



**TO:** Columbia River Gorge Commission

**FROM:** Mike Schrankel, GIS Manager

**DATE:** August 11-12, 2020

**SUBJECT:** **Information Item:** Update on the Land Use Designations Map for Gorge2020

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## **Background**

Section 6(b) of the National Scenic Area Act directed the Commission to develop Land Use Designations (LUDs) for the use of all non-Federal lands within the National Scenic Area. The original maps (adopted in 1991) were small-scale (i.e., less detailed) hand-drawn maps as that was the generally available mapping technology at the time. The maps offered county planners a few basic reference points such as taxlot lines and prominent landmarks to aid in determining the location of a questionable LUD boundary.

By the early 2000's, the six counties in the National Scenic Area were implementing computer based Geographic Information Systems (GIS) into their decision-making workflows. With that came demand for the Gorge Commission to provide a digital version of the LUD maps. The Gorge Commission did not have the requisite staff resources at that time to develop those maps, so the conversion was contracted to the Oregon Corrections Enterprises-Cadastral Services (inmate labor) for completion. While the contractor delivered an admirable product, they did not have the detailed base maps and more accurate digital taxlot data that would become available just a few years later. As counties began integrating more accurate taxlot, road centerline, and hydrologic data into their GIS, they found the original digitization of the LUD boundaries didn't align with that more refined data. This created additional uncertainty as to the actual intended locations of the LUD boundaries.

In 2012, Multnomah County requested that Commission staff provide clarifications of LUD boundaries in relation to the higher resolution and refined data now in common use. Throughout 2015, Gorge Commission staff worked with Multnomah County to clarify their LUD boundaries and delivered a new LUD dataset in March of 2016. These clarifications were made pursuant to Commission Rule 350-50-035, which allows:

(1) The Executive Director and Area Manager may jointly correct any typographical, grammatical, cross-reference, mapping discrepancies (such as land use

designation boundaries that differ from property lines when the intent to follow property lines is clear) created by using maps with different and coarse scales, or other similar error contained in the Management Plan that does not change the substantive provisions of the Management Plan.

(2) The Executive Director and Area Manager shall report such changes to the Commission at a regularly noticed meeting. The meeting agenda shall include notice of a report under this section. For such changes, the Commission shall not be required to amend the Management Plan as provided in this division of the Commission's rules, nor seek concurrence by the Secretary of Agriculture.

The Executive Director and NSA Area Manager presented this information to the Commission for Multnomah County corrections during their March 8, 2016 Commission meeting.

### **Clarifying the LUDs in the Other NSA Counties**

Subsequently, beginning in 2018, Gorge Commission GIS staff began a project to clarify the LUD boundaries in the remaining five NSA counties in the same manner as for Multnomah County. This was especially important as the legal descriptions were finalized and adopted by the Commission for the urban area, external and GMA/SMA boundaries to assure the LUD corrections corresponded to the legal descriptions of the boundaries.

The purposes and processes of this project as listed below were presented as an information item to the Commissioners at the April 2019 meeting, and a follow-up work session provided an update near the conclusion of the project at the December 2019 meeting.

Staff is asking the Gorge Commission to adopt all clarifications—in Multnomah County and the other five NSA counties—in a new LUD map as part of Gorge2020. Staff recommends this approach because the Commission can do it as part of revising the Management Plan without the Executive Director and Area Manager preparing a separate written report and making a separate oral report as required in Commission Rule 350-50-035 (the process used for Multnomah County). Adopting the new map as part of Gorge2020 will also eliminate any possible question whether one or more clarifications is a typographical, grammatical, cross-reference, mapping discrepancy or other error that qualifies for the process in Commission Rule 350-50-035. By enacting a new LUD map, the new map becomes the official LUD map.

