

Columbia River Gorge Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2020
via Zoom Webinar

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Bowen Blair
Lynn Burditt
Sondra Clark
Lorrie DeKay
Dan Ericksen
Robin Grimwade
Tamara Kaufman
Robert Liberty
Jerry Meninick
Carina Miller
Michael Mills
Rodger Nichols
Janet Wainwright

COMMISSIONER MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Connie Acker, Administrative Analyst
Aiden Forsi, Land Use Planner
Joanna Kaiserman, Senior Land Use Planner
Jeff Litwak, Counsel
Lisa Naas Cook, VSI Planner
Jessica Olson, Senior Natural Resources Planner
Mike Schrankel, GIS Planner
Krystyna U. Wolniakowski, Executive Director

AUDIENCE PRESENT

Geoffrey Carr
Keith Cleveland – Hood River County Planning
Peter Cornelison – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Kaylee Crosby – Wild Wood Tours
Sheila Dooley
Scott Edelman – State of Oregon
Deborah Ferrer
Casey Gatz – US Forest Service
Randy Gragg
Kevin Greenwood – Port of Hood River
Scott Hege – Wasco County Planning
Carol Johnson – Multnomah County Planning
Gil Kelley
Andrea Klaas – Port of The Dalles
Michael Lang – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Terra Lingley – ODOT
Sally Newell
Mitch Nickolds – Clark County Community Development
Ryan Rittenhouse – Friends of the Columbia Gorge
B Rogers

Anna Shank-Root – Port of The Dalles
Tyler Stone – Wasco County Planning
Dawnielle Tehama
Judy Todd
Armando Zelada

Others were present during the meeting.

Call to Order and Roll (8:30 a.m.) Chair Liberty called the meeting to order and Connie Acker called roll.

Approval of Minutes for November 10, 2020 Commission Meeting (8:32 a.m.) Commissioner Blair moved to adopt the November 10, 2020 meeting minutes. Commissioner Erickson seconded the motion. The Commission voted to approve the November 10, 2020 meeting minutes on a unanimous voice vote.

Treaty Tribe Word of the Day (8:33 a.m.) Commissioner Meninick shared nimoo as the word of the day which means relatives, loved ones, or elders. Commissioner Meninick mentioned that this word is shared by all of the Northwest tribes and some of the Coastal tribes. When tribe members greet each other, the members shake each other's hands and convey this expression of respect. Nimoo is not only a greeting or sign of respect to tribe members but also to foods, such as roots, berries, and fish.

Opportunity for Treaty Tribe Nations to Address Commission (8:36 a.m.) 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.

Opportunity for Public Comment: (8:37 a.m.) The following provided public comment to the Commission on items not listed on the Agenda:

- **Gil Kelley** – Served as Portland, San Francisco and now Vancouver, BC City Planning Director. Mentioned the open public comment period (now through January 4, 2021) for the Federal Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) concerning construction of the new Hood River/White Salmon bridge. Also offered his opinion regarding proposed design options.
- **Randy Gragg** – Joined Gill Kelley in asking the Commission to think of the new Hood River/White Salmon bridge more broadly. Offered his opinion regarding proposed design options.
- **Michael Lang, Friends of the Columbia Gorge** – Commented on Supplemental Draft EIS and Commission's role with regard to the new bridge. Also commented on Management Plan requirement for protection and enhancement of air quality and visibility.
- **Kevin Greenwood, Port of Hood River** – Informed the Commission of the 45-day public comment period for the Supplemental Draft EIS released November 20, 2020. Encouraged comments during the public comment period.

Work Session Item*: Staff Reports on 2021-2022 Gorge Commission Workplans and Timelines: Krystyna U. Wolniakowski, Executive Director, presented an overview of the draft roadmaps and timelines according to the priorities established by the Commission at the November 10, 2020 Commission meeting. [\(Attachment A\)](#)

Commissioner Liberty offered that the Commission would hear staff reports, Commissioners will ask clarifying questions, public testimony will then be heard, and the Commission will then deliberate.

Climate Change Action Planning: 2021-2022 Workplan Summary and Presentation – Jessica Olson, Senior Natural Resources Planner, presented [\(Attachment B\)](#)

Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding Climate Change Action planning:

Blair: Asked Olson to clarify what “deciding what frameworks to be used” in Phase 1 means.

