the QR code.



Free Pollution Prevention Curriculum for Kids!

Looking for something fun for the kids in your life? Check out our new virtual science units that tackle important environmental issues and inspire action.

Kids can work on the units at home on their own, or teachers can facilitate learning in a classroom or online.

The lessons, experiments, and hands-on activities use supplies and materials you likely already have.

Visit bit.ly/PollutionPreventionC or scan the QR code.



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WILL FEDERAL DAMS COMPLY WITH THE CLEAN WATER ACT?



By Miles Johnson,
Senior Attorney

Imagine walking along the Columbia, maybe at a park or boat ramp. You see someone backing a flatbed trailer down to the water's edge. The trailer is hauling 55-gallon oil barrels. The driver gets out and starts pouring a barrel straight into the river. His hat reads "U.S. Army Corps of Engineers." The oil coming out is dirty black; it floats on the water and coats the shoreline. You watch him pour barrel after barrel into the river.

Sounds like a bad dream? Wake up. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) has been illegally discharging toxic oil and hot water into the Columbia and Snake rivers for decades. A series of oil spills at Lower Monumental Dam in 2017 spilled over 1,600 gallons of oil into the Snake River—that's about 29 oil drums' worth. It was hardly an isolated incident. Army Corps dams routinely spill or leak hundreds of gallons of oil into the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Think it's unfair to compare the Army Corps' oil spills to someone purposefully dumping dirty oil into the river off the back of a truck? What if you knew that some dam equipment is designed to continually leak oil and grease into the water? Does it matter to people and animals that rely on the Columbia whether oil gets into the water on purpose or accidentally? And when the Army Corps "accidentally" spills oil into the river over and over for decades without fixing the problem, are these really still accidents? Or is this just how the Army Corps does business?

Let's be clear, oil pollution is bad for the Columbia River. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),

Spilled oil can harm living things because its chemical constituents are poisonous. This can affect organisms both from internal exposure to oil through ingestion or inhalation and from external exposure through skin and eye irritation. Oil can also smother some small species of fish or invertebrates and coat feathers and fur, reducing birds' and mammals' ability to maintain their body temperatures.

Not nice. But for decades, the Army Corps has spilled hundreds, or even thousands, of gallons of oil into the Columbia and Snake rivers every year. Because the Army Corps has never monitored oil pollution, we don't know the exact amount.

Toxic contamination lurking in some of the Army Corps' oil spills is also deeply troubling. In 2012, the Army Corps spilled over 1,500 gallons of transformer oil from Ice Harbor Dam into the Snake River. That oil contained high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). PCBs are toxic substances that linger in the environment and accumulate to dangerous levels towards the top of aquatic food webs, such as in the bodies of fish, birds, and humans. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), PCBs cause cancer and harm the immune system, reproductive system, nervous system, and endocrine system—that's a lot of important systems! The oil from the Ice Harbor spill contained PCBs at levels 14,000,000 percent greater than state and federal chronic water quality standards.

Heat pollution from the Army Corps' dams and reservoirs also takes a heavy toll on the Columbia and Snake rivers, which are already too warm for salmon and steelhead. The dams create large, shallow reservoirs that soak up the sun's energy and make the water too hot. The reservoirs sometimes warm the rivers so much that it actually kills or injures endangered salmon and steelhead. And the dams themselves discharge even more hot water, after using it to cool dam machinery. In 2015, hot water killed over 95 percent of the endangered Snake River sockeye salmon run; it will be a small miracle if nothing similar happens this summer. Scientists have long understood that the reservoirs raise the rivers' temperature to levels that are dangerous for fish, and the Army Corps has also long resisted taking meaningful action to address its heat pollution.

