

Comments from the Hood River Listening Session:

Mitigate climate change and impacts of fossil fuel transport
Increase support of tribes and provide economic development for them
Increase and provide ped, bike, bus access to recreation areas
Traffic congestion issues
Expand access to further out recreation sites
Enhance synergy of local business community with recreation and each other
Enhance synergy of local business community with rec and each other

Consider one way of HCRH at eastern end
Emergency service providers (state and local FS) do not have resources to handle demand
Disaster (including Natural) resiliency
Provide accommodations for various recreation users, address congestion and incompatibility
Maintain growth in urban areas
Ensure laws are upheld at approvals and maintained through the life of the project via enforcement
No logging or minimal extraction
Encourage development of old growth
Threat of fire vis a vis climate change
Increase meaningful participation opportunities for minorities and youth (diversify shareholder/stakeholder)
Better public transportation across the bridge
New bridge
Protect high value farmland
More native input (CRITFC)
Tribes are on the last 6 pages of document, consider moving to front as sign of respect
Consider ways to crowd source revenue
Protect white oak habitat
Offer a wide variety of environmental interpretation, considering various interpretive signs and methods that are effective for broad audiences
Protect landscape features and consider whether protection buffers are sufficient
Provide a mix of trail designs
Problematic cell towers – they can be an eyesore
Drones
Work with urban areas on hike/bike friendly communities
Consider how railroads act as barriers for both humans and wildlife, separating the rest of the landscape from the waterfront
In general, consider how to improve connectivity for humans and wildlife, but the access to water habitat in particular is an issue
Marking some roads for bikes
Consider how the plan can support green design and less environmental impacts within the urban areas
Secure and sustain funding
Hand air and water quality issues
Collaboration amongst agency partners to work together on regional issues
Housing attainability and security

Sound process for urban area expansion
Enhance local control
Funding
Public understanding needs to be increased
Protect living cultures and tribal treaty rights
Tribal cultural awareness
Tribal affordable housing
Scenic resources are a multisensory experience not just a visual experience
No wind turbines
Air quality
Dark sky initiative
Biodiversity
Climate change
Trains and coal need to be addressed: pollution, traffic, fire danger, coal dust
Affordable housing
Trail design (range of experiences): accessibility and shared trails
Opportunities for engagement
Interest in the idea of a Gorgewide loop trail that connects communities
Impacts of recreation: growth and tradeoffs, risk of loving the Gorge to death, distribution of benefits
Logging prohibition
Balance tipped to protection vs economics
Need measures of objectives spelled out in the plan

Uphold and more clearly define the purposes of the Act

- There is too much emphasis on economic development over resource protection
- What does it mean to support local economies?
- Protect wildlife habitats, corridors with buffers
- Protect the Columbia River – consider water quality policies, protect it from fossil fuels transport by water or rail
- Cultural resources need protection
- Tribal rights need protection

Need to consider impacts of activities conducted or regulated outside the NSA

- Wind farms, fossil fuel infrastructure and development
- Hold the line on boundaries and development
- Coal train pollution and contamination
- Weakening federal environmental protections mean there is a greater need for regional protections
- Development and transport affects River water quality

Need for regional science and regional solutions related to climate change, wildlife movements and habitat connectivity management

- The NSA should provide regional leadership in climate change issues
- Encourage European-style trail throughout the NSA
- Protect the Historic Columbia River Highway
- Support Towns to Trails
- Provide a diversity of outdoor opportunities and promote human connection to nature, wild areas

Increase fairness and consistency in regulations

- Inappropriate developments are being approved

Proactive protection of the resources, planning tools

- Support design elements and developments that enhance resources and the user experience
- Smart development can be beautiful and serve many people's interests
- Create a certification system or educational strategies for architects, planners, realtors, landowners to be experts in NSA building
- Understand impacts of climate change and land use on species and habitats – protect these
- Science and information must be generated, used, and shared here
- Equity and Livability
- Protect residents as well as visitors

Cost of living is high

- This is a very special place and it should cost more to live in desirable places
- Affordable housing is needed, especially for service workers who are important to local economies

Consider cumulative impacts of development and land use decisions

Implementation of the Plan

- Development review takes too long
- There is a lack of tools and expertise to assist landowners
- Issues that are not addressed or need clarification in the regulations
 - Trailers on properties – what is allowed? Hardship dwelling being abused?
Temporary dwellings can be eye sores and should be required to have screening vegetation. Compliance and enforcement of temporary occupations
- Regulations need streamlining for the landowners and the planners who have limited capacity to assist

Solutions and ideas

- Create certification programs for NSA expertise
- Promote science and track local change
- Build partnerships and increase awareness
 - Work with schools, citizen scientists, monitoring
 - Staffing is down; local support can help the Commission increase capacity
- Invest in proactive tools to streamline development reviews and relieve the planning burden