Olson: Hope to bring this as a Commission discussion item soon to dig into what that means. In general, as mentioned, others have done similar work. The NSA is very unique and the Commission's desires are unique.

It has been clear to staff that there is interest both in addressing mitigation and adaptation. In other efforts that we have reviewed, many times there is focus on one or the other. There are pretty clear ways that we can step through, almost a recipe, for how to do that. Staff would like to share with the Commission some of those templates and what might be unique about our needs and how we might adjust those frameworks to work for us.

Liberty: We just had four years of public engagement, including enormous amounts of testimony on what the Commission should or should not do on climate change. What is it that will be done here that is different from what we just finished?

Olson: That is clearly on our minds when we set expectations. We want to be very careful in where we invest our staff time, so while we would like to engage robustly with the public and others working on climate change, we also want to be strategic. While we are putting effort into thinking about outreach, that does not necessarily mean we will devote a lot of resources to implementing that outreach. We want to be very clear in what the expectation is, how we will reach out and who will engage and when. That is something that we will bring to you in the proposal in the future to work through.

Liberty: The point is that there were years of outreach and documentation of that outreach. A collection of those recommendations seems like that should be our starting point.

Liberty: We have had some discussion about developing Commission criteria for prioritization, revise draft strategies and actions accordingly. What additional work is needed in this analysis that would help the Commission choose priorities?

Olson: The key is making use of the vulnerability assessment documents that are already available and thinking about what is of highest risk and vulnerability in terms of resources that we value. What is most urgent and where can we get the most benefit from taking action.

Liberty: I think you just articulated what I believe is the starting point. There may be many things that we have no authority over or it is beyond our capacity. The question is where do we have leverage and where do we apply leverage.

Vital Sign Indicators Project: 2021-2022 Workplan Summary and Presentation – Lisa Naas Cook, VSI Planner, presented (Attachment C)

Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding Vital Sign Indicators Project planning:

Blair: By the end of 2021 we will have completed indicators for one resource area and by 2022 we will have completed another two resources areas. With five resource areas, this suggests that the last two resource areas will be for 2023 or later. Is that correct?

Naas Cook: Potentially. The timeline for the first two resource areas is dependent on what we learn about how effective and efficient we can be in the first year and what our priorities are. The next phase may be two resources but it may be able to be three. There will be a better sense after the first year but potentially the timeline could go into 2023 to complete all five.

Liberty: Can you give us more detail of the function of the working group and how it connects to the Commission?

Naas Cook: The structure will be determined based on the recommendations that we are putting into the VSI assessment. It will be a very clearly defined committee or technical group where we will be able to refine the process of taking our management question and being able to vet it as a monitoring question, identify what the specific data sets that are out there, and who can help us do that. We may need to bring in a few different agencies to help.

Liberty: What are the touch points to the Commission for shaping the work?

Naas Cook: That is something that we will be mapping in the workplan, similar to what we did for Gorge 2020 but trying to highlight when those connection points are with the Commission. We envision February 2021 being an opportunity for the Commission to look at the assessment and for staff to identify what our asks are from you.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: 2021-2022 Workplan Summary and Presentation – Joanna Kaiserman, Senior Land Use Planner, presented (Attachment D)

Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion planning:

Wainwright: Complimented staff on each of the reports. Will we be able to get a summary of Commissioner DEI interviews?

Kaiserman: Once Tina Patterson completes Commission staff interviews in February, she will draft a combined report with all of the responses analyzed.

Liberty: Will Ms. Patterson's report be a summary due to the confidential nature of answers given by Commissioners and staff?

Kaiserman: The report that Ms. Patterson produced after Commissioner interviews is a summary with anonymous responses.

Blair: The report mentioned that the recommendation is to have someone outside of the Gorge Commission lead the DEI discussion on behalf of the Commission. This does not make sense to me. What is the reason?

Kaiserman: That was meant to say not on behalf of the Commission but with the Commission. We hope to have a facilitator discuss the DEI plan with the Commission.

Blair: This would be a professional facilitator?

Kaiserman: Correct.

