

Land Uses Updates in Gorge 2020

Gorge 2020 is a three-year process to review, and revise as necessary, the **Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (CRGNSA) Management Plan**. Part II of the CRGNSA Management Plan includes goals, objectives, policies, and guidelines for the **land use designations** in the National Scenic Area. The land use designations are intended to protect resources in agricultural lands and forest lands; protection and enhancement of open spaces; and in the GMA, identify areas used or suitable for commercial development. Part II Chapter 7 of the Management Plan includes **general policies and guidelines for land uses** in the land use designations.

How Updates Were Identified and Proposed

During the process of public scoping, staff meetings with state and federal agencies, and discussions with county planners, Gorge Commission and Forest Service Staff received comments related to language and policies in the Plan that are perceived to cause unnecessary confusion and inefficiencies in the development review process, as well as suggestions about specific land uses and activities that might need to be added to or revised in the Plan.

Throughout 2018 and 2019, Commission and Forest Service staff consulted with NSA county planners to identify and work through the technical fixes to the plan. At a series of public open houses held for this focus topic from August to October 2019, staff gathered input received from landowners and other local stakeholders. Input received from all of the public meetings along with feedback and guidance from the Commission informed the proposed revisions presented in the draft chapter.

Synopsis of Proposed Updates

- Adding new expedited review use for **roof-mounted solar panels**, provided they comply with the resource protection and procedural guidelines in the Management Plan.
- Removing the provision for **cluster developments** from the Plan. Cluster developments are rarely proposed, and opportunities for these kinds of land divisions are limited.
- Remove the term “cottage industries” to streamline language. Combining the current guidelines for Cottage Industries and **Home Occupations**, keeping the term “home occupations”. Add a definition for “home occupations” in the Glossary.
- Adding guidelines for the current practice of permitting **renewable energy production** as a review use, accessory to an existing approved use.
- Adding **overnight accommodations** in established single-family dwellings as a review use in the GMA.
- Changing allowances for **bed and breakfast inns** to be only in the SMA.
- Clarifying the guidelines for **commercial events** by modifying the description of types of commercial events allowed, adding a definition of commercial events to the Glossary, and adding guidelines for monitoring commercial events.
- Clarifying what is considered a **mining** activity by updating the definition for “Exploration, development (extraction and excavation), and production of mineral resources” in the Glossary.

Modifications to Definitions

- **Accessory renewable energy system** – A system accessory to a primary structure or allowed use on the parcel that converts energy into a usable form such as electricity or heat and conveys that energy to the allowed structure or use. An Accessory Renewable Energy System is a solar thermal, photovoltaic, or wind turbine structure, or group of structures designed to offset all or part of the annual energy requirements of the primary use on the subject parcel.
- **Agricultural building** – separated the definitions for agricultural buildings and agricultural structures.
- **Agricultural structure** – updated to include fences, trellises, and irrigation systems.
- **Commercial event** – An organized gathering at an allowed commercial development. Such events include weddings, receptions, indoor concerts, and farm dinners, and are incidental and subordinate to the primary use on a parcel.
- **Dwelling unit** – updated for clarification.
- **Exploration, development (extraction and excavation), and production of mineral resources** – modified to clarify that transportation of mineral resources is included in the definition of mining.
- **Fruit and produce stand** – A venue on a property selling agricultural products primarily grown on the subject parcel. Fruit and produce stands are not a commercial use.
- **Home Occupation** – A small-scale commercial use conducted in a legal single-family dwelling or accessory structure, employing the residents of the dwelling and up to three outside employees. Periodic use of home offices, studios, and other work areas used only by the residents of the dwelling are not a home occupation.
- **Overnight accommodations (GMA)** – The rental of one or more rooms located in legal single-family dwelling on a daily or weekly basis. Overnight accommodations are clearly incidental to the use of a structure as a single-family dwelling and are owner-operated.

Formatting / Editorial Changes

- Updating language throughout the chapter for consistency with new draft language in resource protection chapters.
- Adding language to clarify policies and streamline implementation.

What's Next?

Public comment will be accepted on the draft Management Plan from **June 1 to June 30, 2020**. The Gorge Commission and Forest Service will also host two informational Zoom video webinars:

- Proposed Changes to the Management Plan: **June 11, 2020 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**
- Public Comment Virtual Open House: **June 25, 2020 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

For more information on how to submit comments and to register for these webinars, visit the Gorge Commission website: www.gorgecommission.org.

After all comments are reviewed, staff will provide a summary to the Gorge Commission at their July 2020 Meeting. The final draft of the Management Plan will be presented for Commission approval at the August 2020 meeting.

Questions about this chapter? Contact Joanna Kaiserman – joanna.kaiserman@gorgecommission.org