

Dear Director Wolniakowski & Gorge Commissioners,

I'm writing to provide comments regarding enforcement and review of the land use section of the Management Plan for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

The Columbia River Gorge is a national treasure and must be protected for future generations to experience. I want to thank the Commission for reviewing and revising the Management Plan to better fulfill the purposes of the National Scenic Area Act and improve protection of its outstanding resources. The plan was originally adopted in 1991 and many of its policies are out of date and do not represent the best available science. In addition, the plan does not address the growing threats of climate change on the Gorge and its communities.

Enforcement

For the Management Plan to have any value, it must be enforced. Congress gave the Gorge Commission mandatory enforcement authority over violations of Gorge protection laws, yet the Commission is not currently enforcing the law. As a result, illegal mines tear up the landscape, railroads scoff at Gorge protection laws, and landowners flout Gorge protection rules. The Commission's rules at 350-30 require the Executive Director to enforce on all violations. Not only has the Commission ignored its enforcement rules, it refuses to even acknowledge these rules in public meetings.

Before the Commission revises anything in the Management Plan it must start enforcing laws that protect the Columbia River Gorge and address any impediments to performing this mandatory duty. Please direct your staff to implement Commission Rule 350-30 (Enforcement).

Land Use Issues

Mining:

The Commission should prohibit new mining and quarry operations and impose strict limits on the expansion of existing quarries. In addition, clarify the definition for mining (exploration, development, and production of mineral resources) to explicitly include hauling of mining material.

Commercial Uses:

Do not expand commercial uses in rural areas that are not zoned commercial or rural center. Examples include travelers' accommodations such as short-term rentals, processing plants, businesses that host large events or cater to large crowds. Short-term rentals deplete the availability of existing long term housing and also increase the costs of existing housing for families. Agricultural processing facilities, like cideries, are industrial uses and that are prohibited by the National Scenic Area Act. Expansion of commercial events harms scenic and natural resources, harms other rural residents, and creates more enforcement problems.

Additional Dwelling Units (ADU)

While ADUs are suitable for urban areas and provide affordable housing, they have no place within rural lands in the National Scenic Area. ADUs would double the density on rural lands, harm scenic and natural resources, and change the rural character of the Columbia Gorge. Please do not allow ADUs.

Cluster Developments

Prohibit cluster developments with bonus lots and dwellings. The current guidelines increase residential

development densities with little to no benefit to the resources of the Gorge. Higher densities belong in urban areas.

Geohazards

The Columbia River Gorge is very geologically active. Inventory, protect, and avoid siting development and mining in geohazard areas. Having residential zones at the bottom of active landslide areas, such as Dodson Warrendale, are irresponsible.

Cumulative Effects

Revise the glossary definition of “cumulative effects” to include consideration of reasonably foreseeable actions and effects.

Railroad Expansion

Require scenic area-wide master plans for rail expansion. Clarify that new rail development, including new tracks, are not allowed in open space and public recreation zones. Require Gorge-wide cumulative effects analysis for rail expansion projects. Require river access improvements to be provided with rail expansion projects.

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Land Use Designations

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Thank you in advance for starting to fulfill your mandatory enforcement role and making needed updates to the Management Plan.

Sincerely,
April Atwood
6306 SE 21st Ave
Portland, OR 97202

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M Jones

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Portland, OR 97211

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4050 SW Bancroft St
Portland, OR 97221

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2075 Sunray Cir
West Linn, OR 97068

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Lyndee Cunningham
1529 Division St
Camas, WA 98607

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12520 SW Gem Ln
Beaverton, OR 97005

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Thank you in advance for starting to fulfill your mandatory enforcement role and making needed updates to the Management Plan.

Sincerely,

Rachael Pappano

330 River Rd

Mattawamkeag, ME 04459

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Grant Fujii
5906 N Depauw St
Portland, OR 97203

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Jane Heisler

2731 SE Harrison St

Portland, OR 97214

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Paul Caggiano
8578 N Oswego Ave
Portland, OR 97203

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Dear Gorge Commissioners,

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The Gorge is a regional gem and national treasure, which must be protected for future generations.

Thank you,
Jean Avery

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13314 SE 19th St
Vancouver, WA 98683

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Sincerely,
Richard Johnson
6 Overlake Ct
Bellingham, WA 98229

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Sincerely,
casey cunningham
7037 NE 8th Ave
Portland, OR 97211

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Luan Pinson
826 SE Morgan Rd
Vancouver, WA 98664

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9030 W Sahara Ave
Las Vegas, NV 89117

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2928 NE 19th Ave
Portland, OR 97212

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1089 W Yapoah Crater Dr
Sisters, OR 97759

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Alan Winter

5707 NE 15th Ave

Portland, OR 97211

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Paulette Meyer
1615 SE 58th Ave
Portland, OR 97215

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Daniel Jaffee
4723 NE 14th Ave
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PO Box 662
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2914 NE 18th Ave
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Sincerely,
Rodney Bender
4506 NE Simpson St
Portland, OR 97218

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Thank you.