Klickitat County NSA Compliance Study Workplan – Aiden Forsi, Land Use Planner, presented (Attachment E)

Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding Klickitat County NSA Compliance Study planning:

Nichols: Are you only going to select tax lots that have had applications to see if they have fulfilled everything or will it be a random sampling?

Forsi: Both. I am working with Mike Schrankel, GSI Planner, to look at all tax lots within Klickitat County. In early 2020 there were 1,300 tax lots within Klickitat County that are in the scenic area. We will sample all of those to see whether development has occurred. That could include NSA development. The other part of the study would be pulling all tax lots with development reviews and do a sample of those. We are looking at the yes/no – there is development and whether or not it was permitted and then whether or not conditions of approval are being met or are continuing to be met.

Mills: Could this work possibly result in an opportunity to suggest a strategy for Klickitat County adopting ordinances as the other five counties have?

Forsi: The study does not have that aim in mind.

Liberty: This is an appropriate topic to bring up when the Commission discusses review of the workplan. It is a basic policy question, rather than a study methodology.

Clark: Why are we using a full-time employee for one county but none of the other counties are required to do to this? After spending a lot of time and energy on one county, what are we going to do with the information?

Liberty: We are starting with Klickitat County because we directly administer the permits. It makes the study design easier.

Forsi: That is mostly it but the other thing is that we do have part of the funds for the VSI position (.25 FTE or approximately 500 hours) dedicated to this compliance and enforcement work. The reason we are focusing first on Klickitat County is because we have better access to that information. The intent is to expand this to other counties. Whether it takes the same shape as this study and whether the lessons learned from this study are necessarily transferrable to other counties is a larger question. This is step one of a longer process that takes much more engagement with the other counties.

Wolniakowski: The .25 FTE time is the time dedicated for the study. Other than Lisa's position being 100% funded for VSI, all other Commission priorities have to fit into the other work that we do. Aiden has other responsibilities besides this study. We figured within nine months and with 25% of his time, we should be able to get through this work. This study will be a "ground truthing" that we think most properties are complying but without having any kind of data, we do not know that now.

Liberty: We have referred to this as a pilot project, both to test the methodology and figure out how or whether to apply it more broadly.

MOUs with NSA Counties – Krystyna U. Wolniakowski, Executive Director, announced that the meeting with County Planning Directors is scheduled for February 4, 2021. All County Planning Directors will attend this meeting, hopefully Forest Service staff, and Commission staff. Jeff Litwak has developed a draft MOU template. More information will be provided to the Commission after the February 4th meeting.

Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding MOUs with NSA Counties:

Blair: The topic of county MOUs came up during Commission meetings in the context of monitoring and enforcement, including coming up with protocol to deal with NSA or Management Plan violations. I realize that the MOUs will serve other functions but I want to confirm that monitoring and enforcement is still a key purpose of the primary purpose of these MOUs.

Litwak: There are several elements including monitoring and enforcement. I am still working on drafting a complete template. The template will be a working document for us to have a conversation with the counties.

Ericksen: Should a county commissioner from each county be involved? Ultimately it will be the county commissions that have to approve the agreements. There may be a disconnect if we just rely on planners to carry that load.

Opportunity for Public Comment: (10:10 a.m.) The following provided public comment to the Commission on the 2021-2022 Gorge Commission Workplans:

- **Michael Lang, Friends of the Columbia Gorge**

Commission deliberation of 2021-2022 Gorge Commission Workplans (10:15 a.m.):

Climate Change Action Workplan

Blair: Really strong step forward. Thanked Jessica and staff.

Wainwright: Wonder how Jessica and Lisa will be working together. I think Lisa's work will inform climate change work as well.

Olson: Lisa and I have been working very closely. We both have strong backgrounds in both climate change and natural resources and that will facilitate us working together.

Naas Cook: It does feel right now that the indicators for climate and natural resources will intersect, so we are working together on that.

Wainwright: Would it be possible to have a status report in March at my last Commission meeting?

Naas Cook: One of the deliverables is to have a VSI assessment with more details about what the workplan will look like and how it aligns with climate change in February.

Liberty: If we are going to be doing a certain number of indicators and climate change will be completed in 2021, it seems as though those indicators need to be complete. Is that the plan?

