

Attachment C: Gorge 2020 Phase I Scoping January – March 2017
Summary of Comments from Local Government and Tribes

The Commission staff participated in 18 meetings with local governments that included 6 County Commissions, 10 City Councils, and 2 County Planning Commissions to discuss the Gorge2020 Management Plan Review and Update, conduct Question and Answer opportunities, and seek comments on issues or improvements to the Plan from November 2016 through April 2017. In addition, the Commission staff met with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, and will be meeting with the other three Treaty Tribes in May and June 2017. The Commission also received written comments from the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde. Most of the meetings were “listening session” for the councils and commissions to hear about the Commission’s “Gorge2020 Management Plan Process”. There were a few questions with robust discussions following the staff presentations. Specific comments are summarized below and sorted under the same topic categories as for the agency and public comments.

County Commissions:

Hood River County Commission
Klickitat County Commission
Clark County Board
Multnomah County Board
Wasco County Board
Skamania County Commission

City Councils:

The Dalles City Council
Bingen City Council
White Salmon City Council
North Bonneville City Council
Cascade Locks City Council
Hood River City Council
Mosier City Council
Stevenson City Council
Washougal City Council
Troutdale City Council (scheduled for 4/11/17)

Planning Commissions:

Hood River Planning Commission
The Dalles Planning Commission

Treaty Tribes:

Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs

Non-Treaty Tribes:

The Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde

The common theme that emerged and was discussed at each local government meeting was that the Commission was urged to clearly address urban area boundary changes and to define “minor” changes as part of the Gorge 2020 process.

Below is a general summary of comments expressed at the meetings. The order of the items does not imply issue priority or the frequency with which comments were repeated.

COMMENTS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CRGC’s “GORGE 2020” PROCESS

Plan Review Process

- Engage with counties, cities and tribes throughout the plan review process
- Rethink timeline: Allow more time for public to be engaged and informed, and more opportunities for public comment along the way in different phases
- Reach out to more diverse communities in the National Scenic Area, especially Spanish-speakers
- The Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde requests Government to Government consultation on the Gorge 2020 Management Plan Review and Update Process and systematic notification of activities potentially affecting resources within their ceded lands along the Columbia River in the NSA.
- Need to better identify what is working and what is not working in the National Scenic Area through a set of indicators that can be tracked and measured
- Meetings with ports should be scheduled

Economics

- Identify a clear process to change urban area boundaries
- Address housing affordability by expanding urban areas
- Coordinate economic vitality/ strategic plans with the two states for Gorge 2020

Natural Resources

- Need to consider natural resources as “cultural resources”
- Need to protect salmon habitat and “cold water refugia” for spawning and rearing
- Control/reduce/eliminate pesticide use in vineyards in order to protect first food plants
- Eliminate dredge mining that destroys fish habitat
- Control air quality better, coal dust from train traffic through NSA

Cultural Resources

- Include provisions to protect “Tribal Cultural Landscapes”
- Establish a Cultural Advisory Committee to monitor cultural resource protection

- Review of Management Plan by Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and other Tribal authorities

Treaty Rights/Concerns

- Ensure protection of treaty rights
- Include more protection of first foods and medicinal plants
- Address conflicts between recreational users, such as windsurfers and kite-boarders, at in lieu sites when the tribal members are fishing
- Eliminate fossil fuel transport through the Gorge

Scenic Resources

- Continue stringent management of scenic resources

Recreation

- Improve river access but avoid adverse impacts to sensitive resources and treaty rights
- Eliminate congestion, increase public safety and distribute tourists more throughout the Gorge
- Revisit the “recreation intensity classes” to assure that sites are not overused

Development

- Address new technologies in the Plan such as solar roof panels
- Allow PUD projects to be sited outside the urban areas in order to save space for residential development within the urban area
- Allow fire stations to be sited outside the urban areas

Wildfire/Climate Change

- Address and plan for climate change

Transportation/Safety

- Parking areas and access along the HCRH and Highway 14 are inadequate. Pedestrians often cause a safety hazard for motorists
- Transportation via river, rail, air, and highway are vital and should be supported and allowed to expand to meet growing needs
- Designate Highway 14 as a “Scenic Byway” to better control truck traffic
- Continue supporting the bus that transports tourists to the Gorge without their cars

COMMENTS THAT RELATE TO ISSUES OR ACTIONS BEYOND THE COMMISSION'S AUTHORITY OR THAT ARE TOO GENERAL TO BE ADDRESSED.

- Ensure affordable housing for all residents
- Support tribal housing needs