Why is this happening? The Clean Water Act prohibits unregulated oil and heat pollution—but the Army Corps has pretended, for decades, that its dams are above the law. And EPA, the federal agency primarily responsible for enforcing the Clean Water Act, lacks the political influence

and will to enforce the law against another federal agency. Clean Water Act discharge permits for the Army Corps' dams could (if EPA wrote them correctly) result in less oil, toxics, and heat pollution reaching the Columbia and Snake rivers. But the Army Corps has avoided these permits for decades, and EPA is unable or unwilling to do anything about it. So the oil spills continue.

That's where Columbia Riverkeeper comes in. We work to protect the river and hold our federal government accountable for its oil and hot water pollution.

In 2014, Riverkeeper sued the Army Corps for discharging oil and hot water from the dams without the necessary Clean Water Act permits. The Army Corps applied for those permits, but seven years later, EPA has not issued them. Because of the hold up, Riverkeeper may take the Army Corps back to court this fall and seek a court order to protect the Snake and Columbia. And if the Army Corps pressures EPA into issuing inadequate Clean Water Act permits for the dams, Riverkeeper can challenge the legality of those permits. When anyone—even a government agency—ignores the Clean Water Act, Riverkeeper takes action to protect our rivers and fisheries.

"The Army Corps' practice of spilling dirty oil into the Columbia and Snake rivers is disgusting and reprehensible," says Captain Peter Wilcox, former Riverkeeper board president, U.S. Coast Guard-licensed Master Mariner, and longtime renewable energy user and advocate. "It's also an affront to everyone who works hard to comply with the Clean Water Act and keep our waterways clean."

Most of us don't need EPA or a court to tell us that putting dirty oil in the river is wrong. But the Army Corps apparently does, so Riverkeeper will keep working to make that happen. Until then, the Army Corps' oil and hot water pollution will continue hurting salmon and the cultures and ecosystems they support.



Shop for a Good Cause

Check out
Columbia
Riverkeeper's
online store!
All purchases
support our
work to protect
clean water
and restore
healthy
ecosystems.

bit.ly/ColumbiaShop



HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LEGACY GIVING?

Including your favorite nonprofit in your will is a popular way to leave a legacy for the causes that stir your soul. Legacy giving may seem complex, but we're here to make it easy and accessible for everyone. Test your legacy-giving knowledge, check out our legacy-giving spotlight, and let us know if you have any questions.

Contact Acasia Berry, Finance & Operations Director, at aciasia@columbiariverkeeper.org, 541-399-9119.

TEST YOUR LEGACY-GIVING KNOWLEDGE!



1 Legacy giving can include gifts that:

- a. Cost you nothing now
- b. Pay you income
- c. Reduce your taxes
- d. Make an impact now
- e. All of the above

2 Charitable Gift Annuities benefit you in which of the following ways?

- a. The payments always stay the same
- b. You may pay less in income tax and potentially capital gains tax
- c. Allow you to provide for yourself, a loved one, and Columbia Riverkeeper
- d. All of the above

3 How can you make a difference now?

- a. Make a memorial or tribute gift on behalf of someone who loved or benefited from Riverkeeper's work
- b. Donate appreciated securities
- c. Wait to donate
- d. Donate to Riverkeeper now at bit.ly/CRK-donate
- e. a, b, d

4 Circle all the gifts that may provide you tax benefits.

- a. Charitable distribution from your IRA
- b. Retirement plan gift
- c. Gift of securities
- d. Gift of real estate
- e. Life insurance policy gift
- f. Trader Joe's gift card

DRAW A LINE TO MATCH THE TYPE OF GIFT WITH THE DEFINITION



1 General Gift

- a A certain dollar amount, fraction, percentage, or specific items.

2 Residual Gift

- b A gift only if a spouse, family member, or another heir/beneficiary does not outlive you.

3 Specific Gift

- c A gift of a stated sum of money.

4 Contingent Gift

- d A gift of what is left over after all other expenses have been paid.

TRUE OR FALSE RAPID-FIRE

Making a will is expensive.

FALSE! Columbia Riverkeeper has partnered with FreeWill to make it easy to create a will and leave a legacy of clean water and healthy salmon. FreeWill works with non-profit organizations to provide a high-quality, no-charge product.