Naas Cook: One of the things that we want to outline in the assessment is to actually make our recommendation about which two resource areas to start with.

Liberty: By the end of 2021 we would have the climate change indicators reviewed and approved and then put into use in 2022?

Naas Cook: As long as that is consistent with what ends up happening with the climate change action planning timeline.

Motion – Commissioner Nichols: *Endorse the Climate Change Workplan integrating staff responses to the Commission's suggestions and questions.* Commissioner Wainwright seconded the motion.

	Yes	No	Abstain
Blair	×		
Clark	×		
DeKay	×		
Ericksen	×		
Grimwade	×		
Kaufman	×		
Meninick	×		
Miller	×		
Mills	×		

Nichols	×		
Wainwright	×		
Liberty	×		
Total	12	0	0

Vital Sign Indicators Project Workplan

Blair: My only concern is that we plan to take three years to complete the indicators. I understand the need to be deliberate and in step with climate change but I am worried that this drawn-out timeline, during which there may be budget cuts, the usual staff changes, etc., may cause us to lose momentum which is the history of this program for the last 13 years. I encourage staff to do whatever we can to shorten this timeline from three years to 18 months.

Grimwade: I share the concern of Commissioner Blair but going forward the vital indicators is pivotal to the ongoing success of realizing whether the Management Plan is being delivered and whether the strategies are working. There are limited staff resources but if we adopt a crawl, walk, run approach with the methodology in developing indicators, we can put in plan a suite of indicators which will start the wheels churning in the right direction. Then over the three-year period, those indicators can be perfected. I am hopeful that we will be able to know whether we are actually able to manage the resources that we are supposed to be managing and that by 2022 the Commission will be in a position of releasing a “state of the Gorge” report using those initial indicators and giving some indication as to whether the strategies are correct or whether they need to be modified. I believe the biggest challenge for this project is people getting caught up in the minutia and focusing on the wrong elements. It is really important that the indicators stay at the outcome level, not at the input and output level. It is also important that people recognize that we are not going to have perfection. If we can get 45% to 75% of the information, we should be able to make it a decision that will give us guidance in the right direction. The indicators should really be about providing a basis for conversation. They are not necessarily black and white. I am confident that Lisa and Krystyna can pull this off and address concerns.

Naas Cook: I recognize that natural resources is far reaching and complex in terms of data sets. I think narrowing that down as we plan to will be critical but it will also most likely take a little more time and thought in integrating that with climate change. I believe some of these things will move more quickly. I hear Commissioner Blair’s concern, I just want to be realistic, do a good job, and build on successes. As Commissioner Grimwade stated, we want to crawl, run, walk, and go fast but we want to make sure to set a good foundational process to begin with.

Burditt: Just as a reminder, the Forest Service and the Commission will be doing some of these things in partnership. The VSI work does not happen in a vacuum.

Liberty: I am also concerned about the timeline. First, we are all aware of the problem with other agencies in having 200 indicators. I suggest the Commission discuss staff work done pointing to some indicators that might make sense in the spring. The Commissioners could bring their own indicators. We could look at the indicator, how it relates to the first and second purpose of the Act, what would be our choice of indicators, and how that indicator would influence our work. If possible, we could have some test indicators to look at that cover more of the first and second purposes of the Act. We would then be better prepared to hear a more developed proposal. I feel uncomfortable with having one or two indicators at the end of a year. Second, I would like to know what the best practices are in taking an indicator or dashboard and having it integrated and expressed in approving the outcomes.

Naas Cook: Part of the informational interviews have been to look at some of those regional planning efforts such as the Puget Sound Partnership Vital Signs Program and Tahoe Regional Planning Authority Program. As mentioned, several of those have quite an extensive list of indicators. We are not looking to do that but they also have the benefit of having implementation for a decade or longer. Puget Sound Partnership in particular has just undergone revision and streamlining. I do have some thoughts on learning from that and also customizing it to make those learnings apply to what we are doing given our unique situation. Your point is taken about wanting to learn from others but also recognize our unique situation. Some of that will be informing the recommendations that we will be sharing with the Commission in February.

