

Columbia River Gorge Commission

Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2020
via Zoom Webinar

COMMISSION MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bridget Bailey (joined ~9:05 a.m.)
Bowen Blair
Lynn Burditt
Sondra Clark
Lorrie DeKay
Dan Ericksen
Robin Grimwade
Robert Liberty
Carina Miller
Rodger Nichols
Janet Wainwright

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Jerry Meninick

STAFF PRESENT

Connie Acker, Administrative Assistant
Aiden Forsi, Land Use Planner
Bryce Guske, Land Use Planner
Joanna Kaiserman, Senior Land Use Planner
Jeff Litwak, Counsel
Mayer, John
Lisa Naas Cook, VSI Planner
Jessica Olson, Senior Natural Resources Planner
Mike Schrankel, GIS Planner
Krystyna Wolniakowski, Executive Director

AUDIENCE PRESENT

Albrich, Elaine – Davis Wright Tremaine LLP
Asakawa, Debbie
Bechtel, Jeremy
Berger, David
Brewer, Angie – Wasco County Planning Director
Burkhardt, Jeanette – Yakama Nation
Burns, Arlene – City of Mosier Mayor
Carr, Geoffrey
Cetas, Elijah
Chudy, Cathryn
Cody, Heidi
Cody, Robin
Cornelison, Peter – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Craig, Linda
Cross, Brad
Dooley, Sheila
Fiene, Ilia
Gephart, Laura – CRITFC
Gorman, Kevin – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Handlin, Lynn
Hege, Scott – Wasco County Board of County Commissioners Chair
Helfen, Morai – US Forest Service
Hess, Jurgen

Hinatsu, Stanley – US Forest Service
Johnson, Amber
Kaufman, Tamara
Keane, Sheila
Klaas, Andrea
Kloos, Jeanette
Khuta, Scott – Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway
Lang, Michael – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Le Vee, Ilene
Lindblad, Mo-Chi – Klickitat County
Lingley, Terra – ODOT
Mays, Rich – City of The Dalles Mayor
McCoy, Steve – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Meier, Sherry
Nickolds, Mitch – Clark County Community Development
Norman, Storry
Ojerio, Ryan – Washington Trails Association
Ordon-Bakalian, Keenan – Jordan Ramis PC
Palmiter, Susan
Parga, Beatriz – Bridal Veil Lodge
Peters, Alan – Skamania County
Plaut, Melanie
Ready, Vince
Reed, Emily – Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance
Reynolds, Julie
Rittenhouse, Ryan – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Rogers, Laura – Community for Earth, First Unitarian Portland
Ross, Sharon
Roth, Michelina
Santa, Anne
Shoal, Robin – US Forest Service
Starr, Linda
Stevens, Susi – Portland Garden Club
Stice, Nate – Office of Governor Kate Brown
Strunk, Paul – Fox 12
Tkach, Renee
Toepke, Jennifer – Port of The Dalles
Woods, Sara – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Zelada, Armando

Others were present during the meeting.

Call to Order and Roll: Chair Liberty called the meeting to order and Connie Acker called roll. (9:00 a.m.)

Word of the Day: Commissioner Miller shared the word *latitlatit* meaning “wildflower” from the Warm Springs Language (9:03 a.m.)

Approval of Minutes of April 28 and 29, 2020 Commission Meetings: Chair Liberty requested revisions to the April 29, 2020 Commission meeting minutes. Staff confirmed that those edits were made. Commissioner Blair moved to adopt the minutes of the April 28, 2020 Commission meeting. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion. The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2020 meeting on a unanimous voice vote. Commissioner Nichols moved to adopt the minutes of the April 29, 2020 Commission meeting. Commissioner Wainwright seconded the motion with changes and corrections requested by Commissioner Blair and Chair Liberty. The Commission voted to approve the minutes, with proposed changes/corrections, of the April 29, 2020 meeting on a unanimous voice vote. (9:04 a.m.)

Opportunity for Treaty Tribe Nations to Address Commission: As part of the Government-to-Government consultation process, the Commission welcomes input from treaty tribe members on any issue on the agenda and any other matters. The Treaty Tribe Nations did not offer testimony. (9:08 a.m.)

