

[Email received 6/29/20 from Gordy Molitor, gordymolitor@gmail.com]

Dear Columbia Gorge Commission,

The Commission should prioritize the following issues in its plan review. There should be no delay in adopting these climate adaptation policies: Adopt a climate action plan to better protect resources. Identify how climate change is expected to impact all resources in the Scenic Area and what measures the Commission will take to address those impacts. This can always be periodically updated with new information after plan review and revision is completed.

1. Update fish and wildlife habitat protection based on best available science, such as for salmon. Expand buffers for streams, ponds, and other sensitive wildlife sites. Stream buffers in the General Management Areas of 100 feet for fish-bearing streams and 50 feet for intermittent streams are inadequate.
2. Prohibit the loss of wetlands. Restore wetlands where possible.
3. Maximize public safety and environmental rules for any fossil fuel transport through the National Scenic Area. Prohibit coal dust pollution from open-topped coal cars traveling through the Gorge and take enforcement action against polluters and violators.
4. Stop urban expansion. Promote urban planning and encourage growth to occur in existing urban area boundaries, as required by the National Scenic Area Act.
5. Prohibit conversions of forest land to agricultural land.
6. Adopt energy efficiency standards for new dwellings.
7. Limit new dwellings within forest zones to reduce the risks of wildfires and to protect human lives.
8. Protect and promote the proliferation of native plants, particularly Native American first foods.
9. Stop urban expansion and require urban growth to occur within the boundaries of the 13 existing urban areas in the Gorge.

After plan review, the Commission should prioritize the development of a "Transfer of Development Rights" program to avoid the climate impacts of dispersed residential development on resource lands and encourage growth to occur in existing urban areas, as required by the purposes of the National Scenic Area Act.

Regards,

Gordy Molitor