You need a lawyer to make a will.

FALSE! (Although if you have a large or complicated estate, it's best to have one.)

If your partner has a will you don't need one.

FALSE! Even if your plans are identical, both parties should have a legal document. The most important part of estate planning is being prepared for any situation that may arise.

Only people with children, a lot of money, or older folks need a will.

FALSE! You don't need to own a villa in France to need an estate plan. It's important to have a plan for the things that matter to you—like who might take care of a pet, or who you want to have your favorite painting or family heirloom. A will is an expression of care for the people and causes you love.

Once I make a will I can't change it.

FALSE! Your circumstances and wishes may change after you've completed your will. You can change or replace your will at any time. With FreeWill you can make a new will to replace your old one. All you have to do is sign the new will with witnesses and remember to destroy the previous one.

Start your will today at
bit.ly/CRK-Free-Will.



MEMBER: LEGACY GIVING SPOTLIGHT



Name: Jennifer Elling

Location: Yamhill County, OR

How did you learn about Columbia Riverkeeper?

A passionate young person knocked on my door. That interaction was how I started following and contributing to Riverkeeper.

Why does our work for clean water and our climate matter to you?

Clean water is our most valuable resource. I appreciate the leadership of Columbia Riverkeeper and how the organization works with others, especially the Tribes along the Columbia.

More and more people are including Riverkeeper in their wills or IRA. What made you decide to include Columbia Riverkeeper in yours?

The transparency of the organization and keeping it local.

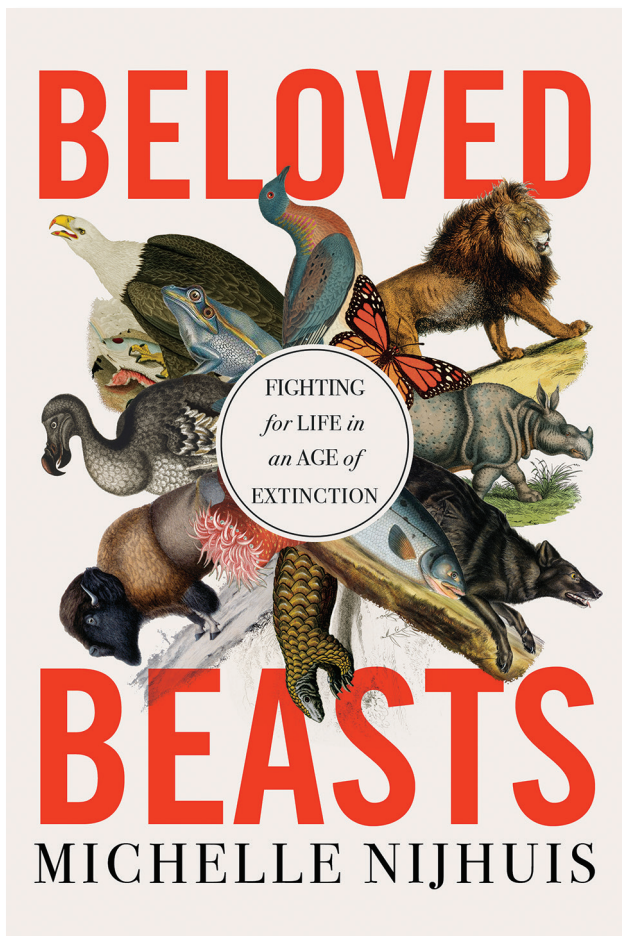
Any advice for others who are considering legacy gifts?

I didn't really know what that large organization across the country was doing with my donation. In 2020, I saw many questionable business practices so that's when I made the easy switch to list Riverkeeper as the beneficiary of my IRA. I'd recommend doing it now while you're thinking of it.

Do you have a favorite place or memory of the Columbia?

I love traveling over the Bridge of the Gods. My favorite memory is water skiing on the Columbia with friends, boy was it choppy that day!