Opportunity for Public Comment: The following provided public comment to the Commission on items not listed on the agenda (9:09 a.m.):

- Michael Lang, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, commented on long-term monitoring and shorter-term enforcement.
- Nate Stice, resident of The Dalles, OR Governor Kate Brown’s Office Regional Solutions, spoke about the Mid-Columbia Regional Economic Recovery Team formed by Regional Solutions and MCEDD. Currently working on a Gorge Economic Resilience Plan, providing information to businesses about programs and guidance, and long-term regional economic recovery.
- Beatriz Parga, Bridalveil Lodge, voiced concern about development and use of a new parking lot at abandoned mill site below Angel’s Rest parking lot and how ODOT will mitigate congestion along the Old Highway and exit 28 off I-84.

Members of the public provided written comment:

- Numerous members of the public provided public comment entitled “Act on Climate” (Attachment A)
- Numerous members of the public provided public comment entitled “Institute Meaningful Climate Action in Plan Review” (Attachment B)
- Bruce Schwartz re climate change (Attachment C)
- Lottie Bromham re climate change (Attachment D)
- Columbia Gorge Climate Action Network re climate change (Attachment E)
- Friends of the Columbia Gorge re Draft Climate Chapter (Attachment F)
- Friends of the Columbia Gorge re Gorge 2020 Recreation Chapter Revisions (Attachment G)
- Friends of the Columbia Gorge re Urban Area Boundary Chapter Revisions (Attachment H)
- Sharon Ross re climate change (Attachment I)
- Alan Peters, Skamania County Community Development re Urban Area Boundary Revision Redlines (Attachment J)
- Jamie Howsley, Jordan Ramis PC re Land Uses Revisions & Public Comment Plan (Attachment K)
- Francie Royce re climate change (Attachment L)
- Elaine Albrich, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP re Urban Area Boundary Revisions (Attachment M)
- David DeLeon re climate change (Attachment N)
- Ilene Le Vee re climate change, policies/directives relating to opening, closing, policing recreation areas, and recreation access expansion (Attachment O)
- Anne Santa re climate change (Attachment P)
- Rich Mays, Mayor, City of The Dalles re Urban Area Boundary Revisions (Attachment Q)
- Scott Hege, Chair, Wasco County Board of County Commissioners re Urban Area Boundary Chapter Edits Work Session (Attachment R)
- Cathryn Chudy re protect resources (Attachment S)

Work Session* -- Gorge 2020 Gorge Commission Draft Climate Change Chapter: Jessica Olson, Land Use Planner, Gorge Commission, Lisa Naas Cook, VSI Planner, Gorge Commission, and Casey Gatz, Land Management Planner, Forest Service, presented draft language for a climate change vision statement and chapter for the updated Management Plan. Staff facilitated Commission discussion on the proposed language and sought comments and guidance. (Attachments T(1), (2) and (3)) (9:35 a.m.)

Public Comment on Work Session: Gorge 2020 Gorge Commission Draft Climate Change Chapter:

- Cathryn Chudy, Vancouver resident, spoke about the importance of listening to the nation’s youth urging the protection vital resources from climate change impacts through policy.
- Heidi Cody, Vancouver resident, urged the Commission to adopt an actionable climate action plan with deadlines.
- Michael Lang, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, commented on the need for the climate action plan having a 1-year deadline for completion, for it to include information on tribal, agency and public involvement, and for it to be reviewed and approved by the Commission in consultation with the

Forest Service for consistency with the Management Plan. Also commented on importance for robust Vital Signs Indicators project and climate plan tied to Plan's policies and guidelines.

