



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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June 30, 2020

Columbia River Gorge Commission
PO Box 370
White Salmon, WA 98672

Dear Commission Members:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) greatly appreciates the opportunity to continue working with the Gorge Commission staff and members on the draft Gorge2020 Management Plan. The draft plan has been greatly improved through all the hard work of your dedicated staff and land protection partners.

We would like to share our new riparian habitat management tools as a recommendation for addressing riparian buffers throughout the plan. The purpose of WDFW's forthcoming Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) Riparian Volume 2: Management Recommendations is to provide guidance to protect, and—where possible, restore—healthy, intact, and fully functioning riparian ecosystems. The width of the riparian ecosystem is typically based on site-potential tree height (SPTH) measured from the edge of the active channel or active floodplain. A fundamental component of PHS Riparian Volume 2 is the use of SPTH at 200-years (SPTH₂₀₀) to help delineate the width of the area that, when fully functioning, provides sufficient riparian habitat for fish and aquatic wildlife, and also generally supports the riparian habitat needs that terrestrial wildlife have. SPTH₂₀₀ is based on a number of characteristics including soil type, slope, most common long-lived tree species, and the predominant surrounding ecosystem within the landscape. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife compiled and analyzed this data for the majority of Washington State and created an online, publicly-available mapping tool to depict this information spatially.

Also please consider adding peregrine falcons and bald eagles to your species of special interest to the public. These raptors frequently utilize the scenic area and enjoyed by members of the recreating public. Or consider not limiting the number or type of species in order to be adaptive to changing public interests.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Gorge2020 Management Plan. We look

forward to continued discussion with both the staff and commissioners to bring this update to completion. If you have any questions or would like further clarification, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



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