

**Columbia River Gorge Commission  
Vital Signs Indicators Project  
Community Advisory Team Charter**

**PURPOSE**

The Vital Signs Community Advisory Team (the Community Advisory Team) is created to assist the Columbia River Gorge Commission (the Commission) in selecting a set of objective measures that will be used to assess how well the Columbia River Gorge Management Plan is protecting or enhancing the scenic, natural, cultural, economic and recreational resources (SNECRs) of the gorge as mandated by the NSA Act.

The Commission will utilize these measures for two purposes. First, the measures will be used to periodically assess the condition of the Gorge for the benefit of policymakers and the general public. Second, they will serve as the high level measures that the Commission will use to assess its performance in achieving the goals and objectives of its management plan.

Three overarching beliefs will underpin the Community Advisory Team's work:

1. A robust set of measures that are grounded in science will assist the Commission in devising better long-term strategies for achieving the results described in the Act.
2. Measures must be developed in a holistic and comprehensive fashion in order to encompass the many interacting forces affecting the SNECRs.
3. Regular dialogue with community representatives is critical in order to broaden understanding and support for the Vital Signs project.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Community Advisory Committee will have three primary responsibilities:

1. Review and develop a working understanding of the measures as proposed by the Technical Advisory Team.
2. Provide feedback to the Technical Advisory Team.
3. Provide advice to the Commission regarding the Community Advisory Team's understanding and support for the proposed measures.
4. Share knowledge and understanding of the measures and Vital Signs project with other community interests.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Members of the Community Advisory Team's will be chosen based on the following criteria:

1. recognized community leadership, and active in one or more of the SNECRs;
2. open-minded;
3. collaborative;
4. understands the issues at play in the Gorge (and is willing to obtain a basic understanding of the NSA Act); and
5. ability to meet time commitment requirements.

The Community Advisory Team will consist of no less than 12 members. Members shall represent both communities within the Gorge and communities of interest outside the Gorge.

All members, including the chair, will be chosen jointly by the Commission executive director and the chair of the Assessment Committee.

### ORGANIZATION

The chair of the Community Advisory Team will report to the Gorge Commission's Assessment Committee. Members of the Community Advisory Team will serve at the discretion of the Community Advisory Team chair.

The Community Advisory Team may hold community meetings to discuss the measures proposed by the Technical Advisory Team. The Community Advisory Team, through its chair, may propose new measures to the Technical Advisory Team for consideration.

The Community Advisory Team will operate on an informal basis working towards consensus. The chair will act as spokesperson. Minority reports to the Assessment Committee may be developed when consensus is impossible.

The Gorge Commission and the Forest Service will provide staff support for the Community Advisory Team when necessary.

Members of the Community Advisory Team will serve without compensation. Where appropriate, members may be reimbursed for reasonable meal and other travel-related expenses.

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Community Advisory Team and any subcommittees will operate in a transparent manner with all meetings open to the public. Members will be chosen to represent the local, regional and national Gorge community. The chair and Community Advisory Team members shall meet with members of the Commission's Technical Advisory Team to discuss measurement issues related to community interests. The chairs of the Technical Advisory Team and the Community Advisory Team shall agree upon an appropriate protocol for exchanging information.

### REPORTING

Recommendations and a report made by the Community Advisory Team will be presented to the Commission.

The Community Advisory Committee will terminate six (6) months from the date of this charter unless renewed by the Commission.