- Debbie Asakawa, Portland resident, expressed concern about lack of clarity and action items in the draft climate action plan.
- Elijah Cetas, Center for Sustainable Economy, expressed disappointment that the draft climate change chapter does not commit to take action or to change the Management Plan.
- Peter Cornelison, Gorge Climate Action Network, urged Commission to declare a climate emergency in the National Scenic Area and to develop timeline for climate action plan.
- Michelina Roth, Gorge Sustainable Investing, urged the Commission to consider adding real climate policy to the Management Plan and to declare a climate emergency.
- Melanie Plaut, expressed concern about how weak the climate change plan seems to be, urged the Commission to keep in mind mitigation and adaptation for climate change and to take urgent action.
- Arlene Burns, Mayor of Mosier, emphasized the importance of bold, prescriptive action and science-based policies and commended the Commission and staff for taking this on.
 - Commissioner Bailey requested a list of operative requirements that could be used within the Gorge Commission's jurisdiction.
 - Mayor Burns gave example of protecting tree canopy, which can ensure water sources have adequate shade and protection.
- Jurgen Hess, recommended that Commission and staff review the findings in the 4th National Climate Assessment, 2018.
 - Commissioner Bailey asked Mr. Hess if he could produce an updated booklet about native plants in the Gorge to help with climate change impacts.
 - Commissioner Burditt commented that the native plants recommended by Landscape Setting are being updated in the Gorge 2020 Scenic Resources technical review.
 - Jessica Olson commented that the Gorge Commission office has resources for acquiring a seed mix of native, locally-adapted species.
- Dave Berger, urged the Commission to investigate the benefits of CO2 emissions in the Gorge, mitigating hazardous algal blooms, zero logging in every rivershed, and controlling carbon emissions.
- Steve McCoy, commented on the importance of mitigation and adaptation policies, and urged the Commission to take action now.

Commission Discussion:

Chair Liberty suggested two options for discussing the proposed climate change chapter: 1) Consider having a separate meeting for Urban Area Boundary discussion. 2) Take 25 minutes to go through and identify Commissioners' opinions on certain issues.

Commissioners were polled about keeping with the Commission meeting agenda, or taking the rest of the meeting time to discuss climate change:

- Commissioner Blair: Continue, have thumbs up or thumbs down on chapter, go around the Commission and see what some of the most important issues are for climate change outside Gorge 2020.
- Commissioner Clark: Maintain decision to postpone climate change issues until after Gorge2020
- Commissioner DeKay: Keep with agenda, poll Commissioners today to see where they are at with this topic
- Commissioner Ericksen: Agrees with Commissioner DeKay
- Commissioner Grimwade: absent
- Commissioner Miller: Stick with agenda, have another time to discuss this further.
- Nichols: Agrees with Commissioner Miller, need more time.
- Commissioner Wainwright: Keep to the agenda
- Commissioner Bailey: Stick to the agenda
- Chair Liberty: Majority want to stick with agenda, proposed a thumbs up on whether to have a climate change chapter, then will address topics within the chapter.

Commissioners were polled to move forward on approval for this chapter to go to public review:

- Commissioner Bailey: Yes

- Commissioner DeKay: Yes
- Commissioner Ericksen: Yes
- Commissioner Grimwade: Absent
- Commissioner Miller: Yes
- Commissioner Nichols: Yes
- Commissioner Wainwright: Yes
- Commissioner Bailey: Yes
- Commissioner Blair: Yes
- Chair Liberty: Yes

Chair Liberty suggested that staff annotate the staff report on climate change presented in February 2020 and send out for Commissioners annotate, indicating preferences on the action steps.

- A thumbs up poll was taken, most Commissioners affirmed this.

Commission discussion:

Commissioners were asked about having a single-item meeting to discuss the draft climate change chapter on May 26, 2020:

- Commissioner Bailey: Would like to have a noticed work session. Requests a live document such as a GoogleDoc to track the comments of other Commissioners. (Commission counsel Jeff Litwak recommended against using GoogleDocs, suggested that staff collect all input from Commissioners and share that back out to the Commission)
- Commissioner Blair: if we have a separate meeting, hold any comments.
- Commissioner Clark: Agreed to have separate work session. No need for public comment.
- Commissioner Burditt: If actual changes to Plan review are anticipated, this might necessitate a change to the Gorge2020 Roadmap.
- Executive Director Wolniakowski: requested clearer guidance on how to move forward with the report and policies proposed, and more discussion about what needs to be done inside or outside the Plan.
- Commissioner Nichols: Wants to make sure that public can sit in on Commission work session.

Staff will send a copy of the February 2020 staff report out to Commission on 5/13.