Landscape Photo: Paloma Ayala



CONSERVATION HISTORY FOR THE CURIOUS WITH MICHELLE NIJHUIS



By Karina Sahlin,
Communications Coordinator

Michelle Nijhuis is a journalist and award-winning author of “Beloved Beasts: Fighting for Life in an Age of Extinction.” With stunning vignettes and interwoven narratives, “Beloved Beasts” explores the history of modern conservation, from Linnaeus to current community conservation efforts in Namibia. Our interview has been edited for length and clarity.

What inspired you to write this book at this time?

I have a background in biology, and when I became a journalist I noticed that even professional conservationists and people who care deeply about conservation didn’t have a very strong understanding of the history of conservation as a movement. This is understandable because they’re focused on the emergencies in front of them. But I think it’s crucial to understand what activists before us have done right—and what they’ve done wrong and overlooked.

The book goes beyond a discrete history of modern conservation; each chapter builds on the previous. Why did you take this approach?

One of the most interesting parts of my research was learning about all the connections among well-known conservationists. They exchanged letters, they argued, and sometimes they clashed in quite dramatic ways over their ideas and strategies. We tend to think of these people

as isolated icons, but they worked together—even across generations—and they helped build a movement that’s evolved over time.

The modern history of conservation is, until recently, white and affluent. Racism and colonialism were prevalent, and remain ongoing issues today. Why were conservation and colonialism so intertwined?

My book is a history of the “modern conservation movement,” which I define as the movement that began in Europe and North America in the late 1800s—when many people in those societies first understood that humans could drive species globally extinct. It’s important for me to define my terms because modern conservation has overlooked and ignored a lot of more local, traditional conservation practices that have existed since the beginning of human history.

The modern conservation movement did begin as an elite movement. The people with power in Europe and North America had a first-hand look at what industrialized societies were doing to other species. They had the resources and the education that allowed them to understand that this was happening on a global scale. They had privileges that allowed them to voice their opinion without fear of retribution. To their credit, I think the leaders of the early modern conservation movement



Michelle Nijhuis and Eugenia Velásquez Orozco in the Guatemalan Highlands in 2017. Photo: Lynn Johnson.

had the foresight to connect people with species that they might never encounter in life, but whose fates their actions nevertheless affected. However, the elite, white, predominantly male roots of the movement have meant that modern conservation has often defaulted to top-down, centralized authority as a strategy. The movement also tended to follow colonial paths and work with colonial governments when it did leave North America and Europe, more or less imposing conservation rules and regulations on colonized peoples.

It's taken the modern conservation movement a long time to begin working more closely with existing, local conservation practices and realize that they are essential to what we might call the "conservation ecosystem." Conservation can't simply rely on boundaries and prohibitive laws if we want conservation to operate both ethically and on a global scale.

Any advice you'd give to budding conservationists?

I think community-led conservation is one of the most exciting directions that conservation is taking right now. The modern conservation movement is realizing that one of the most ethical and effective ways to get conservation done is to support the people whose communities have been practicing conservation for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. These efforts are working with species

that are often not in crisis, that are still abundant in many ways, and that's almost a joyful kind of work to be doing because you're working not just to prevent extinction but to restore relationships. I would encourage young conservationists, especially those who are worried about conservation being a depressing field, to check out the exciting, innovative work being done in that realm.

Do you have a favorite species?

I've been a fan of frogs ever since I was a little kid. I'm not a fan of any particular species of frog, but I love frogs and amphibians in general. They get to be two animals, and live in two habitats—how cool is that?

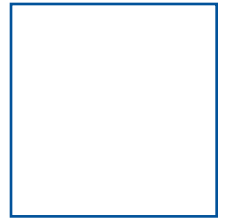
"Beloved Beasts: Fighting for Life in an Age of Extinction" is available online and at your local bookstore. If you'd like to watch my full interview with Michelle, please check out Columbia Riverkeeper's YouTube channel (bit.ly/BelovedBeasts) or scan the code below with your phone camera.





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