

[Email received 6/27/20 from Pamela J. Marley, pj1255@gmail.com]

June 27, 2020

Columbia River Gorge Commission:

I'd like to submit my comments regarding your oversight and management draft for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

Stream Buffers

Streams in the General Management Area, just as in the Special Management Area, need a minimum 200 foot protective buffer from pesticides, development, and off-road vehicles. Please implement.

I'd like to suggest county employees, when visiting areas on county business, distribute wildflower seed along stream banks and at appropriate roadsides to encourage pollinator populations.

Urban Sprawl, Land Use

I built my home and have made it my primary residence in the west end of Skamania County for over 30 years. In my own area, neighbors, friends, and I have witnessed blatant inattention to county codes and ordinances regarding land use, additions, and inspections, which, besides overuse, greatly increases the risk of wildfires. An employee of Skamania County's Planning Dept. has conveyed to me that land use enforcement is **not** given a high priority. The NSA regulations are quite extensive; neighbors should not be turned against neighbors attempting to interpret and report violations. Please *severely* limit new dwellings and *prioritize* adequate permits and inspections to minimize risk to humans, wildlife, and our beautiful forests and waterways. It is disheartening that, for example, there are numerous "visitors" living in "temporary" motorhomes, completely disregarding NSA lot size requirements, and often dogs run at large, harassing wildlife and disturbing fragile areas, without a single enforcement officer available.

Perhaps the county could require a NSA informational packet be acknowledged by signature upon closing for all land sales or distributed at the time of ownership filings.

Please limit entry to the Gorge when air quality is poor and especially when fire risk is extreme. Perhaps this could be accomplished with a transponder system to allow residents to travel freely but limit tourist traffic. We would very much benefit from an operational weigh station on Highway 14 as well.

Recreation

Please develop a plan to coordinate temporary closure of trails and recreational sites. Perhaps an alternate-days scheme, based on license plate digits, could work.

Climate Change

This county is very much in need of an expanded recycling program to discourage wilderness trash dumping. Residents would likely be more inclined to participate if there were, at the very least, increased hours at transfer sites, but ideally, curbside service, even if only offered on a twice monthly basis.

Please help restore the area's livability by completing a climate change action plan within 1 year of adoption of the revised management plan.

Explore, please, the Commission's authority to act upon these issues and suggestions.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Pamela J. Marley
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