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Daryl Grenz

1930 SW River Dr

Portland, OR 97201

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Lee Chapman
1529 SE Ramsay Rd
Bend, OR 97702

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1410 Z St
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2325 SW 21st Ave
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L Whealin
648 NE 25th St
Gresham, OR 97030

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38835 Historic Columbia River Hwy

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Philip Pizanelli

38835 Historic Columbia River Hwy

Corbett, OR 97019

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Janet Elgin
515 NE Holladay St
Portland, OR 97232

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Jacob Meyer

908 Sun Tillikum

North Bonneville, WA 98639

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5906 N Depauw St
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2398 Hillside Ln
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3300 Vensel Rd
Mosier, OR 97040

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Currently, coal trains with open-topped coal cars pollute gorge lands and waters with tremendous amounts of coal. Adopt policies and guidelines prohibiting coal pollution in the Columbia Gorge. Pursue enforcement and civil penalties for violators.

Climate Change

The Management Plan is devoid of standards addressing climate change. Review and revise land use policies and guidelines to build climate resilience. Restrict or prohibit conversions from forest to agriculture. Limit new rural development in resource land and encourage development in urban areas. Increase stream buffers using best available science.

Land Use Designations

Change the zoning of lands that were acquired by public agencies to open space or recreation, based on the land use designation policies for these zones. For example, when the Forest Service acquired land zoned as Forest or Agriculture from private owners, the use of the land changed from extraction to resource protection and enhancement. The zoning should be changed to reflect the changes in use.

Thank you in advance for starting to fulfill your mandatory enforcement role and making needed updates to the Management Plan.

Sincerely,

Rachael Pappano

330 River Rd

Mattawamkeag, ME 04459

Dear Director Wolniakowski & Gorge Commissioners,

I'm writing to provide comments regarding enforcement and review of the land use section of the Management Plan for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

The Columbia River Gorge is a national treasure and must be protected for future generations to experience. I want to thank the Commission for reviewing and revising the Management Plan to better fulfill the purposes of the National Scenic Area Act and improve protection of its outstanding resources. The plan was originally adopted in 1991 and many of its policies are out of date and do not represent the best available science. In addition, the plan does not address the growing threats of climate change on the Gorge and its communities.

Enforcement

For the Management Plan to have any value, it must be enforced. Congress gave the Gorge Commission mandatory enforcement authority over violations of Gorge protection laws, yet the Commission is not currently enforcing the law. As a result, illegal mines tear up the landscape, railroads scoff at Gorge protection laws, and landowners flout Gorge protection rules. The Commission's rules at 350-30 require the Executive Director to enforce on all violations. Not only has the Commission ignored its enforcement rules, it refuses to even acknowledge these rules in public meetings.

Before the Commission revises anything in the Management Plan it must start enforcing laws that protect the Columbia River Gorge and address any impediments to performing this mandatory duty. Please direct your staff to implement Commission Rule 350-30 (Enforcement).

Land Use Issues

Mining:

The Commission should prohibit new mining and quarry operations and impose strict limits on the expansion of existing quarries. In addition, clarify the definition for mining (exploration, development, and production of mineral resources) to explicitly include hauling of mining material.

Commercial Uses:

Do not expand commercial uses in rural areas that are not zoned commercial or rural center. Examples include travelers' accommodations such as short-term rentals, processing plants, businesses that host large events or cater to large crowds. Short-term rentals deplete the availability of existing long term housing and also increase the costs of existing housing for families. Agricultural processing facilities, like cideries, are industrial uses and that are prohibited by the National Scenic Area Act. Expansion of commercial events harms scenic and natural resources, harms other rural residents, and creates more enforcement problems.

Additional Dwelling Units (ADU)

While ADUs are suitable for urban areas and provide affordable housing, they have no place within rural lands in the National Scenic Area. ADUs would double the density on rural lands, harm scenic and natural resources, and change the rural character of the Columbia Gorge. Please do not allow ADUs.

Cluster Developments

Prohibit cluster developments with bonus lots and dwellings. The current guidelines increase residential

development densities with little to no benefit to the resources of the Gorge. Higher densities belong in urban areas.

Geohazards

The Columbia River Gorge is very geologically active. Inventory, protect, and avoid siting development and mining in geohazard areas. Having residential zones at the bottom of active landslide areas, such as Dodson Warrendale, are irresponsible.

Cumulative Effects

Revise the glossary definition of “cumulative effects” to include consideration of reasonably foreseeable actions and effects.

Railroad Expansion

Require scenic area-wide master plans for rail expansion. Clarify that new rail development, including new tracks, are not allowed in open space and public recreation zones. Require Gorge-wide cumulative effects analysis for rail expansion projects. Require river access improvements to be provided with rail expansion projects.

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Thank you in advance for starting to fulfill your mandatory enforcement role and making needed updates to the Management Plan.

Sincerely,
April Atwood
6306 SE 21st Ave
Portland, OR 97202