Main Concerns

- Management Plan issues from 2004 that were deferred need to be addressed.
 - Retaining walls came up a lot. Is permitting every little retaining wall a good use of limited staff resources?
- Gorge Commission should discuss, individually, all changes to management plan instead of voting “in toto” or all at once.
- Definition of compatibility. How does a 14,000 sf house get built when all houses around it are 3,000 sf?
- Cumulative Impacts
 - Cumulative impacts not addressed, like Hood River’s view of Underwood Mountain with all the development that has occurred under current land use destination.
 - Cumulative impacts of coal and oil trains not addressed.
 - Need detailed studies with 3-d rendering to show what impact future development will have on the visual landscape.
 - FOCG has some data on “hotspots” for cumulative impacts.
 - Perhaps limitations of size of dwellings. But current rules have lots of compatibility standards.
 - What exactly is a “tipping” point in the landscape?
 - Maybe look at “medians” to set standards and exclude outliers.
 - Buildable lands inventory important. What does the landscape look like today and what might it look like built out under the current management plan?
 - Focus on rapid-growth areas.
 - Buildout may be unrealistic. It might occur over long period of time.
 - Issues with non-compliance of existing standards.
- Alleged that plan reviewers are not checking that applicants are not lying on their applications.
- Recreation
 - No update last time of 1980’s project list
 - Lots of recreation “hot-spots”
 - Plan needs recreation vision, then implementation plan
 - Needs to be looked at as a bigger vision
- Cultural
 - Not limited to native American population. Eg Hood River recreation impacts orchardists and farmers who have been a fabric of the community for a long time.
 - Recent Gorge Community meeting. Local population changed (negative) attitudes to increase of recreation activity
 - Juggling of multiple cumulative impacts with different, often conflicting values
- No mention of climate change in plan. Was not on people’s radar at the time.
- Environmental impacts vs scenic impacts. Encourage solar arrays?
- Affordable housing issues impact on scenic area.
 - UA’s expected to accommodate developments, but t in Washington Counties 2/3 of population lies outside of UA.
 - Are policies in the scenic area contributing to housing un-adorability?

- In some urban areas there is still a rural culture. Look at Dallesport rezoning controversy.
- Compare Gorge economy to other similar areas. Get a picture of impact of act on economy.
- New economic uses. Vineyards and cidaries and commercial events.
- Housing needs. Are they regional or local? The group consensus was regional.
- Corbett has need for more housing and it is not a UA.
- What is the agreed upon or universal vision for the gorge? Example: what should underwood hill look like?
- Be careful to use policies to pick winners and loser. E.g. solar panels vs. reflectivity.
- How will we accommodate population growth that is coming?
- Currently affordable housing needs to remain affordable.
- LESS but MORE EFFECTIVE REGULATION. Work with realistic resources levels. Avoid pie in the sky, what can the commission actually do?
- Policy vs. regulator. County's need input in regs that they are going to have to implement.

What are your main concerns?

- White Salmon River, post dam removal, protecting Pacific Corps land below dam.
- Protect forest from logging, clear cuts
- Trailhead over-crowding, trail over-use
- Impact of Climate Change
 - Wildlife and Natural Resources
 - Population increases
 - Transportation and increases in moving residents, visitors and commerce
- Long term Transportation plan that looks to future needs

Management Plan

- Should be forward thinking, continuous public education important
- What do we see 30 years from now?
- What is the future of the Commission itself, and the Forest Service?
- Need to be able to measure achievements to know if MP is working
- Benchmarks (VSI) based on best available SCIENCE
- Are there ways we can be 'greener' and incorporate that into plan?
- Is there something we can add to innovate transportation ideas?

Funding

- Need to find a way to secure reliable funding stream
- Considering changes in DC, how do we protect our resources (\$ and SNCERs)

Address threats

- Climate Change
- Air Quality
- Activities outside the boundary that impact the NSA
 - Large scale ag, dairy farms
 - Power plant emissions
 - Wind turbines just outside scenic area tall enough to impact scenic resources
 - Potential oil spills from derailments anywhere along the river

Recreation

- Enforcement of rules (illegal camping, trail building)
- Economic Development and Recreation are closely linked
- Promote concept of Towns to Trails to spread people out, disperse crowds, impacts

Land Use Designations

- Open space designations: Land use designations should have teeth
- Is protection of open space in GMA viable? Can it be enforced?

Urban Areas

- Direction for Urban Areas to optimize their economic development potential
- How do you interpret MgtPlan so that the Urban Areas can thrive?
- What exactly is a minor revision?
- How do you control cumulative effects of multiple minor revisions?
- How do you ensure that the Urban Areas keep within the spirit of the Act?
 - Commission could be fostering long term planning and visioning, especially in the smaller UA's who don't already have such programs.
 - A "Gorge Commission Certified" program to showcase successful projects, encourage compliance

How is the plan working?