Commissioners were polled about setting a deadline of 1 year for Commission to take the climate change actions identified in the February 2020 staff report:

- Commissioner DeKay: No. We do not know what future holds for the CRGC and our partners.
- Commissioner Ericksen: No. Deadline makes a rush to the finish or making decisions that are not
- Commissioner Grimwade: absent
- Commissioner Miller: Yes. What I heard is we need to do something sooner rather than later. Would like to see deadline to help us prioritize.
- Commissioner Nichols: No. Would like to see a lot more specific items from science
- Commissioner Wainwright: Should have a deadline, not sure if a year is best. Wants to see a subcommittee of Commissioners to spend extra time working on this.
- Commissioner Bailey: Yes. Would like a subcommittee.
- Commissioner Blair: Yes, put a year deadline on this. If we need to extend it a little bit, let's be a little flexible.
- Commissioner Clark: Don't care for the word "deadline", would rather say "target date". Would rather have staff do it rather than a Commission subcommittee.

Chair Liberty asked the Commissioners who voted "no" to explain their concern.

- Commissioner DeKay: Was under the impression that this suggestion was for putting this language [about a 1-year deadline] in the chapter. No problem with having a target date.
- Commissioner Nichols: Agreed, fine with having a target date of a year.
- Commissioner Ericksen: Fine with that.

Outcomes of Commission Discussion:

- Consensus on the target date of 1 year for taking actions.
- Agreed to a meeting on May 26th – two hours for the Commission to discuss comments on the February 2020 staff report on draft climate change strategies and action.
- Staff will find a way to share the comments with the rest of the commission and the public.

Commissioner Burditt gave provided comments on this topic from the Forest Service perspective: The draft chapter focuses on GMA. Forest Service is very interested but not able to be responsive on the one-year timeframe. For over a decade the Forest Service has been working on climate change issues. The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Mt. Hood and Willamette National Forests is a science-based peer review program intended to inform actions. The current version of the Assessment is out for public review. Hope to have the final draft out in Fall 2020. The Forest Service is really supportive of Commission’s efforts, but doesn’t know if it can meet the 1-year target date to provide anything for the SMA updated in a draft.

BREAK – 11:15 a.m.

Work Session* -- Gorge 2020 Recreation Resources Chapter Edits: Stan Hinatsu, Recreation Staff Officer, Forest Service, Casey Gatz, Land Management Planner, Forest Service, and Aiden Forsi, Land Use Planner, Gorge Commission, presented highlights of the edits (“red-lines”) to the Recreation Resources Chapter of the Management Plan. The purpose of the Work Session was to review the draft revisions to the Management Plan and for the Commission to either endorse the language as prepared by the staff or modify it to reflect its preferences within the GMA. The Commission will then present the draft language which it has endorsed for public comment during the final public comment review period, June 1–30, 2020. (Attachments U(1), (2), (3) and (4) (11:28 a.m.)

Commissioners asked clarifying question on the following topics:

- Commissioner Blair: When is a recommendation or solution expected from the monthly meetings on congestion on the Historic Columbia River Highway?
 - Stan Hinatsu: There were short-term goals for this summer to move forward with flagger support at Multnomah Falls and additional law enforcement at parking areas at Multnomah Falls, but Covid-19 has slowed down the timeline, ODOT working to determine when to open the Historic Columbia River Highway again.
- Commissioner Blair: Memo refers to proposed spatial provisions. Does that mean changing RIC classifications?
 - Casey Gatz: Recreation technical and stakeholder group identified in March 2020 an interest into looking at revising where the RICs are spatially. Because unable to reconvene the group in time, unable to get a proposed revision for this drafted by this meeting.
- Commissioner Nichols: 1. References to “equitable and accessible” language about ability- does this mean everything has to have wheelchair accessibility? 2. Removing the light shielding requirement- why was this done? 3. (This is for the policy discussion) Trails and pathways- should include something about removing illegal trails.
 - Aiden Forsi: the guideline that addresses accessibility says that this be implemented where it can be done and where it makes sense. The light-shielding requirement was removed because it was duplicative in the Scenic chapter.
- Chair Liberty: 1. Why was the reference to creating and restoring openings for views? 2. Why was there a change in the observation or adherence to treaty obligations? 3. What would be the impact to adopting draft changes to RICs?
 - Casey Gatz: RIC guideline proposed changes consider other factors such as trail conditions and more consideration for the social experience on the sites.
 - Stan Hinatsu: Helps provide setting and managerial context of what could be approved in that particular RIC, and why those were classified as such, and what is appropriate for those classes.
 - Casey Gatz: Goal for changes to references to treaty obligations is to make the chapter more consistent with the Act.
 - Casey Gatz: The reference to restoring views overlapped with the scenic chapter, removed to reduce redundancy.

