

United by a River, Divided over Management

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Photo courtesy of River Drifters

A land sale proposed by Weyerhaeuser exposes the divide between two Wild and Scenic River advocates, private landowners, and federal river managers on the White Salmon River.

By Dac Collins. Nov. 28, 2019. If you paddle boats in whitewater, you will inevitably experience moments when tunnel vision sets in and living in the present is unavoidable. Moments when your field of vision narrows and your grip on the paddle tightens as you commit to a drop borne of water, rock and gravity.

It's only after your boat crashes through the hole, seething with energy and spraying water in your eyes, that your surroundings re-appear. The trees, the shoreline and the sky come back into focus, and the ecstasy of living in the moment is replaced by the dull sense of self-awareness — the mind's usual flitting between past and future — that permeates our day-to-day.

It's no wonder, then, that so many of us return to the river again and again, paddling toward the brief