



April 27, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Columbia River Gorge Commission
c/o connie.acker@gorgecommission.org

Re: Comments on Land Use Chapter Edits

Dear Chair Liberty and Commissioners:

Northwest Cider Association (“NCWA”) is a non-profit trade association established by nearly 100 cidemakers in the Pacific Northwest. Together, we create a larger, stronger regional cider industry. Collectively, we raise awareness of the category itself. We support cideries on farms as well as in urban areas. Cider, like wine, is inherently an agricultural product that starts with apples that are juiced and fermented like wine, not brewed like beer. The Columbia gorge has an especially high number of cideries in the Scenic Area because apples and pears grow so well there. There are approximately 15 cideries in the Columbia gorge and many apple orchards. In fact, cideries are licensed as wineries in the state of Oregon and Washington.

NCWA encourages the Columbia River Gorge Commission (“Commission”) to reconsider its earlier discussion about allowing cideries on agricultural land within the National Scenic Area. Cider operations, including production and tasting rooms, are similar in nature to wineries on agricultural land, which are current authorized on agricultural land. NWCA encourages the Commission to allow cideries (production and tasting rooms) on agricultural land when the cider operation is in conjunction with orchard operations.

The cider industry has more than a \$700 million economic impact to the Northwest economy. We support about 3,000 jobs by making more than 6 million gallons of hard cider. Additionally, the number of cider related tourists locally is approximately 700,000 people every year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Emily Ritchie
Executive Director
Northwest Cider Association