



Molalla River Alliance

Newsletter 10

Molalla River named state scenic waterway

A dramatic stretch of the upper Molalla River has been designated by Oregon Gov. Kate Brown as an Oregon Scenic Waterway. The prestigious designation is the first to be conferred on an Oregon river in more than a quarter of a century. It caps more than a year of research, public outreach and planning by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in cooperation with the Molalla River Alliance, local property owners and representatives from sports and conservation organizations.

“From the very start, public support has been tremendous,” said Molalla River Alliance President John Atkins. In addition to the MRA, endorsements were submitted by American Whitewater, Molalla River Watch Watershed Council, and the Native Fish Society.

The Molalla River Scenic Waterway encompasses 13.2 miles of river—from the Glen Avon Bridge upstream to

the confluence of the Table Rock and Copper Creek forks.

All but about one mile of the waterway is already in public ownership. It is managed by the federal Bureau of Land Management and is known as the



The amazing basalt rosette on the Molalla.



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Save the date

Our next general membership meeting is **Friday, May 13, 2016**, at the Molalla Retreat, 9 a.m. to Noon. As usual, we have a packed agenda on tap and good stuff to eat and drink at the refreshments table.

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A productive, memorable year

By John Atkins
MRA President

Molalla Scenic Waterway Citizens' Advisory
Committee.



A year ago, I reported to you that the MRA was “rolling up its sleeves to help shape a recreation management plan for the upper Molalla River”—a necessary step in our effort to gain official Oregon

Scenic Waterway status for our treasured river.

And so we did. The outcome of our efforts over the past year, under the guidance of a very talented and professional staff from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, is reported joyfully in our lead-off article.

This is a notable achievement, in that no Oregon river has been so designated by a governor of Oregon since 1988. Only 21 other rivers in Oregon carry this distinction.

The Scenic Waterway designation is the outcome of a careful and exhaustive analysis by the state recreation and water resources staffs, an extensive public involvement and outreach effort, and the active participation of a citizens' advisory committee that helped develop the recreation management plan.

It was truly a labor of love for all who cherish this remarkable natural resource in order to ensure that its scenic splendor and outstanding recreation opportunities may be protected and enjoyed by all who come after us.

I want to express my appreciation and admiration to the individuals who contributed their time and talents to this successful effort as members of the

- Jerry Bailey, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde
- Connie Derry, Glen Avon Neighborhood Association
- Pete Giordano, Blue Sky Rafting
- Jack Hammond, Molalla River Alliance
- Bob Loucks, Molalla Retreat
- Scott Marlega, Weyerhaeuser Company
- Mike McCallister, Clackamas County Planning Director
- Jeffrey McCusker, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Bureau of Land Management
- Gary Potter, Canby Utility Board
- Mark Schmidt, Property and Local Business Owner
- Bill Taylor, Molalla River Watch (Watershed Council)
- Becky Wolf, Recreational User, Oregon Equestrian Trails
- Sam Wurdinger, Molalla Chapter, Northwest Steelheaders

For more information about Oregon's Scenic Waterways, click on scenic.waterways@oregon.gov.

The Scenic Waterways program is Oregon's version of the federal Wild and Scenic River program. The aims of both are to preserve the nation's outstanding rivers for future generations to enjoy, while respecting private property rights.

Our Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. is continuing its efforts to add the Molalla to the federal Wild and Scenic system. Let's hope the governor's action will add a little oomph to that worthy initiative.

— 

Molalla Scenic Waterway declared by Governor

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Molalla River Recreation Corridor.

For most of the past year, ORPD staff and a citizens' advisory committee have been working to develop a recreation management plan for the proposed Molalla Scenic Waterway. This was one of the requirements leading to a final recommendation to the governor.

The advisory committee included MRA representatives, local landowners, sports and conservation groups, and government agencies. The committee worked closely with the Bureau of Land Management to ensure that the management plan was compatible with the BLM's.

