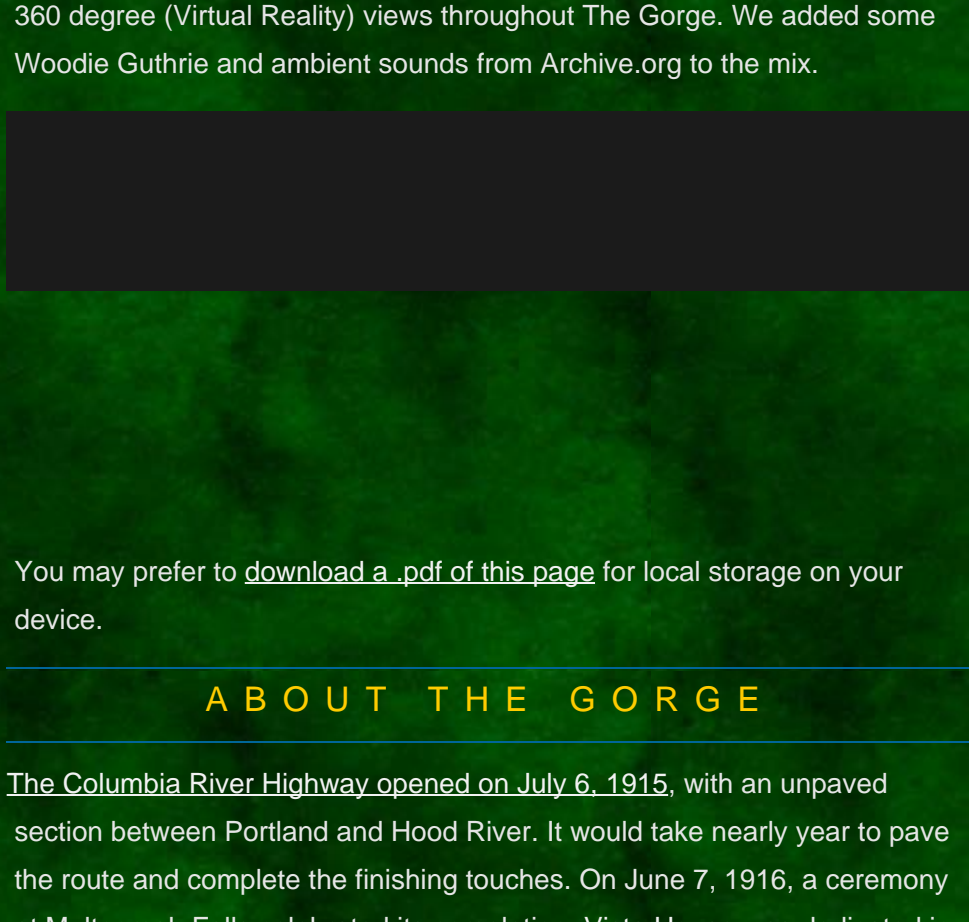
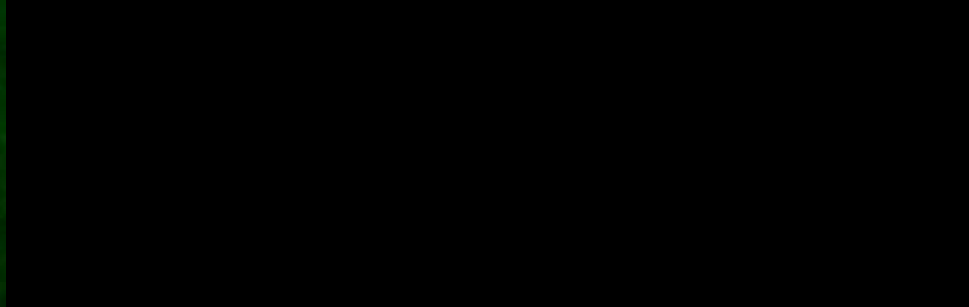


## WELCOME

**W**elcome virtual travelers! [The historic Columbia River Highway](#), the first scenic highway in the United States, celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2015.



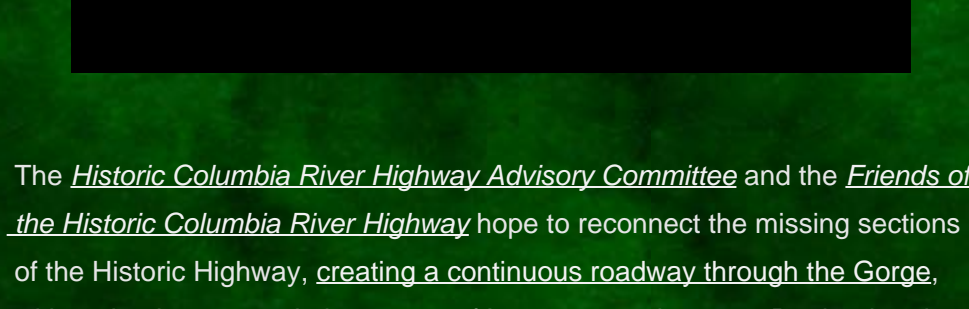
Take this journey with us. We've collected dozens of vintage audio and video clips as well as the latest Photospheres (similar to Streetview), that capture 360 degree (Virtual Reality) views throughout The Gorge. We added some Woodie Guthrie and ambient sounds from Archive.org to the mix.



