

Dear Columbia River Gorge Commission.

We have systematically left out, exploited, and murdered First Nation, Black, Hispanic and cultures of color within the Columbia River Gorge, one way we have done this is through land management plans. As a country we are working to dismantle structural racism and white supremacy to create real equity. We need to re-examine and re-work this management plan as it helps uphold many systems of white supremacy and systemic racism. I ask that we please work to make this plan anti-racist. If anti-racist is an unfamiliar term, the book *How to Be Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi is a fabulous resource. There are many ways this plan needs to be re-done in order to be anti-racist I am including several examples.

1. White supremacy comes with a set of characteristics that are ingrained in our systems and perpetuate oppression. The article [White Supremacy Culture Characteristics](#) by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun highlights these very successfully. These characteristics show up all over this plan. Please re-visit this plan and seek out spaces to dismantle where characteristics of white supremacy are being used. This is an opportunity to find alternative modes of operation to better serve our community.

2. The History section needs to be re-written. Currently this history is from the white perspective and it is not ok for us to white- center our history, this is not acceptable as we need to center our history in all people and hold ourselves to accountability to the realities of experiences and histories for all involved. We need to include First Nation and Indigenous history and be led from the perspective of all communities that have been excluded and included on this land. Genocide of First Nation communities happened on this land, Blacks were expelled and not legally allowed to live on this land - this needs to be included in the history of the area. Japanese internment camps and hispanic deportation prisons are part of this history. This also includes Black, Hispanic/Latinx and other cultures of color that have been included and excluded and exploited within the Columbia River Gorge. Please review these resources of history and go much further and develop a much more complex accurate history.

- a. <https://www.confluenceproject.org/library-post/tribes-of-the-columbia-river-system/>

- b. <https://calendar.eji.org/racial-injustice/jun/26>

3. Include a Land Acknowledgement, as a government body that is tied to the white supremacist system overseeing land that was stolen from Native and First Nation folks, we need to start all our work with land acknowledgements to acknowledge and heal from the history of land management in the area.

4. We need an Equity Plan. At this point no document that is written by our government institutions should not include an equity plan. This needs action steps to redress the hundreds of years of systemic racism and white supremacy that has excluded communities of color from the area. It also needs to talk and create steps about how white supremacy and systemic racism is being dismantled within the management plan. This work needs to be done with communities of color both in Portland/Vancouver and the Gorge, as may of the

communities of color in the cities have not been allowed to be part of there gorge and those in the gorge have been moved, relegated and oppressed within the community. For some good references I will bring us back to characteristics of white supremacy culture

- a. <https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html> .
- b. <https://www.racialequityalliance.org/resources/racial-equity-action-plans-manual/>

4. Every piece of this management plan needs to include more around racial justice, because racial justice is environmental justice.

Intersection of justice is critical to create meaningful environmental change and protect our communities. I invite you to explore these texts to help shape arguments around edits that need to happen to this plan.

- a. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/05/climate/racism-climate-change-reading-list.html?fbclid=IwAR3xm3nJO08kQqo-U2600hB3tmV917JaAlAveW7U34BMAj6riQaEAptucY>
- b. https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-northwest-racism-outdoors-nature-hiking/?fbclid=IwAR1nSLYbBiwFvAS-spL3ao2l_uoj20SNUhxqfN0bRTdyB-A8BFI9I3LZ1Ik
- c. https://www.opb.org/news/article/black-birding-week-oregon-bipoc-conservation/?fbclid=IwAR1gGrJQnarG6ymUzo5vZelpJy0Di9dFGk-U5-tNc0gDS_CXGobDopO61po
- d. https://e360.yale.edu/features/unequal-impact-the-deep-links-between-inequality-and-climate-change?fbclid=IwAR1hOZh4SrbWD09WSAXCCfS8ldxIVr_HgPodlKiHGOC4awHaqVm2xpByT9k

Thank you for taking racial justice serious and making meaningful changes to this plan in order to dismantle white supremacy and systemic racism so that the gorge community may grow and heal and be a prosperous space for all communities.

Thank you,

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