

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Jill Arens, Columbia River Gorge Commission Executive Director
509-493-3323, ext. 224

Governor appoints Bonker to Columbia River Gorge Commission

Honorable Don Bonker appointed for a four-year term

Governor Christine Gregoire's newest Gorge Commission appointee is Don Bonker, former U. S. congressman and a leading authority on international trade and investment, with broad experience on foreign policy issues. He is an executive vice president at APCO Worldwide, a global public affairs firm.

Prior to joining APCO in 1989, Mr. Bonker served for 14 years in the United States House of Representatives from the State of Washington. He was a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, specializing in international trade, global environment and human rights issues. At various times, Mr. Bonker chaired important subcommittees, including the Subcommittee on International Economic Policy and Trade, Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, and the Africa Subcommittee. Rep. Bonker also served on the Merchant Marine & Fisheries Committee and is considered an authority on U. S. maritime policy.

Representing one of the most pristine areas of the country, Rep. Bonker led efforts to protect and preserve the state's natural resources which are now environmental landmarks, including establishment of the Grays Harbor national Wildlife Refuge and the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, adding Protection Island to the National Wildlife Refuge, preserving the Point of Arches in the Olympic National Park, and banning the export of Western Red Cedar. The "Don Bonker Cedar Grove Trail" was so named to honor his efforts to preserve the ancient cedar forest in Southwest Washington.

He replaces former Commission member Jane Jacobsen who served on the Commission from 2001 through 2008.

Gorge Commission Chair Joyce Reinig praised Congressman Bonker as she welcomed him to his four-year term. "Congressman Bonker brings a national and state perspective to the Gorge Commission. His vast experience will be an asset in dealing with policy and land management issues."

Jill Arens, the executive director of the Commission said Bonker's experience in high-level and complex policy making will enrich the Commission. "Congressman Bonker is at ease with complex and controversial issues, and knows the stakeholders in the Gorge."

Thirteen members comprise the Columbia River Gorge Commission. The six Gorge counties appoint one member each, the governors of Oregon and Washington each appoint three members. The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture appoints one non-voting member. More information on the Gorge Commission is available on the web at www.GorgeCommission.org.

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