Liberty: Do you have a reaction to the suggestion that we discuss the indicators in early spring?

Naas Cook: We could offer some initial indicators for the two resource areas that we are doing a deeper dive on and may have time because we will have opportunity to talk with people in that development phase. If the Commission were interested in having a rough sense of what are the key management questions or

information needs across all five resource areas as a touchpoint in the spring, I could provide that but it may be more preliminary. There will not be technical input on those other resource areas, other than climate and natural resources. It depends on what your objective for that session would be.

Liberty: I am more interested in having the Commissioners look at the indicators, talk about them, and get some sense of whether they are technically good, and how they would affect decision making on the Commission. Not a briefing but hands-on work.

Naas Cook: Are you interested in doing that across all five resource areas as well as climate and seeing a preliminary look at indicators for all of those or for the two focus areas that we purposed doing – being climate and natural resources?

Liberty: All of the natural resources, cultural, scenic, and the second purpose of the Act, and climate change. I assume that climate change fits into the resources. A rough idea of what we are talking about, what do we think, and how do we use them before waiting for several months to come back and talk about one or two.

Wolniakowski: Staff plans on a work session to look at management questions, determine what kind of information we need to answer those management question, and then logically what would be the indicators. We do not want to collect indicators that we cannot have data in monitoring programs backing it up. This is the reason for the deliberate approach this first year. One of the reasons there was not much progress over ten years is that we did not have the resources but we also knew that 51 indicators were way to overwhelming and there was no way to monitor those. A Commission work session, like we are doing at the staff level, where we could look at the Management Plan and think about questions would be very interesting. I think it would be very important for the Commissioners themselves to think about what Management Plan questions are most important and how those questions relate to a set of indicators that could be monitored over time in partnership with other agencies and monitoring entities

Liberty: That makes me feel more comfortable moving forward.

Motion – Commissioner Grimwade: *Endorse VSI workplan integrating staff responses to the Commission’s suggestions and questions.* Commissioner Kaufman seconded the motion.

	Yes	No	Abstain
Blair	×		
Clark	×		
DeKay	×		
Ericksen	×		
Grimwade	×		
Kaufman	×		
Meninick	×		
Miller	×		
Mills	×		
Nichols	×		
Wainwright	×		
Liberty	×		
Total	12	0	0

BREAK - 10:40 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workplan

Motion – Commissioner Nichols: *Endorse the DEI workplan.* Commissioner Mills seconded the motion.

	Yes	No	Abstain
Blair	×		
Clark	×		
DeKay	×		
Ericksen	×		
Grimwade	×		
Kaufman	×		

Meninick	×		
Miller	×		
Mills	×		
Nichols	×		
Wainwright	×		
Liberty	×		
Total	12	0	0

Klickitat County NSA Compliance Study Workplan

Blair: I think this study is a very good step forward. The National Scenic Area Act requires the Commission have a monitoring program. The Management Plan calls it essential and it is squarely the responsibility of the Commission.

Ericksen: Along with this study we are incorporating MOUs. I think the MOUs with counties may be as difficult as our own enforcement in Klickitat County has presented itself to be. Counties are losing their DLCD support for the scenic area to apply the scenic area ordinances. I think it will be an even bigger challenge for counties if we are expecting them to add staff or time to enforce. This needs to be a consideration as we proceed with MOUs. I believe the counties all have a desire to have the ordinances enforced but just like we have had difficulty doing enforcement in Klickitat County, the other counties have the same issue.

Kaufman: This is a beginning step. Having the Klickitat County study move into the MOU process will help us get a baseline for how we move forward with compliance. Appreciate staff working with landowners to bring them into compliance.

Wolniakowski: Every year we complete a report on compliance issues found for that year. You will be receiving a copy of that at the January meeting. Most of those found in CY 2019 have been resolved and those were resolved without having to issue notices of violation. Once we found the compliance issue, they were resolved. We have received several complaints in the last few months about different developments and it turns out two of those were not in the NSA. In one case we contacted the landowner despite the property not being in the NSA and asked him to consider being in compliance with NSA standards. We try to address complaints as we get them. If there are outstanding complaints in Klickitat County that we have not addressed, it would be helpful to find out which ones those are. At this point, we have addressed as many as we could.