You may prefer to [download a .pdf of this page](#) for local storage on your device.

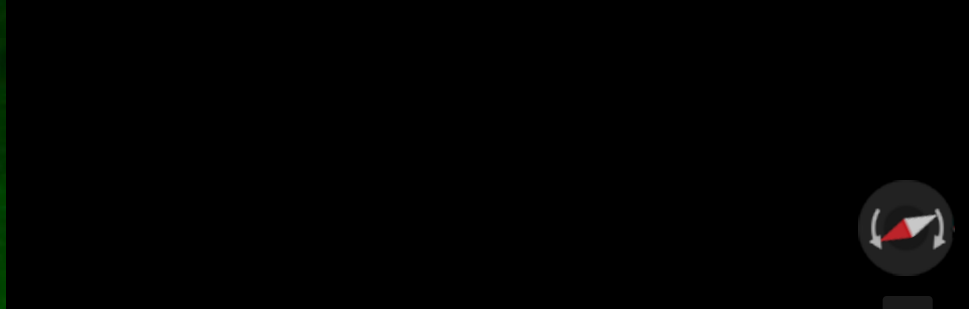
## ABOUT THE GORGE

The [Columbia River Highway](#) opened on July 6, 1915, with an unpaved section between Portland and Hood River. It would take nearly year to pave the route and complete the finishing touches. On June 7, 1916, a ceremony at Multnomah Falls celebrated its completion. [Vista House](#) was dedicated in 1918. From 1916 to 1920 highway construction proceeded in sections east from Hood River to The Dalles.



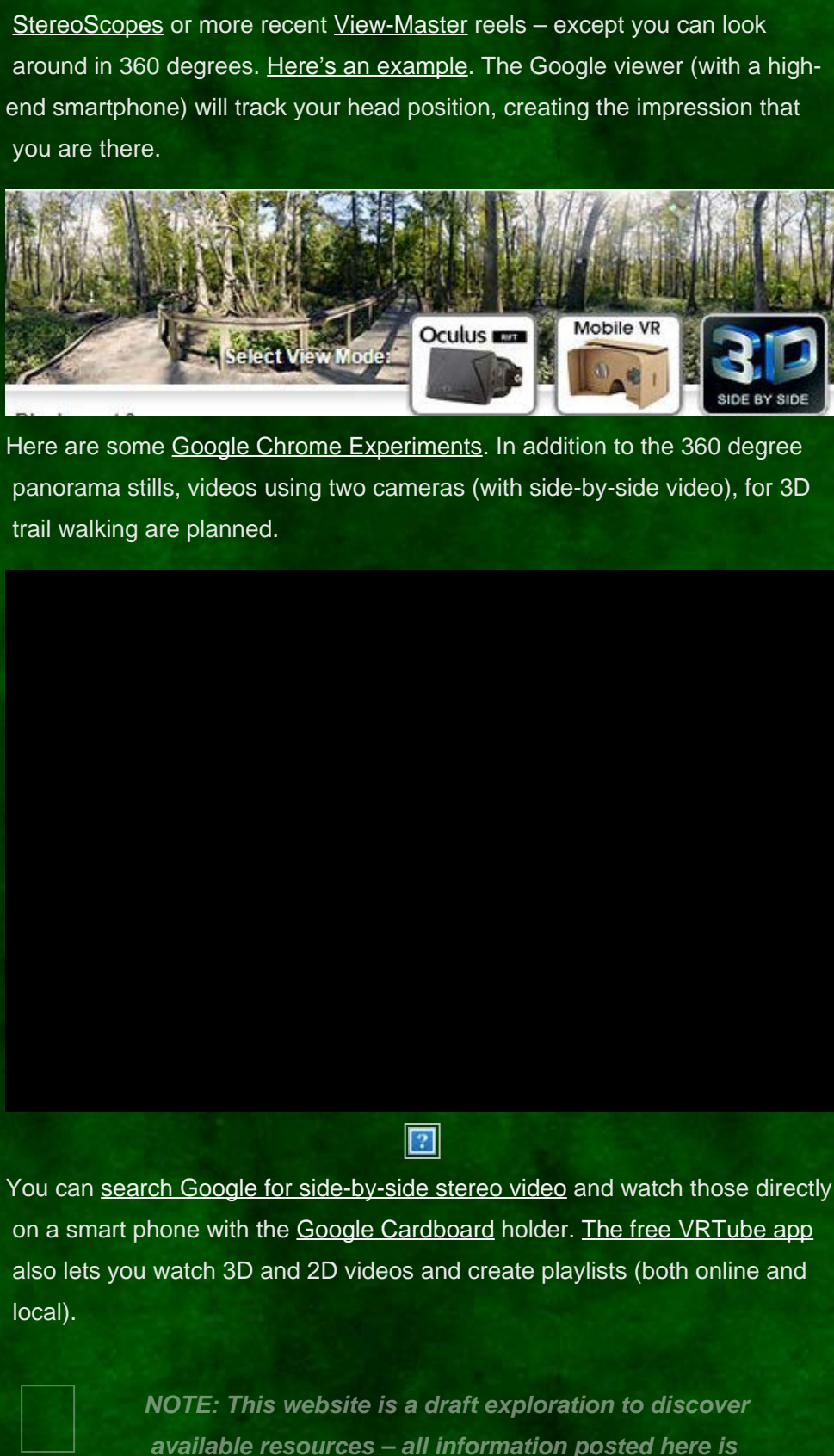
This historic road serpentine along the cliffs and waterfalls through the [Columbia River Gorge](#) in a spectacular 80 mile journey from Troutdale (near Portland) to The Dalles along the [Columbia River](#).

