

## **RESOLUTION**

Adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission on February 20, 2014

### **RESOLUTION OF THE OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION'S SUPPORT FOR COMPLETING THE HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY STATE TRAIL PROJECT**

#### **RECITALS**

**WHEREAS**, a century ago, Samuel Hill and Samuel Lancaster had the vision to create America's first scenic highway, the Historic Columbia River Highway, to complement the Columbia Gorge's magnificent natural landscape.

**WHEREAS**, the Historic Columbia River Highway, constructed 1913-1922 through Multnomah, Hood River and Wasco Counties, is considered one of the earliest and most significant scenic roads designed specifically for automobile use in the United States.

**WHEREAS**, the Historic Columbia River Highway is a National Historic Landmark recognized as an outstanding example of modern highway development in 20<sup>th</sup> century America for its pioneering advances in road design.

**WHEREAS**, the construction of a water-level route through the Columbia River Gorge, now Interstate 84, destroyed many sections of the Old Highway.

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon Department of Transportation was directed by Congress in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act of 1986 (PL 99-663) to prepare a program to preserve and restore the Old Columbia River Highway for public use as an historic road.

**WHEREAS**, ORS366.553 directs the state of Oregon to connect intact and usable highway segments with recreation trails, where feasible, to create a continuous historic road route through the Columbia Gorge that links local, state and federal recreation facilities.

**WHEREAS**, comprehensive planning for the trail is complete. In 2011 the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department adopted the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail Plan. This plan defines the trail alignment and design guidelines which have been adopted by the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee. The trail is included in the Hood River County Transportation System Plan.

**WHEREAS**, there is broad public support for this project. The Gorge communities have rallied to support completion of this project. They see tremendous economic opportunity created by bicycle tourism, and the possibility of providing additional access to the Gorge by means other than the automobile. A recent economic study prepared for Travel Oregon revealed that bike-related tourism brings \$46 million to the region annually.

**WHEREAS**, 14 miles of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail has been built. The remaining 10 miles of the trail is in final design. Construction funding is needed to complete the project, which will connect the remaining segments of the Old Highway into a state trail.

**WHEREAS**, the reconnection of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail has broad support. Since 2009 the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail Project has received letters of support from the following organizations: Architectural Heritage Center, Bicycle Transportation Alliance, City of Astoria, City of Cascade Locks, City of Hood River, City of Mosier, City of The Dalles, City of Troutdale, Clackamas County, Columbia River Gorge Discovery Center, Columbia River Gorge Commission, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, Columbia River Gorge Visitors Association, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Confluence Project, Cycle Oregon, Cycle Wild, West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce, East County Transportation Coordinating Committee, The Dalles Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Multnomah Falls, Friends of the Gorge, Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway, Friends of Vista House, Governor's Office Economic Revitalization Committee, Gresham Chamber of Commerce, Hood River County, Hood River Valley Residents Committee, Metro, Multnomah County, Multnomah County Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee, Northwest Trails Alliance, Oregon Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Pedal Bike Tours, Port of Cascade Locks, Port of Hood River, Port of The Dalles, Sierra Club, Portland Wheelman Touring Club, Portland Woman's Forum, Travel Oregon, Travel Portland, and Wasco County.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED:**

1. The planning and environmental work needed to construct the last ten miles of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail is complete.
2. Constructing the final segments of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail is a project of statewide and national significance.
3. The State of Oregon, local governments, and private citizens have collaborated to leverage significant funding for improvements such as the recently completed John B. Yeon to Moffett Creek Trail Project. For the first time in 77 years, Oregonians now are able to ride their bicycles from Cascade Locks to Troutdale without having to go on the shoulder Interstate 84.
4. Completion of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail is a priority for the Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and Travel Oregon.
5. The Oregon Transportation Commission strongly supports federal funding to complete the project and will communicate this in writing to the Oregon Congressional Delegation and U.S. Department of Transportation.
6. The Oregon Transportation Commission directs the Oregon Department of Transportation to develop federal funding requests and identify any required matching funds to take advantage of any grant opportunities.
7. The Oregon Transportation Commission thanks the Historic Columbia River Advisory Committee for its continued leadership and dedication to completing construction of the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail.
8. This resolution shall be entered into the minutes and records of the Commission as Resolution No. [N/A], adopted on February 20, 2014.