- Commissioner Bailey: Concerned about protection of agriculture lands. Is agriculture included under the GMA Goal under “natural resources”?
 - Casey Gatz: This goal reiterates the purpose of the Act that when we provide new recreation opportunities, they must be consistent with scenic, natural, cultural resource protections.

Public Comment on Work Session: Gorge 2020 Recreation Resources Chapter Edits:

- Kevin Gorman, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, commented that the changes proposed are good on the surface, but the issues of congestion and missed opportunities of a cohesive recreation management plan still exist. Wants to see a holistic Gorge-wide recreation plan with clear outcomes and clear timeline incorporated into the Management Plan.
- Michael Lang, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, commented that adoption of the Management Plan must be based on resource inventories (documentation of resources and activities). To Friends’ knowledge, no new inventories or assessments have been done.
- Renee Tkach, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, commented that there needs to be a wider plan to support and disperse users. Suggests incorporating Friends’ written comments provided.
- Beatriz Parga, commented that she would like to see the elimination of parking along the Historic Columbia River Highway. Wants the Commission to encourage ODOT to enforce no parking and mitigate congestion along the Waterfall Corridor.
- Ilene LeVee: submitted comments via email.

Commissioners were polled to identify issues or to move forward on approval for this chapter to go to public review:

- Commissioner Ericksen: Fine with it going out as is.
- Commissioner Grimwade: Managing recreation in Gorge is incredibly complex and this is step in the right direction. Would like to see this go forward for public comment. Still need for clear, long-term vision for recreation linked to VSI.
- Commissioner Miller: Hard to understand how these suggestions will actually be implemented. But no specific concerns.
- Commissioner Nichols: Pleased with changes.
- Wainwright: Happy with it. Would still love to see how different Management agencies quantify “damage to a resource.”
- Commissioner Bailey: Suggested edit on p. I-4-14 GMA Policy 4: temporary trail closures “shall be implemented.”
- Commissioner Blair: Concerned about congestion issue and how it is not dealt with in the Plan. Trails and trails connections – why was this taken out? If duplicative, fine. If not, why?
- Commissioner Clark: No specific issues.
- Commissioner DeKay: Yes, good with it going out for public comment.
- Chair Liberty: Satisfied to send out for public comment. But has the following concerns: 1. Closure language- “will consider” needs to be more forceful. 2. Need to do more about automobile congestion and trail congestion. 3. Trails and trail connections – why was this taken out? 4. What is the point of a variance to RIC to increase the amount of parking allowed? 4. Would like to see a response about larger vision and trends of what we know about the effects are of recreation on SNCR resources.

Commissioner Burditt responded to comments on the language about 1-4-14 policy 4 and 1-4-6 policy 6 about critical risk periods. The Commission can provide a great deal of support to the approaches and policies by stating that they are valuable, and you endorse them. Agencies have a variety of legal authorities under which they operate and what is written in the Plan does not override those authorities, so nothing in the Plan can take precedence or limit agencies’ options. Recommends not using language that attempts to limit those authorities or options.

Commissioner Bailey thanked Commissioner Burditt for her comments.

Outcome:

Consensus to send out the draft recreation chapter for public comment. A few Commissioners identified issues they may wish to come back to.

LUNCH (12:32 p.m.)

Work Session* -- Gorge 2020 Urban Area Boundary Chapter Edits: Jeff Litwak, Legal Counsel, and Aiden Forsi, Land Use Planner, Gorge Commission, provided an update on the draft edits (“red-lines”) to the Urban Area Boundaries section of Management Plan Part IV Chapter 1. The purpose of the Work Session was to review the draft amendments to the Management Plan and for the Commission to either endorse the language as prepared by the staff or modify it to reflect its preferences. (Attachment V) (1:03 p.m.)

Staff presented an overview of the staff report, outlining the background on how the Commission has approached urban area policy and the steps taken to include the public and key stakeholders. In November the Commission stated a desire for new plan policies, then discussed again in January and February. Some consensus was reached. Staff is providing a draft of policies to interpret section 4(f) of the Act, and to guide the staff in revising the Commission rule outlining boundary revision procedures and clarifying compliance with the 4(f) criteria. All proposed content is new. Policies 1-7 are related to the procedures, 8-9 relate to the term minor, and the remaining are high level guidance for compliance with the 4(f) criteria.