The highway's engineer, Sam Lancaster, did "not want to mar what God had put there," and worked diligently to showcase the many waterfalls and "beauty spots" on the highway. [The River They Saw](#) chronicles the early Gorge in photos.



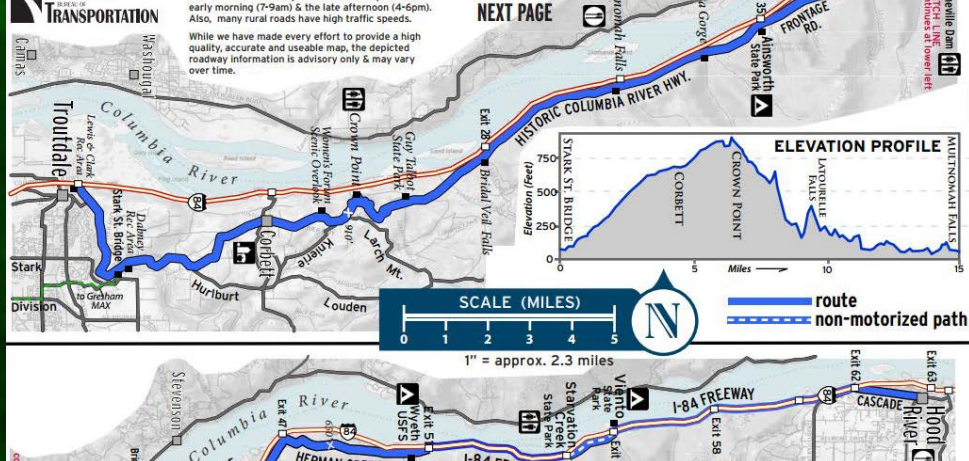
The [Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee](#) and the [Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway](#) hope to reconnect the missing sections of the Historic Highway, [creating a continuous roadway through the Gorge](#), without having to travel along parts of [Interstate 84](#), between Portland and The Dalles.

[Milepost 2016](#) identifies [areas that need to be finished](#) to allow total reconstruction of the Historic Highway, although some sections (the State Trail) will remain limited to bikers and hikers. Of the original 73 miles of historic highway, one can currently access about 61 miles either by car on the drivable portions or by foot or bike on the State Trail sections, with about 12 miles remaining unconnected.

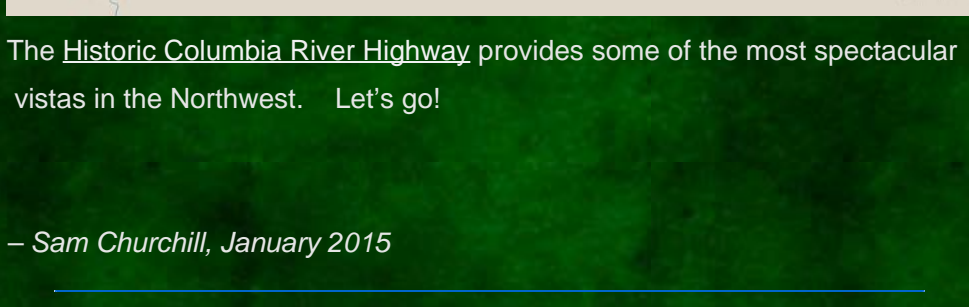


## IMMERSIVE SIGHTSEEING

This website provides panoramic images along the Gorge highway, historical anecdotes and current information. You can also view the 360 degree images using Virtual Reality headsets like [Google Cardboard](#), a \$20 viewer that, when coupled with a smartphone, provides an immersive experience.



