



Columbia INSIGHT Annual Report

Columbia Insight is working hard to build greater public awareness of the environmental challenges and rich opportunities for protecting the lands, air and water of the Pacific Northwest.

We strive to fulfill our own role as a critical news source to make that happen.

But as we look to the future, it's appropriate to take a look at what you, our readers and donors, have already done to help.

On behalf of the *Columbia Insight* board, thank you. We hope you will continue to be a part of this effort. It is not possible without you.



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We Celebrate Our Donors Who Support Independent Environmental Journalism. Thank You!

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*Between every two pine
trees is a doorway leading
to a new way of life.*

John Muir

Where We've Been

In August, husband Jurgen and I drove the dusty road that winds up Mt. Adams' slopes to Bird Creek Meadows. But at the spot where the road crosses Bird Creek, two sturdy, and locked, steel gates blocked the bridge.

The area along Bird Creek, which flows full even after this hot summer, used to be so thick with trees and bushes that I could never see much of the creek. This swath of the mountainside burned in the 2015 wildfire. Now, only a narrow line of grasses and late blooming flowers grow beside the creek.

The upside, if there is one, is that we can walk down to the creek and look upstream to see a lovely little waterfall that cascades just past the bridge and its gates. Refreshed, we walked back up to the road, where someone had tossed a crushed beer can. Someone else (or maybe the same person) had smashed a beer bottle.

Columbia Insight has published a number of stories about litter. They are always the stories that you, our readers, respond to, leaping to the defense of wild places,



commenting with dismay at the litter, and offering ideas for ways to help.

We published 93 articles in the last 12 months: 74 that we wrote and 19 that we picked up from media where we have a relationship. For example, *Columbia Insight* is a member of Associate Press Pacific Northwest. We can pick up stories from media members in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska. And they can pick up and run our articles.

This year we added an audio component to our articles via Ad Auris. People tell us they like to be able to drive, paint, and garden as they listen to a story.

This month we engaged a firm to redesign the *Columbia Insight* news site. We expect the new site look to come online in early October.

I hope you were able to attend some of our events. Last month board member Seth Bradley put on a musical evening for all our CI readers at the Volcanic Bottle Shop in Hood River. We hosted a table September 6 at White Salmon Farmers' Market. A year ago, we had a table at the Hood River Farmers' market. We'll be back there September 17.



We work to balance *Columbia Insight's* coverage of wildlife, energy, water, land use, climate, forestry, air quality...and litter.

Susan Hess
Publisher



A Storied Year

As I review the most popular stories of the past year, I'm struck by the fact that so many of our top stories explicitly deal with the Columbia River. These three stories, for example, are in our top five most-read stories of the year:

Why the entire world now depends on the Columbia River

Salmon are no longer kings of the Columbia. That has biologists worried

Columbia River 'at tipping point' warns longtime conservation leader

What does this say, exactly, about our output for the year? I guess it feels self-evident to say the Columbia River remains the focal point of all environmental concerns in the region (makes sense), but the importance of these stories to our readers reflects the concern people have for the health of the river and life in and around it. This awareness is important and gratifying to see supported by our metrics. And it offers a guidepost for moving

forward. We'll continue to report stories about the Columbia River that others seem to be missing.

With a robust subscriber base and more than 10,000 average monthly unique visitors, *Columbia Insight* reaches audiences via its website, social media channels and public events. However, those platforms reflect only a fragment of our reach. As a member of the AP StoryShare program, *CI* makes its content available freely to more than 50 publishers across the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Regional outlets such as the *Oregonian/OregonLive*, *East Oregonian*, *Investigate West*, KGW-TV and others regularly reprint *CI* stories. *CI* stories are occasionally reprinted by national and special-interest media.

Columbia Insight was honored by The Society of Professional Journalists as a second-place winner in its 2021 Northwest Excellence in Journalism Contest on environmental reporting for its series on corporate influence over natural resources.

Chuck Thompson
Editor



REVENUE GROWTH *Columbia Insight's* increased readership and broad reach has shown a marked increase in revenue.

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