Blair: I do not think that we necessarily disagree. I think that 85% of the violations can be addressed amicably and should be. That leaves 15%. Generally, these are landowners who are wealthy, who are knowingly violating the NSA by moving ahead with impunity and violating Management Plan ordinances. Our rules are unambiguous. If it is not a de minimis violation, we have to issue a notice of violation and we are not doing that.

Liberty: The study design is good. One part that I am not comfortable with is the onsite inspections because I think that we are going to upset people if we do not identify an issue and also because we should be able to test how much we can learn without having onsite inspections. One of the conclusions from the study may be that onsite inspections are necessary. I recommend against doing onsite inspections. Three other integration points are MOUs, VSI, and database.

Forsi: My intention with site visits is “as necessary”. Those visits will be on public rights of way only. The study will feed into the MOUs. The study will help inform what kind of regular monitoring we need to do. I believe this study will help to highlight the database issues that exist.

Liberty: You are creating part of the database and learning about what would be needed to create a broader database. I would like that to be a part of your work product.

Motion – Commissioner DeKay: *Endorse the Klickitat County Compliance Study workplan integrating staff responses to the Commission’s suggestions and questions.* Commissioner Blair seconded the motion.

	Yes	No	Abstain
Blair	×		
Clark	×		
DeKay	×		
Ericksen	×		
Grimwade	×		
Kaufman	×		
Meninick	×		
Miller	×		
Mills	×		
Nichols	×		
Wainwright	×		
Liberty	×		
Total	12	0	0

Liberty: Asked Wolniakowski whether she would like the MOU workplan treated the same as other workplans today.

Wolniakowski: Not right now because we are not far enough along. I would prefer after we have an opportunity to meet with the County Planning Directors and Forest Service that we come back to you with a timeline.

Liberty: I believe you have heard the suggestions about how this is integrated with the other parts of the work, including things that we have approved as workplans already.

Wolniakowski: So noted.

Information Item: Subcommittee Report: (11:10 a.m.) Commissioner Robin Grimwade provide a progress report on the scope of work for the subcommittee. (Attachment F)

Grimwade: The subcommittee was charged with the responsibility of looking at how we provide for more timely reviews in updating the Management Plan, how we integrate that plan with the Commission’s strategic plan and other projects, in particular the VSI project, so that we can improve the Management Plan’s usefulness in terms of how it could be used to inform Management policy and financial decisions. Also, how we could be more agile and responsive to changes in scientific information, emerging social, cultural, environmental, and economic issues which we need in order to preserve those intrinsic values. We are on target to report in January subject to the Agenda.

Nichols: I believe this is going to be incredibly valuable to the Commission as a whole.

DeKay: Echo was Nichols just said. I am learning a lot and happy to continue engaging with Grimwade.

Liberty: One of the things you mentioned in the past and part of your past experience in Australia is how we structure our Agenda each month. Is that something that you might be tackling?

Grimwade: At the end of the day, it is about equipping the organization with standardized, repeatable, scalable processes so as issues pop up, we think about how we can improve. We have gone through a very hectic period with Management Plan amendment. The time has now come to focus and deliver the Management Plan. This will be the most challenging part. It would be better if we reduced the scope and number of items and focus on one or two items and then have a good robust discussion, knowing at the end of that discussion that the Commission is in alignment. This will give clear direction to staff on how to move forward. The Commission’s job is really setting direction, vision, policy, and oversight and allowing staff to do the implementation. I have discovered in my time on the Commission two of the most important things in my mind for the Commission is the reports by the Executive Director and by Lynn Burditt as the chief forester of the area. We are always in a rush when we get to their items or we lose those items. Being informed of what our stakeholders are experiencing and encountering is really important. Staff can only do so much and then there are times when the Commission has to pick up those issues and fulfill the role of the Commission, which is to make sure that the resources are there to deliver the charter of the organization. Missing out on those two reports is something that we need to pull back and give quality time to.