- Overall opinion is that it is working great
- Evidence: Troutdale and Camas/Washougal vs NSA boundary

Other concerns?

- Prohibit open pit mining
- Access to Klickitat River spit in Lyle
- Access to White Salmon River, parking concerns at 141A and 14 junction
- Tribal fishing access, protecting salmon in areas of high recreation use
- Controlling # of users
 - permits?
 - Shuttles
 - A GORGE PASS! Or a CRG NSA vanity plate to raise \$
- Airspace controls (drones, low flying aircraft as airports expand)

Main Concerns

- Traffic, overuse, and types of traffic. Conflicts arise between types of traffic.
- Character of Highway damaged by too many big vehicles.
- Hiking trails crowded, high numbers of SAR, high demand on volunteer EMS service and fire departments.
- Parking lots and roads full. No place to park. Distribution among sites to mitigate this?
- Can people be dispersed further east? Were lots designed with certain number of vehicles in mind?
- Building difficult to do. Colors are difficult to adhere to. Why do they matter anyway?
- Length of time and ability to understand design requirements could be improved.
- Different presenses (sic?) in Oregon and Washington would be nice if EMS mutual aid was easier between states.
- Reassess SMA boundaries using better GIS or other technology?
- Light pollution is not monitored.
- Coal and oil trains. Does Commission have authority here?
- Economic development – Very little on the Washington side. Look at areas outside the scenic area.
- Pressure on the whole area from too many visitors. Increased theft and graffiti.
- Huge numbers of people take toll on local law enforcement, ems, SAR and fire. Has to be covered by county.
- Day users don't necessarily stay or buy things. Drive through. Large numbers don't equate to money in the community.
- Locals avoid trails because of increase in use.
- Maintenance of existing structures and roads. Noxious weeds are not being taken care of.
- Division of parcels in scenic area. Why can't they be broken up? Hard to find anyone to answer theses questions.
- Land zoning need to be revisited.
- Promote economic development in urban area. Increase activities and advertise around local business.
- Shuttles – Private or sponsored? Can there be more for both sides – get people out of cars.
- Plan needs to consider effects of climate change. Increasing water temps and fish mortality.
- Plan seems to be protecting scenic and cultural resources for the high amount of visitation.
- How is economic development measured? What metric and how are they meeting them?
- Connection between Gorge and River. Opportunities to use river are cut off by railroads, I84, and SR14.
- Could railroads be used as a shuttle to bring people in and out and relieve traffic issues?
- Highlight geologic features such as the ice age floods.
- Fire danger – thinning would reduce danger while increasing money to communities.
- Parking and trailheads closer to stores and eateries.
- Towns to trails. Get Forest Service on board to complete the vision.
- Cumulative effects and unexpected consequences.

- Developing private partners to help maintain structures and trails.
- Economic disparity between Hood River and Bingen and the rest of the gorge (Cascade Locks, Mosier, Home Valley, Lyle, Stevenson).
- Economic diversity – What does it look like now vs 50 years ago – How do we promote or diversify? Can we provide incentives to attract new and diverse companies?
- Housing – If we bring business in, where do employees live?
- Matching new business to existing communities.
- How is infrastructure maintained? Is it fairly distributed with the number of visitors?
- Urban growth boundaries and housing – Increase density instead of increasing urban area boundaries.
- Should Urban Area boundaries be increased.

Main Concerns

- Economic Development
 - Recreation access
 - Fishing/Salmon
 - Forest conservation
 - Scenic value
 - Water protection
 - Permit process
 - Economic enhancement
- Recreation
 - More infrastructure around trails
 - Connections – Towns to trails
 - NEPA process for trail building – regional process rather than individual trails.
 - Spread people out!
 - Recreation puts stress on counties. Police, rescue, etc. creates economic burden.
 - Depending too much on volunteers.
 - Funding for counties to deal with the NSA
 - Funding for Gorge Commission
 - Opportunities for sport fishing and supporting wild salmon
 - Bike trails as economic benefit. Mountain biking and paved trails.
 - Gorge Hubs to Washington side/
 - Bring RR in as partner in recreation development
- Natural Resources –
 - Attack invasive species. Boot brushes on trails.
 - Salmon – How are endangered species treated in management plan?
 - Are current riparian zones adequate? Look at other examples
 - Culverts barriers to salmon migration.
 - Forest harvest in GP and Skamania County.
 - Timber land swaps/forestry/economic development/ recreation impact; how do these interact?
 - Trail use – limiting number of people using parking as a tool is not working.
 - Mechanism to accommodate status of sensitive species using best available science.
- Land use
 - Review discontinued use? Does this category work as intended?
 - Streamline review process!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Cultural
 - Preserving culturally, sensitive sites.
 - Recognition of the historic tribes (like the Cascade Chinook). Address tribes not included in four confederated tribes.
 - Continuing cultural resource guidelines – very important
 - First foods preservation
- Air, water, animal protection