The side-by-side images are similar in concept to popular 19th Century [StereoScopes](#) or more recent [View-Master](#) reels – except you can look around in 360 degrees. [Here's an example](#). The Google viewer (with a high-end smartphone) will track your head position, creating the impression that you are there.



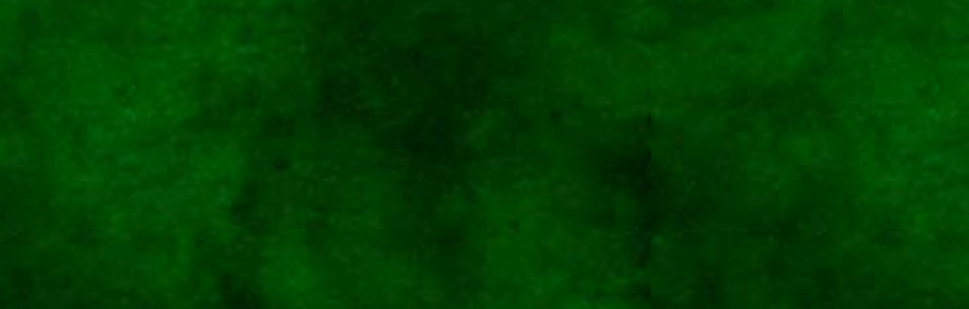
Here are some [Google Chrome Experiments](#). In addition to the 360 degree panorama stills, videos using two cameras (with side-by-side video), for 3D trail walking are planned.



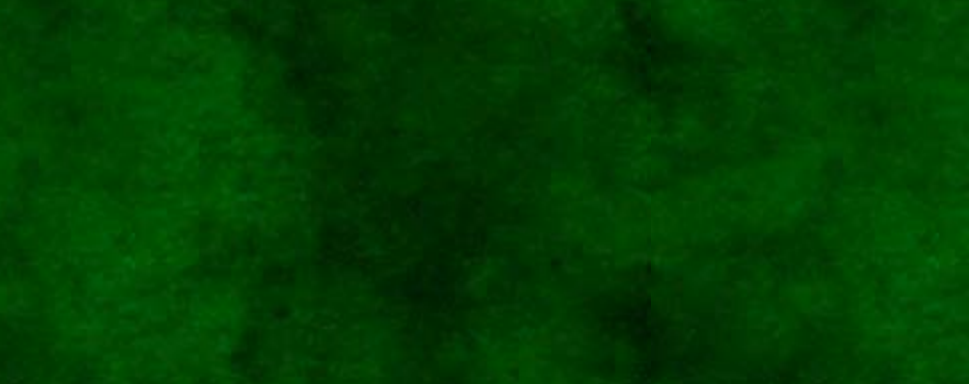
You can [search Google for side-by-side stereo video](#) and watch those directly on a smart phone with the [Google Cardboard](#) holder. [The free VRTube app](#) also lets you watch 3D and 2D videos and create playlists (both online and local).



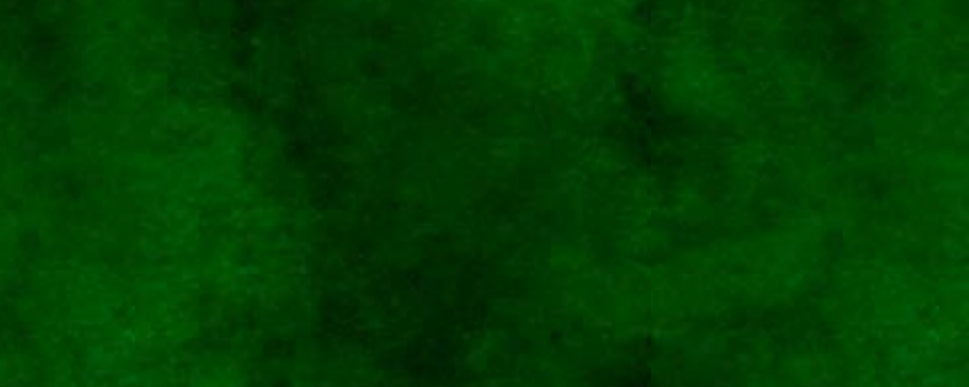
*NOTE: This website is a draft exploration to discover available resources – all information posted here is tentative, may be in error or out of order.*



I hope to add my own photosphere pictures of the Gorge this spring. Meanwhile [360 Labs](#) has a terrific selection of [360 stills and videos of the region](#).



A [Portland to Hood River Bike Map](#) shows some of that journey is restricted to hiking and biking only.



The [Historic Columbia River Highway](#) provides some of the most spectacular vistas in the Northwest. Let's go!

– Sam Churchill, January 2015

[NEXT: Overview](#)

