



**TO:** Columbia River Gorge Commission

**FROM:** Krystyna U. Wolniakowski, Executive Director

**DATE:** October 10, 2017

**SUBJECT: ACTION ITEM:** Proposed Modification to the “Gorge 2020” Roadmap/Timeline

**Background:** On October 11, 2016, the Gorge Commission adopted a roadmap/timeline for the “Gorge 2020” Management Plan Review and Update process. The roadmap/timeline outlined five different phases that were timed over 3 years, created to the best of our ability as we looked forward and backward, and incorporated staff capacity as well as engagement of the tribes, counties, public, agencies and the Commission.

- Phase 1 was “getting started” that went through November 2016 (completed November 2016),
- Phase 2 was “public scoping and resource inventories” through June 2017 (completed in July 2017)
- Phase 3 was “revising goals and objectives” through mid-2018,
- Phase 4 was “revising implementation measures” through Spring 2019, and
- Phase 5 was final plan adoption by summer 2019 and concurrence by winter 2020.

As we have progressed through the first 10 months of the “Gorge 2020” process, analyzed the input we have received so far, and examined our staff capacity given that we did not get the additional 1 FTE we had planned for with the new 2017-2019 budget, we have had to re-evaluate our timeline more realistically and adjust the roadmap accordingly.

**Proposed Modifications:** Phase 1 and Phase 2, which were to be completed by June 2017, were completed by July 2017. We had a one month delay due to the Union Pacific Railroad appeal hearing at the June 13, 2017 Commission meeting. In evaluating how best to move forward from here into the next phases, we worked closely with the U.S. Forest Service to assure we were collaborating on the timeline and aware of how each of us would contribute to the “Gorge 2020” process. We decided we would re-name the phases to better reflect the Commission and U.S. Forest Service’s workplan. We wanted to work out the process so that we could still keep to the deadline of completing the plan by the end of 2019, but recognized that the Commission and the U.S. Forest Service might have different timelines for our respective deliverables throughout the next two years so that any revisions in the GMA and the SMA may not always coincide. The adjusted roadmap/timeline attached shows a chevron where each phase transitions into the next as follows:

- Phase 3 is now “strategic engagement” through fall 2018 to highlight the work the Commission does in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, the six counties, the four Treaty Tribes, agencies, and the public. Specific topic “committees” will be formed to help advise the Commission staff as we tackle each of the focus topics and prepare recommendations
- Phase 4 is “draft the revisions” to be completed by spring 2019
- Phase 5 is “draft the revised plan” to be completed by summer 2019
- Phase 6 is “adopt the final plan” to be completed by fall 2019
- Phase 7 is “post-adoption actions” to be completed by spring 2020

Each of these phases will include public meetings, quarterly Commission workshops, tribal consultation, and engagement with the counties and experts in order to provide comments/feedback to the staff. We plan to have updates on “Gorge 2020” for the Commission at each meeting, but we need time to do the work between meetings and will share deliverables at the quarterly Commission workshops.

**Staff Recommendation:** The revised roadmap/timeline better describes the strategic engagement that the Gorge Commission will have with the U.S. Forest Service, the six counties of the National Scenic Area, the four Treaty Tribes, agencies and the public, with a clear sequence of how we will move forward. Our timeline has only shifted about 6 months at the end of “Gorge 2020” into winter 2020 to allow for concurrence, county ordinance adoption, and possible judicial review. Staff is requesting that the Commission approve of this 7-phase approach and timeline.

**\*\*Footnote\*\*:** This 7-phase plan was prepared before the Eagle Creek fire burned over 48,000 acres in and around the National Scenic Area. The U.S. Forest Service and their firefighters, sheriffs’ department and other agencies have coordinated incident response to protect lives, property, and sensitive resources since the fire began on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017. At this time, we do not yet know the extent of the impact to the resources. We are coordinating with the USFS CRGNSA and BAER team and the affected counties to assess the extent of impacts from the fire and from emergency response actions. In Part II Chapter 7 page 26, the Management Plan outlines “**Emergency /Disaster Response Actions**”. When the fire is contained and it is safe to do so, the Commission will work with all agencies and parties to implement #2 below, the post-fire mitigation and restoration planning process. The specific wording in in the Management Plan follows below. We do not know how our response to this Eagle Creek fire disaster will affect the roadmap/timeline we outlined above:

1. Notification of emergency/disaster response actions is required in order to:
  - A. Provide responding parties early access to inventory information on sensitive resources that may be affected by emergency response actions;
  - B. Prevent or minimize resource impacts from such actions, reducing the need for post-emergency mitigation/restoration;
  - C. Achieve the above purposes while allowing actions necessary to protect life, property, public services, and the environment during an emergency or disaster.
2. Post-emergency/disaster response development review is required in order to evaluate whether such response actions have impacted scenic, natural, cultural or recreation resources. Adverse impacts of the response actions shall be mitigated to the greatest extent practicable. The review process shall be expedited to facilitate timely mitigation/restoration efforts, where needed. The party(ies) submitting the post-emergency/disaster response application shall be responsible for implementing any required mitigation/restoration, unless: (1) other responding parties agree to

assume such responsibility, upon agreement of the parties; or (2) the landowner denies access for mitigation/restoration activities, in which cast the landowner assumes responsibility.