Commissioners commented and asked clarifying questions on the following topics:

- Chair Liberty and Commissioner Nichols provided initial comments to staff before the meeting.
- Commissioner Blair asked about policy 12 and recommended it be more specific and clearer.
- Commissioner Clark recalls discussion related to 8(A)(ii), but not a vote to decide on this point. Staff responded that they reviewed the minutes of the Commission meeting (November) to identify consensus. This seemed to be one possible description of what could be considered minor. As the November conversation continued, Commissioners did decide to move on for lack of consensus. Policy 8(B)(iii) was certainly not agreed to and that is reflected in the “placeholder” nature of the language staff included.
- Commissioner Nichols commented that he also reviewed the transcripts and felt there was agreement on the 20 acres or less as a minor change, not that there was agreement on an upper limit but that 20 acres or smaller would fit into the definition of minor.
- Commissioner Nichols noted that the term “cumulative” was not used in the November meeting discussions. Staff clarified that term “over time” was used and is being interpreted with the term “cumulative”. This term could be changed in the draft.
- Commissioner Ericksen also asked about the term cumulative. Staff responded that this could be thought of as similar to Oregon’s safe harbor tool that guarantees an urban area that 20 acres or less could be pursued as a minor change but sets the expectation that anything larger may or may not be considered minor.
- Commissioner Blair stated that he does not feel this should be seen in the same manner as a safe harbor and that’s why the term “over time” was used to prevent multiple 20 acre increases from being automatically considered minor.
- Commissioner Bailey asked what 1% of total area of urban areas? Staff replied these are included in Commission Rule 350-10 (200-page rule establishing legal descriptions for the National Scenic Area). The legal descriptions of Urban Areas provide the number of acres of each.
- Commissioner Nichols quoted Commissioner Liberty at the November 12, 2019 Commission meeting: “We agreed that a reduction is minor. We agreed that zero is minor. Now we’re doing 1% for 20 acres over time. It doesn’t say lifetime or forever will be gone if it’s forever but over a long period.” Commissioner Nichols stated that he still has some problems with that but that is exact language.

Public Comment on Work Session: Gorge 2020 Urban Area Boundary Chapter Edits:

- Scott Hege, Wasco County Commissioner, strongly encouraged more time and public consideration for this section.
 - Commissioner Blair: If there was a request to accommodate, say, manufacturing with a change, shouldn’t the Commission have the right to ensure that property is actually used for

- manufacturing if it grants the change? Commissioner Hege responded that zoning could be an assurance to the Commission that the land is dedicated to a certain use.
- Commissioner Wainwright: If the Commission was unable to secure funding to do its own analysis of an UA application, are you saying that the applicant should be allowed to go ahead? Commissioner Hege responded that if the county invested to develop an application, the expectation would be that the Commission would review and process it. Commissioner Wainwright would want to see an independent analysis, in addition to the county application materials.
 - Chair Liberty asked if Commissioner Hege if the county could provide suggested improvements, particularly to policies 4,5, and 6.
 - Commissioner Nichols shared Port of The Dalles suggested language that if funding is not available, Commission shall enter into a cost sharing arrangement until the budget allows sufficient staff resources to review an application.
- Eric Walker, Hood River County Community Development Director, raised concerns on behalf of the county about the limited amount of time to comment on this section of the plan revisions. Requested extending the comment period at least until June 1st.
 - Chair Liberty clarified that the full plan will be available for public comment for the month of June.
 - Commissioner Bailey asked about county involvement in the process directly with Commission staff. Mr. Walker commented that staff limitations have prevented Hood River County from active engagement since November.
 - Michael Lang, Friends of the Columbia Gorge - The Act in section 4(f) makes urban area boundary changes discretionary and we support language that you would determine whether or not to accept an application contingent on funding.
 - Rich Mays, Mayor of The Dalles - Mayor Mays stated that the Commission has been participating actively throughout and engaging the community directly. The Commission is proposing draft revisions with major implications for communities. The process feels rushed now at the end of the process and during this pandemic. Public comments should be considered. The city has concerns about the 20 acres/1% policy, and about the clarifications about the term minor. Filing requirements are not realistic and do not align with state policies. Mayor Mays stated that there should be more time to enter comments into the record before the Commission endorses staff edits.
 - Elaine Albrich, attorney for the Port of The Dalles – Stated her concerns that if the Commission endorses today, comments will not be incorporated in the future, and requested longer comment period. She was also concerned that the Commission is deferring policy decisions to rulemaking or application processing.
 - Commissioner Bailey asked if it would be preferable to make no change to the Plan. Ms. Albrich responded that the revisions seem to do more harm than good.
 - Steve McCoy, Friends of the Columbia Gorge – Noted that the Act requires urban area changes be consistency with the purposes of the Act. Policy 11. He stated that there should be a mechanism to ensure the land is used in the manner intended and approved.
 - Andrea Klaas, Port of The Dalles – This is a very difficult time for many and it is challenging to review and provide meaningful input to these important policy concepts. Please adjust your schedule so that all interested parties may be fully engaged in the process.

