



Looking upstream at the confluence of Spring Creek and the White Salmon River. *Photo by Dac Collins*

One thing that the Forest Service, Thies and White can all agree on, however, is that an overall lack of funding lies at the root of these management concerns. White explains that since the CRGNSA Office is charged primarily with managing lands within the National Scenic Area, it is difficult for the agency to set aside enough funds for the Klickitat and White Salmon Rivers, which lie outside the boundaries of the Scenic Area.

“The problem is that because the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area is there, and because it’s big and it has a lot of needs, all the money goes there. And the Wild and Scenic Rivers just starve to death,” White says.

Arnold has noticed the same underlying problem during her tenure as executive director of Friends of the White Salmon:

“There’s many, many political currents that make these things go the way they go. And part of it is just the dearth of public funding.”

“Any Forest Service acquisition that can happen at this point is a good thing,” Arnold says. “A purchase would hopefully begin to get a ball rolling. And then there needs to be enough pressure coming from this direction saying, ‘This is important, this funding needs to happen, these purchases need to happen.’ And unfortunately, the way you do that is you show people how bad it’s getting, which is not too hard to do anymore.”