- Columbia River one of most endangered in country.
- Consider regulating fossil fuel transport or its effects.
- Oil spill unacceptable. Clean up costly and impossible to achieve. Salmon at risk.
- Develop new ways to tell old stories. New media?
- Looking ahead/what's coming?
 - E-BIKES
 - Drones
 - LED lighting (dark sky)
- Successes?
 - People who didn't think there were places left like this.
- Scenic
 - Restoring views/ maintenance (dealing with overgrown vegetation)
 - Improve way finding. Better signage
 - Repair scenic area signs!
- Airspace protection? Wind turbines have no buffer.
- Haze – Diesel locomotives, trucks, ships
- Low emission wood stoves?
- Money for VW settlement
- Electric charging station in urban areas (metered)
- Recreational birding opportunities.

Main Concerns

- Overuse of trails.
 - Disburse crowds throughout the Gorge
 - Advertise alternate trails
 - Provide information about towns to trails
 - Info kiosk at popular hiking spots pointing to another close trail in that area.
 - Real time website with trail and parking info (including trails outside of NSA).
 - Public transit options
- More enforcement of existing problems.
 - People get approval and do something entirely different.
- Competing authority between Gorge Commission, counties, states, and federal.
- Funding for all served, particularly emergency services. Shouldn't federal money be included to help pay for emergency services?
- Update recreation intensity classes.
- Identify what has changed in the Gorge between 1986 and now and 2003 and now.
- Coal oil trains a detriment.
- Increase highly safety on SR14.
- Trail use – Illegal trails and overuse of existing trails.
- Encourage economic development – including areas outside of NSA to take pressure off NSA.
- Forest road management could help with fire management.
- Promised economic development money that was never delivered. 1.4 million. How to move forward with remaining funding?
- How do we regulate wind power resources?
- How do we protect NSA from impact of decisions made outside of the NSA? For example, ports and oil terminals create demand for goods to be moved through the Gorge.
- Create more access to forest service lands.
- Motivate people to use solar and wind power. There are many designs of wind turbines that can be visually subordinate and do not harm wildlife.
- Keep urban area boundaries intact. They protect the gorge from urban sprawl.

The majority of the conversation focused on economics vs resource protection—how do we create compatibility. They asked what kind of projects could meet both needs? Discussed “Towns to trails” as a possible way to merge both goals, to be good for recreation and good for the local economy.

One landowner was concerned that Towns to Trails is trespassing on private property. It was clarified that those were illegal trails created by hikers and not part of Towns to Trails because those trails have not been completed/permitted yet. In general people felt that this could be a good economic stimulus if there was more landowner cooperation and no liability if something happened to the hikers on private property. All the landowners in the group expressed some measured support for Towns to Trails if landowners are partners and see some benefit from the cooperation they provide, without any liability. How can the positive vs negative impacts be measured? Lack of education about the trails—use the plan review process to explain to the public what will happen with the land.

They wanted to discuss how do we actually address and utilize “cumulative impacts” in the plan, especially if the Gorge has a “carrying capacity”. Ok to allow houses under current LUDs but how many are too many and do we know when we reach capacity and then have to turn down applications because we have reached carrying capacity. Need to address this somehow in the plan. (I tried not to engage in discussion and just told them we were acknowledging their comments and questions)

Several people expressed concerns that the Forest Service has bought up too much land in Skamania County and there are many unemployed former timber industry workers with no other opportunities for jobs. Finding additional economic opportunities in Skamania County residents should be a priority for the Gorge Commission.

They also commented that realtors need to be better educated about the NSA and be truthful and make potential buyers aware about restrictions of building or renovating in the NSA.

The plan needs to do more to explain/encourage economic resources/development in the NSA. What is the Gorge Commission doing to encourage economic growth in areas where allowed by the plan and what needs to change in terms of land use designations to allow some additional flexibility to encourage economic development, especially in Skamania County?

Important to get facts about economic performance in the Gorge communities in terms of employment vs unemployment.

The plan needs to be updated to deal with fossil fuel transport and expansion through the Gorge, and review any rules that affect fossil fuel transport. Does the Gorge Commission have any authority over the RRs?

Commission should be more proactive about reducing/monitoring/regulating coal dust from trains. Commission should work with the RRs to control the coal dust in the NSA, promote covered cars and less flammable products.

Costs and benefits of promoting recreation—too many people are getting hurt on the trails and the cost of rescues is a strain on the local government budget. There should be some consideration or funding mechanism to be able to address these additional costs.

Commission should encourage Forest Service in the SMA to allow selective harvest/thinning on lands that help enhance habitat but could also bring in some timber revenues. The Forest Service should allow thinning and make it a less cumbersome process (this was from the DNR participant). DNR manages more than 65,000 acres within the NSA and they want to better understand the basis of the regulations.

