

**Urban Area Boundary Revision Policy**  
**Workshop Summary**  
**November 19, 2018**

The Gorge Commission staff held its third urban area policy workshop on November 19, 2018. Eleven people attended.

Michael Lang gave a presentation on a conservation perspective of urban area boundary revision policy. Michael reviewed the National Scenic Area Act authorities applicable to urban area boundary revisions and discussed that the Act requires a regional approach. He used The Dalles and Dallesport to illustrate the regional approach to urban area boundary revision analyses. For Plan Review, Michael said there is a need to review the policies in the Management Plan and that the substantive policies should be in the Management Plan and only procedural requirements in the Commission's rules.

Michael listed a few concerns: development agreements authorized in state law in Oregon, but not in the NSA, so Friends wonders if there is authority for development agreements, and authority to condition an approval on restricting development once land is moved in the urban area (SEE OTHERS ON SLIDES).

Other concerns include how to apply resource guidelines and land use policies to applications for revisions, when the guidelines were written to apply to applications for physical development; applying standards uniformly, and the scope of regional analysis.

Jeff presented the second draft policy. The draft continues to recommend three types of revisions—land swaps, “de minimis” revisions, and “full” revisions that were in the first draft. Jeff noted that the Forest Service has not reviewed the draft language relating to the SMAs and has not committed to using the approach in the draft policy for revisions involving the SMAs.

Michael Lang stated that Friends of the Columbia Gorge does not support the three-tiered structure in the draft policy, and specifically noted that the Act requires the 4(f) criteria must be met whether there is a revision of one acre or many acres.

Scott Edelman from DLCDC noted that the policy needs mechanisms for making the regional approach work; for example, Dallesport would need to be zoned for and has policies relating to the types of land and uses that The Dalles needs, and Klickitat County must approve the needed uses. Amanda Smeller agreed to collect and provide copies of MOUs between Klickitat County and The Dalles regarding The Dalles' airport in Dallesport.

Comments on specific draft text included:

- For revisions in an SMA, there should be a net benefit to resources in the SMA.
- References to using land revised into an urban area for the same type of use for a period of 30 years should be changed to perpetuity; there was also a suggestion that a new application to the Gorge Commission should be required to change the type of use of land revised into an urban area; there was also a suggestion that the type of use should not be

restricted, but rather the Gorge Commission could do a joint review with the city to change the type of use.

- The policy needs to address non-conforming uses.
- The title “land trades” needs to be changed.
- The requirement that 33% of the circumference of land to be revised must be on the boundary of the urban area reduces options for connecting urban areas to the exterior of the NSA boundary.
- The current statement that land trades meet the demonstrable need standard in section 4(f) of the Act is not consistent with making findings on an individual basis; “demonstrable need” needs a definition.
- The Commission needs to map lands not topographically visible from key viewing areas and allow expansions only into those areas.
- The restrictions on use of land revised into or out of an urban area may not allow parking for access to Forest Service land and other recreational areas.
- References to farmland should distinguish between “prime” or “high-value” farmland and non-prime or high-value farmland.
- References to merchantable timberland should be changed to “marketable” and should include evaluation of soil types.

Next Workshop dates include:

**Dec. 17** - cancelled

**2019 Workshops** – TBD

REMINDER: All of the Commission and Staff Workshop Agendas, Staff Reports, and Workshop Summaries are on the Gorge Commission’s Gorge2020 webpage at <http://www.gorgecommission.org/management-plan/gorge2020/> (click on “Focus Topics and Technical Teams” tab).