### **Methodology for the Clarified LUD Map**

#### 1) Obtained authoritative base map reference data

- Current Spatial Data
  - Taxlots (Counties)
  - Elevation Contours (USGS)
  - Rivers, Streams, Waterbodies (USGS-Nat'l Hydrologic Dataset)
  - Recently clarified Exterior, Urban Area, and Special Management Area boundaries
- Historical hard-copy data
  - Hand drafted maps (1991)
  - Management Plans
  - Files and maps from Multnomah County LUD project

## 2) Developed criteria for adjusting LUD lines

- Reviewed workflows and adopted guidelines developed for the Multnomah County LUD project
- Guided by chapters 1-6 of *Part II: Land Use Designations* in the *Management Plan*, it was determined if LUDs were more likely defined by either human-made or natural features
  - FOREST, AGRICULTURE, COMMERCIAL, AND RESIDENTIAL
    - Policies for these LUDs refer to “blocks” or “tracts of land” and “ownership patterns.” These phrases imply discrete, defined boundaries. For the most part, the old-digital layer shows the boundaries for these LUDs mirroring the shape and direction of human-derived lines such as taxlot section, or road centerlines. In these cases, the obvious intent was for the LUD boundary to be coincident with the other line types
  - OPEN SPACE
    - Open Space policies consider protection of sensitive and scenic resources These rarely coincide with taxlot lines or other man-made features. In the absence of obvious natural features, very few adjustments were made to Open Space.
  - PUBLIC RECREATION
    - Public Recreation policies consider ownership patterns (generally State & County Parks). Public Recreation boundaries will generally follow taxlot lines, and can safely be adjusted to coincide with them when obvious
  - Minor LUDs
    - COMMERCIAL RECREATION: This designation occurs in only four places within the NSA, and the intent was obviously to follow taxlot lines in each case
    - RURAL CENTER: This designation occurs in two places within the NSA, with the same obvious intent as above
  - SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA
    - The US Forest Service drafted and maintains LUDs in the SMA

## 3) Adjusted LUD boundaries to coincide with appropriate reference data

- Tracked progress using a square grid overlay to ensure methodical and complete coverage
- Referenced existing GIS data, original hand drawn maps, and the Management Plan to ascertain intent
- Marked questionable areas for further review with Gorge Commission staff and county planning staff.

## 4) Shared clarified boundaries with County Planners

- Hosted a workshop for County Planners on October 15, 2019
- An [online mapping application](#) was made available for easy review and comment by County Planning staff
- The LUD data layer was shared with GIS staff when requested
- At the end of the review period for the Counties, 18 comments were received, and were resolved with simple edits or documentation provided by the county

## 5) What this mapping project did not do

- No intentional changes to general land use designations. During Gorge2020, the Commission received some comments and requests to change land use designations. These changes were beyond the scope of Gorge2020; however, the designations on slivers of many parcels

changed as part of adjusting LUD boundaries to coincide with appropriate reference data. Additionally, Commission staff's work on this project corrected some minimum lot size labels on parcels in the Forest and Agriculture designations located within Deer & Elk Winter range that were inconsistent with Policy 7 on page 122 of the June 1, 2020 Draft Management Plan:

*On lands designated Large-Scale or Small-Scale Agriculture, Commercial Forest Land, or Large or Small Woodland that include deer and elk winter range or turkey habitat, new parcels shall be 40 acres or larger in the west end of the Scenic Area and 80 acres or larger in the east end of the Scenic Area. In Oregon, the division between the west and east end of the Scenic Area is the Hood River. In Washington, the White Salmon River is the line of division.*

- No changes to the recreation intensity classes and landscape settings maps. The linework on these maps is primarily resource-based and not as closely tied to the same accurate taxlot, road, etc. digital data as the LUD map.

**NEXT STEP:** Staff request the Commission adopt the clarified LUD Map as part of the adoption process for the Gorge 2020 Management Plan.

**Attachment:** Example of a corrected LUD line.

# Example of LUDs not Aligned with Base Data

The map on the left highlights some areas in which the LUDs do not align with the Exterior Boundary, Street Centerline and Taxlot lines. The map on the right displays the LUDs after editing to make boundaries coincident.