Other comments related to the Plan:

- More needs to be done to protect oak trees.
- More needs to be done to treat/remove invasive species.
- Need to protect more habitat for the squirrels
- Remove subjectivity of interpreting the NSA regulations by planners.
- Establish a partnership with a paint company for “Gorge Paints” that are the colors that are approved by the Commission—pre-mixed and branded as Gorge friendly.
- Changing land use patterns (more vineyards) and rising land values with concerns about future development impacts on availability of affordable housing.
- [Note: Landowners Greg and Adrian from Kahnaway Art and Ecology are still waiting for an opportunity to talk with Gorge Commission about potentially modifying their zoning to be able to permit/locate their education center in a large barn in Washougal]

Recreation has been short shrift – there needs to be more opportunity, hiking, and river access

The original plan vision of connection is not being met; lots of disconnected trails

There is not enough overlap between recreation and economic development

There are questions about trail connections across the states and FLAP grants

Friends has been working on Towns to Trails

Could Friends educate hikers to support EMS services?

Could private partnerships with REI, others help offset drain on resources?

Open access to public lands improves quality of life for residents as well as tourist

Realtor – The Gorge is an awesome destination

Developers don't know that NSA regs don't apply in Cities

Needs for connectivity – work with private lands for easements (i.e. Lacamas Lake)

Emergency access

Better transportation solutions to move people on both sides of the river

Concerns about rock slides on SR14, excess truck traffic = need for WA/OR cooperation

There is a lot of recreation based pull-off traffic on the OR side which is just picking up on the WA side

Vandalism of parked vehicles

Money for county coffers and sheriffs

Levies to fund EMS and Fire

More funding for sustaining local businesses

Side note about 3 3's – 3 days, 3 meals

Economic Development should be more effective, equitable, responsive to local needs

Tourism does not equal family wage jobs – cash flows out to Vancouver and Portland

Economy in Skamania Co is depressed

Stevenson is in good shape

Skamania Lodge and other gems throughout the gorge

Weddings and other commercial events create revenue for the local economies

Pooled money would better lift communities

Rural/agricultural grants

More density in urban areas makes this possible

Pre-Bea House it was easier and now has become more difficult

People want to buy land in the NSA and respect the rules

Assist people through the development process and provide grants

Hood River had no housing, had to go to White Salmon/Bingen, while kids are in school in Hood River

2 large plots of land in Stevenson

Definite shortage of low-income housing

5,000,000 in grants already allocated

Mosier has to deal with oil train clean up

There is nothing in the Management Plan dealing with climate change

Spread of pests, lack of winter snow pack

What is considered a major development?

Local considerations – West end versus Catherine Creek

Gorge has its own set of CC&R – vacation homes should pay their way and not detract from local resources

Is transfer of development rights a possible strategy here?

Location and event fees?

At inception there were fewer environmental laws in WA, but that has improved. There is overlap and redundancy now

Water rights impacts, especially in Underwood

Oil coming through the Gorge – impacts of major derailment highlighted that emergency resources are not sufficient and must be address

It's nice to see the Commission do more related to rail expansion

Internet access will bring people here and improve quality of life

Balancing Access and Transportation

Consider safety corridors in popular rec areas

Trucks causing congestion on SR-14

Recreation

Need to provide access – more trailheads

Need to alleviate crowding at popular sites

Provide more access points with connected trails

Review identified projects from the past for progress and needs (e.g. old mountain bike trail proposal)

Economic Development

What is the current picture? Demographic data and regional information needed

There is inequity in Washington

Consider expanding economic funding to places outside the NSA

Need more engagement with local governments

Counties provide services for visitors (e.g. Search and Rescue) without compensation

Need to consider cumulative impacts

Quantify and monitor these through Vital Signs Indicators program

Population growth will stress resources

Streamline the development process and shorten permitting timelines

Expand the list of uses allowed outright or by expedited review (e.g. utilities, replacements and repairs, public facilities, some in-home business uses, etc)

Reorganize the plan to be more user-friendly (e.g. all uses allowed outright in one place)

Consider simpler conditional use process

Ensure consistency with changes to state and federal policies/information

Consider emerging industries

Allow accessory dwellings

Allow larger accessory and agriculture buildings

There is currently no mechanism for individual land use designation changes

Review lot sizes and opportunities for splitting parcels

Clarify the process for changing Urban Area Boundaries

Review home-business guidelines and review requirements

Provide education and tools to understand visual subordination – update the Handbook

Educate realtors

Improve consistency in design requirements for sites visible and not visible from KVAs

Protect ecosystems

Improve the website to assist landowners identify requirements for their projects

Monitoring

Monitor air quality and support regional solutions

Work with NEON and other groups

Form volunteer groups to look for grants to support VSI

Organize volunteers

Monitor compliance with permit decisions and conditions

Support development of the health industry on the Washington side

Lack of enforcement and monitoring is a problem at CRGC and Counties

Review cluster development policies and planned development - they don't seem to be working

