
CREATE LIFELONG MEMORIES AT THE YAKIMA CANYON INTERPRETIVE CENTER



Imagine the excitement of a butterfly landing gently on a child's nose, the thrill of catching a fish with a handmade pole, or the adventure of a first night in a tent under the stars. These are the moments that create lifelong stories and unforgettable experiences. At the Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center, we are dedicated to crafting these magical memories, and you can be part of this incredible journey.

Nestled among restored native grasslands, vibrant colonies of quaking aspens, majestic Ponderosa pines, and miles of breathtaking trails, the Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center is poised to become a premier destination for nature enthusiasts and lifelong learners alike.

Washington may be famous as the Evergreen State, but the Yakima River Canyon reveals a hidden gem—a stunning landscape within the shrub-steppe ecoregion where rainfall is scarce, and trees fight to survive. This unique habitat is a treasure trove of biodiversity, boasting the highest density of passerines in the state, roving bighorn sheep, majestic birds of prey, crucial salmonid nurseries, ancient basalt lava flows, and the rich cultural tapestry of Indigenous peoples. The Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center will bring the wonders of this extraordinary place to life, sharing its secrets with visitors from around the world.

As the gateway to the 26-mile-long Yakima River Canyon Scenic Byway, the Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center is your entry point to a world of natural beauty and adventure. This center is intrinsically linked to the canyon's endangered shrub-steppe habitat, diverse wildlife, stunning vistas, cultural significance, and endless recreational opportunities. With over 1.5 million visitors traveling through the canyon each year, the center will be a vibrant hub for events, educational programs, and nature-based learning. It is an unparalleled opportunity to engage people of all ages, attract tourists to Central Washington, promote environmental stewardship, and protect the endangered shrub-steppe biome.

Step back in time as you explore the geological history of the Yakima Canyon—a story that began 10 million years ago. Witness how the ridges and valleys formed, shaped by relentless pressures that wrinkled the land like a pushed tablecloth. Marvel at how the Yakima River carved its deep, meandering course through these rising ridges, creating the dramatic canyon we admire today. Discover the shrub-steppe habitat that developed on these hillsides, a rich

ecosystem supporting a dazzling array of plant and animal life, all thriving in this unique combination of acidic soils and low rainfall.

The future site of the Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center lies on the ancestral lands of the fourteen Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, whose people once roamed over 12 million acres of Central Washington. We honor these native peoples, who are deeply connected to this land through their history, legends, and culture, and we acknowledge their descendants who continue to live here today. We express our profound gratitude to the caretakers of this land, who have preserved its beauty and heritage since time immemorial.



The Yakima River Canyon is a treasure waiting to be discovered, and you can leave a legacy by supporting the Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center. KEEN is now seeking visionary partners and legacy donors to help fund the construction and establish a permanent endowment. Join us in creating a place where lifelong memories are made, where the natural wonders of the Yakima Canyon are celebrated and preserved for future generations.

To learn more about the project and naming opportunities, please contact Jill Scheffer, our Board President, at keen@keenetwork.org or 509-551-8807. Your support can make this dream a reality, ensuring that the Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center becomes a beacon of education, conservation, and unforgettable experiences.