Commission Discussion:

- Chair Liberty recommended starting with policy issue of land exchange, then address the timeline and public comment opportunity.
- Commissioner Nichols described the land exchange approach as a way to satisfy both purposes of the Act. A land swap that results in no net loss of NSA lands is minor, we agreed upon that. We also voted to consider the lands across the river. If that’s part of the concept, let’s ensure that communities can grow and prosper without reducing acreage in the NSA. Klickitat County is at least willing to discuss the idea of land swaps, through purchase of development rights.
- Commissioner Blair stated that the policy sounds good in theory and could work for some areas. Dallesport and potentially North Bonneville are so large, they could potentially transfer a large number of acres. The policy could make sense if Dallesport was removed.

- Commissioner Ericksen: Concerned about inequity issue. You have to analyze a huge area before you can do anything, but we've written into the rule that The Dalles cannot use that excess land that Dallesport has available. Commissioner Blair noted that buying land in Dallesport is an option for The Dalles.
- Commissioner Ericksen responded the preference for The Dalles is to expand its own community and provide for its citizens in The Dalles. The cost is too high and gains too little, as written.
- Commissioner Wainwright: Not comfortable voting on this today. It's not going to satisfy anybody. Referring to the entire draft, not only this topic of land swaps.
- Commissioner Bailey: I do not support any net loss of Agricultural lands, so would encourage a swap of low-grade agricultural land for more premium agricultural lands.

Commission Decisions:

Under 8(A)(iii) – an exchange with no net increase in Urban Areas in the gorge would be considered minor (at any scale). Chair Liberty asked for a poll to define no net loss as minor, anywhere and between any communities in the gorge and of any size.

- Commissioner Grimwade: No
- Commissioner Nichols: Yes
- Commissioner Wainwright: No
- Commissioner Bailey: No
- Commissioner Blair: No
- Commissioner Clark: Yes, but more discussion needed on the chapter
- Commissioner DeKay: Abstain
- Commissioner Ericksen: Yes
- Chair Liberty: No
- **Decision:** The Commission did not support exchanges between urban areas resulting in no net increase of acreage being defined as minor.

How much more time would you like before taking action on this draft?

- Commissioner Nichols: Based on public comment, we might defer until the 26th
- Commissioner Wainwright: Agree with Commissioner Nichols
- Commissioner Bailey: Agree need more time but prefer to defer to next year. Amended later - would prefer to scrap this draft and leave the Plan as is.
- Commissioner Blair: Prefer to finish discussion today and send it out as planned. The issue is not the limited time but rather we've hit areas of disagreement.
- Commissioner Clark: Agree on 26th if it is possible for staff
- Commissioner DeKay: Agree on 26th if it is possible for staff
- Commissioner Ericksen: Feel several areas are unresolvable at this point. Concerned the chapter is not an improvement. Prefer to scrap this draft, retain what is in the Plan, and move on with other issues.
- Commissioner Grimwade: Issue has been ongoing for years. We have this opportunity to put out a draft to get public comment. Putting it off will not be helpful.
- Chair Liberty: We've discussed this in 2003 and 2004 when no changes were made because of deep disagreement, some of it with the Act itself. We have made progress and though we do not have agreement, there has been a lot of work done. More time will not gain us agreement. Support extending public comment until the 26th and take action at that meeting about whether to forward the chapter as part of the draft revisions for public comment in June.
- Chair Liberty asked if everyone can live with proceeding to the May 26th meeting. Commissioner Blair asked about how much time should be allocated.
- Commissioner Clark clarified preference that the 26th be a work day without public comment, but receiving comments until the meeting would be welcome.
- Commissioner Wainwright asked to reconsider Commissioner Ericksen's proposal to stop work on the chapter all together. Chair Liberty polled the Commissioners and 4/9 voted to end work on the chapter now. The majority agreed to continue discussion.