Coal trains, recreation, overuse

Objective versus subjective management plan

Distribution of parking from Larch and Multnomah Falls

More robust support for economic side of Management Plan - make it more dynamic to match market changes

How the Plan addresses fire management, history, and prevention

Clean water, education about treaty rights, tribal history, housing, overall development of Gorge

No resources for agricultural producers who want to start businesses in the Gorge - Commission can't keep staff. Some limitations weren't brought up til late in application process. It's difficult to navigate the application process

Planners lack business and ag background to help applicants

More balance of staff (not only protections for natural resources but also for those putting in ag business)

Plan needs to have more specific criteria for colors, camouflage, building requirements

Gorge Commission website doesn't have old cases listed anymore, so applicants can't reference precedence or prior applications.

Implementation is different county to county

Extended timelines for building processes

Inconsistencies between applicants - different planners interpret the plan differently

Planners state they don't agree with color regulations, which compounds the problem

Better education for gorge residents about treaty rights, not only historical, but current rights as well

Taught in schools as curriculum, more written information available

Affordable housing for treaty fishing rights should be made available

More local support for treaty inholdings and uses

How can management plan protect and promote tribal interests in the Gorge?

Fire protection and prevention - more thinning and harvest needed to make forests less susceptible to large fires

Balance protection of natural resources with active management

Urban Area boundary expansion to enhance economic development

Local gorge residents need to be heard in the plan revision

More enforcement of recreation rules to protect recreation areas from over use and resource degradation

Maintain outdoor experiences - views, rec opportunities

Management Plan is only as good as interpretation - people implementing plan may not all be on the same page maybe classes so they can all start from the same base

Lack of enforcement of trail use

Program to encourage landowners to collaborate with tribal leaders and scientists

Plan needs to be implementable - too subjective as planner turnover is high and it has to be implemented over so many jurisdictional boundaries

More consistency between counties for development applications

Hard to determine management activities based on plan rules

Require that all elements with requirements be objectively measurable

More forest service presence on the landscape - more law enforcement too!

Utilize volunteers with existing knowledge base to help with planning

Coal/oil trains - update on transportation and development

Zoning managed by people living in the zones - citizen run interest groups to help navigate zoning process. Larger gorge commission so more focus is given to each group (recreation, agriculture, business) with subcommittees to help focus areas

More solution based focus for plan implementation

For next stage of public input

- More solicitation of public input

- First session was not well publicized

- Put on front page of gorge commission (web page?)

Make the plan more user-friendly

Do more with what we have, given staffing levels of CRGC and Counties

Plan could help streamline permit processing

Possibly use a spreadsheet

Promote the WA side to relieve pressure from visitation on the OR side

Parking should be designed to look nice

Need more trash disposal and bathroom facilities

Promote the economy

Bring in more tourists by promoting outside the NSA

Transportation infrastructure

Note: Lost Lake trail is wheelchair accessible; how about Coyote Wall?

Allow B&Bs with more than 2 bedrooms

Search and rescue resources are stretched thin

People could adopt trail segments like they do highways

Concerns about coal and oil trains

Train traffic volumes wall people off from the river

In some places the tracks are higher than the road

Part of the PCT is in private hands, though there is an easement in place

More migrant labor housing is needed

Be more flexible on light colored roofs to keep homes cooler

Orchardists experiencing more deer issues – fencing shouldn't require full review

Celilo Village needs a voice; tribal member rights need recognition at in lieu sites

Formal communications plan to connect commission, tribes, counties, cities, citizens

Should be distinction in setting between residential and agriculture

Survey all development proposals for impacts to first foods

Consider tourist draw of cultural resources and provide interpretation

Treaty rights can be a positive force for good

Be open-minded and proactive with residents and stakeholders

No big box stores

No wind turbines

The old mill in Skamania County should be repurposed or cleaned up

The Act is written so that only named uses are allowed – flip to what is not required is allowed and allow for creativity

Development pressure in the right areas in the right ways

Give Commission carrots to offer as well as sticks (e.g. design help)

Protect cultural resources

Two purposes of the act are equal, not subservient

Plan should provide more guidance than regulation (too many “shalls”)

Cumulative impacts need to be looked at carefully, proactively

Can be cumulatively positive

Enhanced vigilance on dark skies and light pollution

No billboards is a positive

Maintaining harmony and smart growth

Goodwill tour

Railroad transport of oil, coal, and other hazardous materials through the Gorge

- Limit train numbers, amount of material, dust, and impacts to water and air (may be out of scope)

- Require industry studies

- Small business owners are suffering

- Communities are not equipped to deal with fire risk and emergency

- Risk assessments are needed for earthquakes, etc

- Consider charging the RRs for miles traveled in each state, as is done for truckers (e.g. Spokane)

SMA federal acquisition of private lands

- Impacts County tax base, especially in Skamania with less private land

- Compensation should be paid to the Counties

- There is a need for coordination with Counties when applications come in

Fees and control strategies for recreationists

- Require parking permits, tolls, a Gorge tow truck, or other charges

- Enforcement is a challenge but even without it, charges are a good strategy

- Past efforts have not succeeded, but with increased use could they work now?