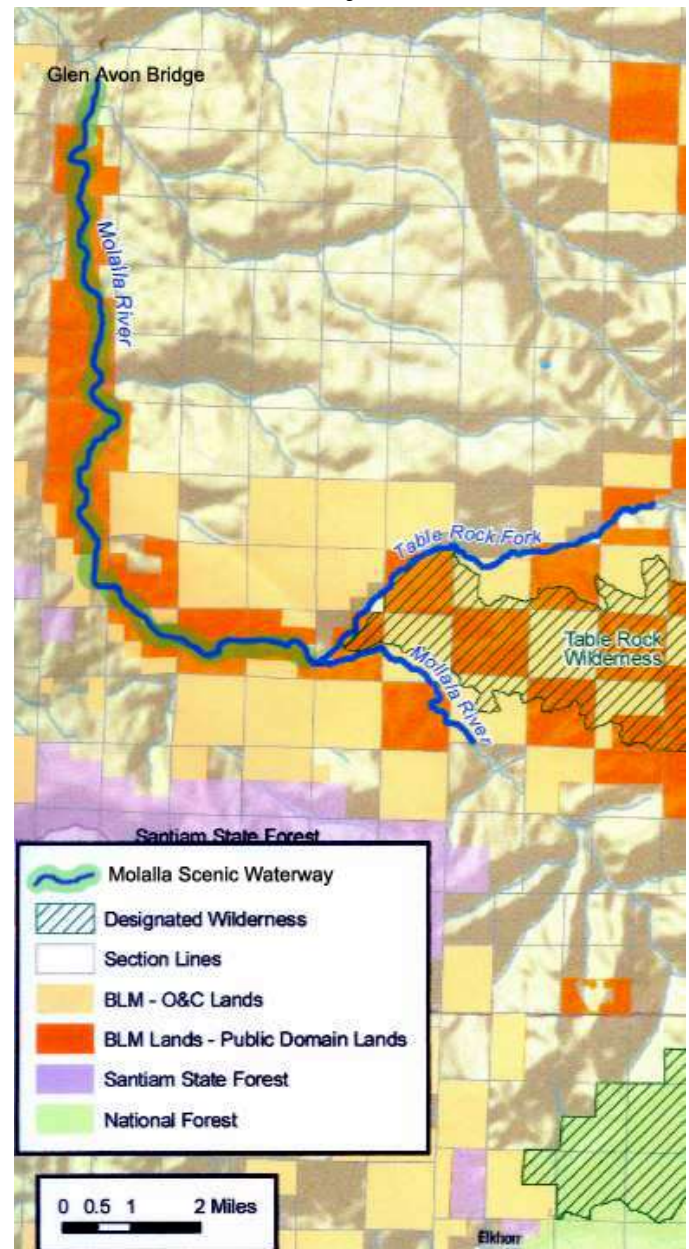
The State Scenic Waterways Program was established by public initiative in 1970. It is designed to protect the existing scenic, natural, and recreation values of designated waterways around the State, while respecting property ownership.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department was directed to periodically study new waterways for potential inclusion in the program. No new waterways have been designated since 1988.

In September 2013, then-Governor John Kitzhaber directed OPRD to analyze at least three waterways for potential designation every two years. An initial survey of all Oregon waterways by OPRD resulted in a list of approximately 80 river segments that had the potential to meet the state's waterway designation criteria.

After further research, outreach and involvement by a broad coalition of agencies and stakeholders, the upper Molalla River, together with a stretch of the Chetco River in southern Oregon, emerged as the top candidates for inclusion in the Oregon's Scenic

Waterways program, bringing the list of state Scenic Waterways to 22. Clackamas County has the distinction of having two other state scenic waterways: the Clackamas and Sandy rivers.



Now on Facebook . . .

Molalla River Corridor Happenings

Useful information about the recreation opportunities and events going on in the corridor. Check it out! Post info!

Fran Taylor named service award winner

Fran Taylor, a longtime Molalla resident, founding member of the MRA and secretary of the board of directors, has been named winner of the Ryan Morgan Service Award.

Fran is an inspirational leader who in 2008 first suggested the need for an organization that would help bring together outdoor and conservation-oriented individuals and organizations in support of goals everyone could get behind: maintaining clean and cold Molalla River water, protecting and restoring natural habitat, recovering wild salmon and steelhead runs, and promoting a wide variety of recreation opportunities for families and sports enthusiasts.



That proposed organization was chartered the same year as the Molalla River Alliance.

Fran and her husband, Bill (a previous Ryan Morgan Service Award recipient) also serve on the board of Molalla River Watch Watershed Council. They have contributed countless hours working to advance the MRA's goals.

Fran was presented with a commemorative plaque with the inscription: "Ryan Morgan Service Award. For exceptional and selfless work for the protection and enhancement of the Molalla River and its watershed."

The service award is given in memory of Ryan Morgan, a founding member of the Alliance who was a youth counselor and mentor, Molalla High School track coach, Molalla City Council member and an avid outdoorsman. Morgan lost his life in a kayaking accident on the Little White Salmon River in August of 2009.



Molalla Tribal History

David Lewis, then- tribal historian for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, is shown giving a presentation on the history of the Molalla Indians at a large community gathering at Molalla High School in October, 2014. The original Molalla people inhabited the eastern uplands of the Willamette Valley from the slopes of Mt. Hood all the way to Crater Lake. The cultural event was facilitated by the MRA.



Fisheries biologist Ted Labbe applies a low-voltage shock to a tiny tributary of Milk Creek, resulting in the netting of a resident cutthroat trout, stunned only temporarily and released.



Intrepid field researchers Christine Brandtner, Ted Labbe and John Atkins

Water Typing in Action

MRA volunteers John Atkins and Jack Hammond, together with Clackamas Community College fisheries student Christine Brandtner, accompanied fisheries biologist consultant Ted Labbe on a field trip to identify fish populations in tributaries of Milk Creek, which enters the Molalla River near Mulino. Even in the smallest rills, cutthroat trout were present. Information collected on the outing included mapping fish passage barriers. The project was commissioned by MRA affiliate Molalla River Watch Watershed Council.



Measuring and recording the gradient of a well-disguised culvert



Labbe examines three little cutthroats up close in the water viewer.

MRA launches river signage project

With a generous donation from the Molalla Running Club, the Molalla River Alliance is spearheading a multi-phase project to design and place interpretive signs at key locations on the Molalla River and highway approach routes.

Directional signs like the ones guiding motorists to the Oregon Gardens in Silverton are envisioned, together with placement of interpretive signs at spots along the river with information about the river, its habitat, inhabitants, history and points of interest.

Similar signage has been installed in Clackamas River parks. Numerous details are still to be worked out in consultation with county, state and federal agencies.

The first interpretive sign is being designed for a spot in Feyrer Park.

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