- **Decision:** 10 additional days for public comment. Action on the 26th (1 hour on the agenda). Climate Change item would have 2-2.5 hours on the agenda, for a half day meeting. No public comment on the 26th for either item. Commissioner Grimwade will have to step out at 9:30. Commissioners supported this approach in a thumb poll.
- Commissioners are encouraged to provide written comments to Jeff Litwak in the next week.

Information Item*-- Gorge 2020 Public Comment Plan: Krystyna U. Wolniakowski, Lisa Naas Cook, VSI Planner, Gorge Commission, and Rachel Pawlitz, Public Affairs Officer, Forest Service, provided an overview of the plan for public comment opportunities during the June 1-30, 2020 public comment period for the draft Gorge 2020 Management Plan. Some of the opportunities outlined in the memo include written factsheets on the proposed changes available on the website and an informational public webinar. (Attachment W) (2:44 p.m.)

- The Commission confirmed the public comment period will be June 1-30, 2020.
- Commissioner Blair thanked the staff and noted that the plan looks thoughtful and thorough.
- Commissioner Wainwright supports the plan and asked if Commissioners could participate in the webinar. Krystyna Wolniakowski will need to confirm with legal counsel if that is possible.
- Webinar recording will be posted afterward. There will be call in options for those without computer or internet capability.
- Chair Liberty encouraged care to not assign too much weight to the number of repeat comments. It will be important to structure how we manage comments, given that we are proposing so many edits.

Public Comment on Work Session: Gorge 2020 Public Comment Plan:

- Keenan Ordon-Bakalian attorney for Judith Zimmerly voiced concerns that there was not consensus about the April meeting Land Use edits relating to mining and that those edits have not been posted. We prefer redline language not be released on June 1st without an understanding of the Commissioners' opinions related to that. Staff responded that minutes will be posted tomorrow, now that they have been approved today.
 - Chair Liberty noted that reviewing the meeting record should be helpful.

Executive Director's Report -- Krystyna U. Wolniakowski provided agency updates and the next steps in the Gorge 2020 Management Plan roadmap and timeline. (3:05 p.m.)

- Executive Director requested confirmation that the latest roadmap is amenable to the Commissioners, with additional meetings in July 21st and August 11th. Commissioners supported those dates. (Attachment X)
- No budget updates, but today Governor Brown requested a 17% agency budget reduction for the next fiscal year. It is not yet clear if that applies to the Commission as a bi-state agency. Ms. Wolniakowski will provide an update on May 26th.

U.S. Forest Service NSA Manager's Report – Commissioner Lynn Burditt provided an update on Forest Service activities in the National Scenic Area. (3:11 p.m.)

- Clarifying the air quality monitoring stations public comment that was brought up earlier. Wishram air quality monitoring continues. Air sensors are used to assess quality and that monitoring continues. There was a national decision to stop collecting imagery monitoring across the sites, though other agencies record photos as part of their air quality monitoring.
- The Scene included some information on preparation for the season. Temporary employees are being trained to start seasonal work soon.
- FS recently did a tabletop exercise with partner organizations to test out scenarios and preparedness for certain situations and to identify challenges that might come up. Particularly during COVID restrictions, the same resources can't be relied upon as they typically would.
- Public lands restrictions will be easing in the coming weeks. Working on alignment among the National Scenic Area land management agencies and jurisdictions on reopening strategies. Striving for common timeline for opening sites. Steigerwald is one of the largest sites on the WA side, managed by USFWS. They were planning to close for their dike realignment project, so they may not reopen.

- Will report at a future meeting on projects going on

Other Business (3:18 p.m.)

- Commissioner Clark thanked Connie Acker for the exceptional work she has done to run these meetings

Adjourn (3:19 p.m.)

Approved 5/26/2020