- Resources are being damaged and facilities are being overrun

- Use permitting as an opportunity to educate users

Encourage sustainable recreation

- Disperse use

- Analyze the carrying capacity

- Eliminate trespass and illegal trails; manage trails and enforce permitting

- Reduce demand on local fire and EMS (mostly volunteer)

NSA and its implementing counties are underfunded

Conduct resource assessments – what is the state of the resources we are protecting

- Places being “loved to death” (e.g. Oneonta Gorge)

- Commercial and Industrial lands inventory and trends analysis

Define a major/minor change to UA boundaries and clarify the process for change

Clarify roles and responsibilities

Partners, agencies, stakeholders

How does the Management Plan relate to other plans?

Clarify the process that landowners must follow

Economy of the Gorge has changed a lot

What does it mean now to support communities?

What are the limitations? Can CRGC address UAs, housing, infrastructure needs

Assist working landscapes to diversify incomes

Allow agritourism, commercial uses associated with ag uses

Include new industries and trends in the Management Plan

Provide a vision – what do we want to see? What scale and types of uses? What's compatible with NSA in terms of events, commercial uses, industry, and ag?

Consider water impacts from wineries, breweries, etc

Communities need utilities outside UAs

Emergency services are limited

Issues not addressed in the Management Plan that need attention

Hazard mitigation

Wildfire risk reduction and response

Storage and response facilities not allowed outside UA

Thinning and forest health to reduce fuel loading and risk

Update provisions and guidelines with best available science, protecting scenic resources while promoting forest health; GMA/SMA are handled very differently

Support landowner assistance programs

Climate Change resiliency (insects and disease, fire adapted systems)

Keep in mind that large crown fires impact the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources as well as economies. Harvest methods can incorporate scenic and natural protections

Revisit relationship between private and federal lands for forest practices standards

Grandfathered uses

There are several examples of abandoned commercial buildings that could be made more compliant if change in use were made easier

Solar panels and other uses should be allowed outright

Industrial use demonstration and review process is burdensome

Focus on the intent of the NSA, not the minutia

Recognize that we lose support and encourage violations when we have too much red tape

Focus on common ground

Consider cumulative impacts of many “small” decisions in aggregate

Communicate better with the public

Streamline the review process

Provide templates and experts to help, “Proven winners”, update colors in the Handbook

Provide for quicker approvals for some uses

Cost and contracting burden on landowners can be high

Land Use Designation changes

What’s the process? Can changes be part of Plan Review?

How could we fund a comprehensive effort to revise them?

Are County zones (more) appropriate? How different are they?

Prioritize UAs for change reviews

- Oil trains – protections in place and plan to protect.
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Split lots – In/Out
- Trails and Recreation. Protect ability to use public lands with horses.
- Abandon barb wired fences.
- Mosier Double track.
- Recreation section is out of data.
- SMA-UAB conflicts and questions. UAB “self-contained”
- Outreach to tribes. Communicate every step of the way.
- Commission/NSA has protected will. Keep/strengthen.
- Barbed wire fences on public land. Can plan address problem? When looking at inventory/projects make sure it is cleared out.
- West end overcrowding on weekends
 - Limit access?
 - How do we look ahead/anticipate?
 - Col. Highway trying to look ahead at this.
 - An approach that allows forward thinking
- Equity/affordability of residents to live, work, and play.
- Financial support through commission to offset expenses of development in the NSA (50/50 split with developers) for SNCRs. Maybe GC could help with finding funding.
- DLCDC funds help
- Changes in UABs. Define minor changes!
- Management of rec resources
 - Forest Service needs to add new trails.
 - Permitting may be needed on weekends
 - State/Federal land managers work together.
 - Gorge parks plan should be aligned with Management Plan
 - Get rid of project list in the plan.
 - Watersports – access points varied maintainers. Work with Assn.
 - Cycling safety/bike lanes.
 - One rec passes for Gorge instead of all the different passes.
- Logging – Selective, for fire suppression, economic reasons
- Transportation – Bus service throughout the Gorge?
- Expanding access while mitigation access – search and rescue, natural resources themselves.
- Limit access to sensitive areas.
- Where is the tipping point? How do we id the threshold.
- Set policy on drones.
- Drone issue has two sides. They can be a nuisance but can also have positive impacts, such as aiding search and rescue.
- Dog policy/leashing.
- Good neighbor authority – ODOT/OSP included?
- Education – leave no trace
- ODOT rest areas.