Executive Director’s Report: (11:23 a.m.) Krystyna U. Wolniakowski provided an update on agency operations and results of the financial audit:

- **CY 2019 Washington Audit Report:** The agency completed the CY 2019 financial audit with the State of Washington Auditor’s Office and received a clean audit report.
- **2021-23 Budget:** Despite the requirement to submit significant budget reduction packages with the 2021-23 Analyst Recommended Budget, the Oregon Governor’s Recommended Budget was released with current service level, which means no reductions to the agency’s operating budget. The recommended budget also endorsed the requested Access Database Replacement project.

The Commission complimented the Executive Director and staff on the clean audit and impressive success with the budget.

U.S. Forest Service NSA Manager’s Report: (11:30 a.m.) Lynn Burditt provided an update regarding:

- Budget and continuing resolution.
- Moving into changing conditions with states regarding COVID.
- The boundary descriptions adopted unanimously by the Commission on November 30, 2018, under Commission Rule 350-10, are in the final phase. Later this week a Notice of Availability will be posted in the Federal register. This notice will make people aware of where the descriptions are located.
- Received transmittal of the Management Plan on November 23, 2020. Forest Service is in the process of evaluating and preparing its staff report to recommend the next action. The Secretary of Agriculture has 90 days from receipt on November 23rd but we hope to be able to process that more quickly.
- Announced that this will be her last official Commission meeting. Burditt is retiring from her position at the end of December 2020. Began this position on January 1, 2012 and retiring January 1, 2021. Will be transitioning to continue helping the Forest Service with interagency work with the state of Oregon on fire recovery. Hoping to announce the person who will act in Burditt’s position until a replacement can be found at the next Executive Committee Meeting. Casey Gatz will serve as Forest Service liaison serving on the Gorge Commission during interim.

All of the Commissioners thanked Commissioner Burditt for her work and dedication during her many years of service.

Other Business (11:49 a.m.) Chair Liberty announced his recommendations for the 2021 Executive Committee membership and requested Commission consent: Commissioners Grimwade, Kaufman, Miller, Wainwright, and Liberty.

Motion – Commissioner Nichols: *Endorse Chair Liberty’s recommendation for the 2021 Executive Committee membership as follows: Commissioners Grimwade, Kaufman, Miller, Wainwright, and Liberty*
Commissioner Blair seconded the motion.

DeKay: Why is Commissioner Nichols not included?

Liberty: Does Commissioner Nichols wish to continue to serve?

Nichols: I do.

Amended Motion to Include Commissioner Nichols - Commissioner Nichols: *Endorse Chair Liberty’s recommendation for the 2021 Executive Committee membership as follows: Commissioners Grimwade, Kaufman, Miller, Wainwright, Liberty, and Nichols*
Commissioner Blair seconded the motion

	Yes	No	Abstain
Blair	×		
Clark	×		
DeKay	×		
Ericksen	×		
Grimwade	×		

Kaufman	×		
Meninick	×		
Miller	×		
Mills	×		
Nichols	×		
Wainwright	×		
Liberty	×		
Total	12	0	0

Connie Acker announced that all attendees (public) will be required to leave the Zoom webinar prior to Executive Session. She went on to explain that after Executive Session, the public meeting will open again and Chair Liberty will announce that Executive Session has ended and that no decisions were made by the Commission during the session. Chair Liberty’s announcement will be recorded and uploaded to the Commission website.

BREAK – 11:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Executive Session: (12:00 p.m.) The Commission held an Executive Session pursuant to Commission Rule 350-11-006(1)(h) to discuss the Executive Director 2017-2019 Performance Review. After executive session, the Chair announced that the Commission did not make any decisions in executive session.

Adjourn (12:30 p.m.)

Meeting Attachments:

- Attachment A – Staff Report & Presentation Slide – FY 2021 Work Plan Priorities and Roadmap/Timelines
- Attachment B – Staff Report & Presentation Slide – FY 2021 Climate Change Action Planning
- Attachment C – Staff Report & Presentation Slide – FY 2021 VSI Project Planning
- Attachment D – Staff Report & Presentation Slide – FY 2021 DEI Workplan Summary
- Attachment E – Staff Report & Presentation Slide – FY 2021 Klickitat County NSA Compliance Study Workplan
- Attachment F – Subcommittee Slide (Commissioner Grimwade)
- Attachment G – Public Commission Meeting Protocol

Approved – 1/12/2021