

Mid Columbia Economic Development District Arts Cluster Submission

- **Key Cluster Participants:** ~20 participants, including Columbia Center for the Arts, White Salmon Arts Council, Maryhill Museum of Art, Golden Art Gallery, Collage of the Gorge, Columbia Gorge Gallery, The Dalles Art Center, Mt. Hood Artisans Market, Made in the Gorge Artists Coop, Columbia Center for the Arts, River House Gallery, Trout Lake Arts Council, Skamania Performing Art, White Salmon Glass Works and other museums, galleries, art studios, photographers, glass workers, potters, painters, sculptors, and artists.
- **Cluster Contact:** Judie Hanel, Columbia Center for the Arts Executive Director, 541.387.8877, judieh@gorge.net
- **Geographical Location:** Mid-Columbia Region—Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington and Sherman, Wasco, and Hood River counties in Oregon
- **Structure:** Monthly organizational meetings
- **Vision:** The Gorge is synonymous with art—with a strong base of local artists, studios, museums, and galleries who have effective, region-wide communication and support economic growth in the region. The local community is involved in art and sees art as relevant in their lives.
- **Background:** The cluster began meeting to create a workplan in spring 2005. The workplan contains short-term quick wins, including planning a Gorge-wide event and communication networks among artists throughout the region, and long-term goals, including branding the region as an arts destination.

Oregon's Overall Business Climate

Best Ranking: Recreation, Innovation Capacity, Quality Communities, Technical Training, International Trade, Entrepreneurial Trade, Business Costs.

Worst Ranking: Environmental Quality

Top Core OBP Initiative Priorities

Improve Public Finance and Services, Expand Oregon's Capacity for Economic Innovation, Achieve a Higher Return on Oregon's Investment in PreK-20 Education

Potential New/Suggested Initiatives: Water Policy, Telecommunications, Energy, Increase Funding for the Arts

Specific Cluster Priorities

1. Nurture existing artists, museums, galleries, and studios
 - a. Share information between local groups—including regional arts calendar and central database of Gorge art information and events
 - b. Create a listserv of local artists
 - c. Create Gorge-wide art map
 - d. Create Gorge-wide art events
2. Brand the Gorge as a unique place for art
3. Involve the Gorge community in arts
4. Help people realize how the arts helps economic development in a community
5. Increase funding for arts, especially for children