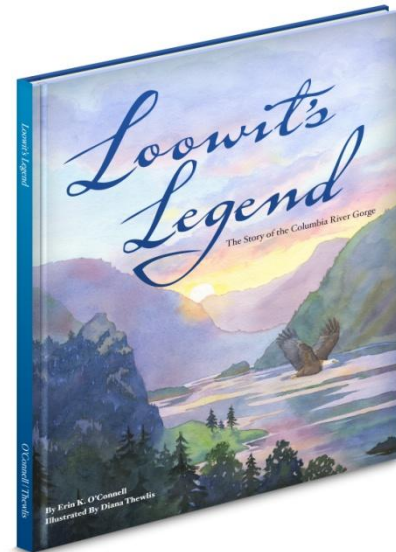


## New Children's Picture Book Tells Legend of the Columbia Gorge

Parallel45 Announces the January 2012 Release of  
*Loowit's Legend: The Story of the Columbia River Gorge*

Hood River, OR – Parallel45 Publishing announces the the region's first children's picture book, *Loowit's Legend: The Story of the Columbia River Gorge*, written by Erin K. O'Connell (Hood River, OR) and illustrated by Diana Thewlis (Vancouver, WA).

*Loowit's Legend* recounts a historic, local legend about the origin of Mt. Hood, Mt. Adams, and Mt. Saint Helens. This book showcases stunning, watercolor illustrations alongside the adapted tale of two brothers, Pahtoe and Wy'East, who compete for the love of a beautiful maiden named Loowit. In doing so, they defy the Great Spirit's wishes and set the stage for the creation of the Cascades.



Intended to entertain and educate children, *Loowit's Legend* is a folk tale that includes valuable life lessons. The book includes an educational inset that acknowledges the region's first inhabitants and their irreplaceable artwork left behind as etchings and paintings on the cliffs of the Columbia River Gorge. Combined with a learning component on the web ([www.LoowitsLegend.com](http://www.LoowitsLegend.com)), it teaches children about historic petroglyphs and pictographs and the importance of preserving these images as part of the rich cultural heritage of the region.

To emphasize the idea of preservation, a portion of proceeds from the sale of every book will be donated to the Columbia Land Trust to help conserve and care for vital lands, waters, and wildlife of the Columbia River region.

"The story has been passed along by word-of-mouth for years, so we consider it an honor to bring this unique local legend to children to enjoy as a picture book," says author, Erin O'Connell. "We're conscientious that the story we tell today will be the story that's remembered tomorrow in the minds of our children."

The author took several years researching the history of the Columbia River Gorge and worked to secure the nod of authenticity from local Native American groups, as well as partnerships with other community groups in the region.

"As a whole, we feel this is more than a story," says O'Connell. "From the start of the project, we

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wanted to ensure that we found a way to make a difference to our region. We're particularly excited about working with the Columbia Land Trust to help preserve a little bit more of it for future generations."

*Loowit's Legend* will be available for sale online and in area retail and souvenir stores beginning in January 2012.

## **About the Author**

Author Erin O'Connell is a writer, in addition to an online advertising and marketing professional. This is her first work for children. She resides in Hood River, where she is currently at work on several other literary projects.

## **About the Illustrator**

Illustrator Diana Thewlis holds degrees in Commercial Art and Illustration. With a wide variety of illustration experience, her current emphasis is on illustrating for children. She began teaching at the Academy of Art University in 1992.

## **About Parallel45**

Parallel45 is a Pacific Northwest publishing company specializing in the creation and marketing of children's picture books with unique, regional appeal. Their products strive to embody the spirit of the Pacific Northwest and capture the inherent beauty and uniqueness of the region. In the first year of the company, the primary focus will be the production of a children's book titled: *Loowit's Legend, the Story of the Columbia River Gorge*. [www.parallel45publishing.com](http://www.parallel45publishing.com)

## **About Columbia Land Trust**

The Columbia Land Trust is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to conserving signature landscapes and vital habitat together with the landowners and communities of the Columbia River region. The Land Trust conserves lands in both Oregon and Washington, from the east side of the Cascades to the Pacific Ocean. [www.columbialandtrust.org](http://www.columbialandtrust.org)

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