- Fossil fuel transport. Air pollution and wildlife disturbance.
- Rec/trail value – What is it?
 - Economic impact to Gorge as a rec area
 - Draw for companies for employees
 - Lifestyle
 - Benefits of increasing trails.
- Strategy for staying ahead of technology/access.
- Equity and inclusion of age groups
- How do we reach diverse populations?
- Update maps of public lands and status.
- New plan – easier to read/use.

Issues we care about:

Cumulative effects review

Urban Area Expansion – expand into rural residential and preserve/protect farm land

Infrastructure siting outside UA in certain circumstances

Connected trails with a focus on established trails and connecting communities

Tie to CEDS in dynamic fashion

Consistency with economic development plans (CEDS, Ports, Cities, Counties)

Tourism is not an appropriate strategy as a sole economic development focus

Collaborate with economic development after scoping, before plan recommendations move forward

Question: where can CRGC advocate with federal agencies in support of community needs

Ex: Army Corps of Engineers North Bonneville issue highlighted in CEDS and Skamania economic development priorities

Commercial events at wineries and negative impacts

e.g. visitors impacting ability for farmer to move tractor between fields

review the number of events and size of events

Wineries – expand to value added agriculture to recognize the diversity of types of products

Farmworker housing

Housing – talk with MCHA

Housing crisis requires creativity

Short-term rental impacts

High privacy fences – key viewing areas

What does “enhance” mean in the Act’s purposes?

It can mean to restore. What about scenic enhancements? Recreation?

Tribal treaty rights consultation

Recreation: how does the plan address recreation funding?

GIS – review inconsistencies. E.g. Underwood Community Park

Open space and green space

Work with local planners during rule/plan development and subsequent interpretation

Consistency in interpretation of language among CRGC, all counties

Address renewable energy

- Encourage small scale hydro/solar/wind

Tourism is creating a problem in places

- Insufficient resources to deal with the number of people (emergency, impacts)

- Manage to carrying capacity

Transportation review

- Oil/coal trains regulation and disaster relief

- Air quality mitigation

- Mobility – movement of people

- Concern for increase in railroad traffic, both the quantity and what is being carried

Preventing sprawl – dense planning before expansion to preserve open space

Incorporate climate science considerations throughout the plan

Enforcement

- Guest house transition to rentals in the GMA

- Without having to sign a complaint form that may lead to retaliation against the reporting party

 - Balance against challenges of anonymity

Small scale fishing support, especially commercial

- Consistency – resource-based businesses are treated differently than non-resource based

- Clarifications down into implementation of the rules at County planning level

- Home based businesses with family employees that do not live on site

- Different interpretations by county, CRGC, hearings officer

Define minor and major change

Solutions and improvements

Cannot rely on CRGC by themselves

- Funding for strategic areas

- Partnerships

- Resources to expedite reviews

Connectivity

- Transportation, EV charging stations

Gorge Broadband Consortium

Sustaining FLAP funded WET bus, Col Gorge Express

Railroad and passenger rail

Infrastructure – provide a clear process

Cell towers that blend into the landscape (e.g. look like trees)

Malleable plan for changing conditions that is interactive and evolving (creates concern as well)

Logging/Forestry

wildfire and ecological function

wildlife management

Some logging on FS lands should be allowed

Economic Development

Unemployment rate differs

Trails could support econ devel on the WA side

Urban Areas

Running out of room, The Dalles for example is restricted

High density urban development creates undesirable aesthetic (e.g. Mosier)

Lyle lost part of its urban area and is now a "bedroom community"

Port of The Dalles is running out of sites for development

Beyond tourism address housing affordability and living-wage jobs

Problems with recreation

Parking lots

Residents enjoy trails too, but private property rights need to be considered

Trails should be planned with infrastructure on public land

How do we capitalize on the economic activity?

How do we disperse recreational use?

Development review policy and process

Solar panels - rule change is needed to allow energy efficient solutions

Need prompt processing of applications with due process

The Act has done well to protect scenic views

Commissioners

Should be required to live in the Scenic Area to experience being subject to rules

Oil trains and coal trains create coal pollution

Solutions:

Recreation buses

Urban Area replacement for lost land (e.g. Lyle)

Better approaches for fires

Trails - balance more recreation versus property rights

Timely processing of applications

Gorge Commission marketing, listening, and partnering

Expedited review process for smaller applications

Better recreation facilities and parking areas

Increase access to the River; access for kite boarding on the Klickitat River

- Farmers/Orchardists
 - Housing for workforce. Already dealing with state and federal regulations.
 - Deer fences have positive effect for farmers.
 - Dark roofing creates hot conditions for workforce housing. Then farmers need to pay for A/C.
- Cumulative impacts
 - Little or no alternative.
 - Old fences that aren't being used are causing negative impacts. Remove old fencing when new fencing is approved and installed. Look at fences on Forest Service land.
 - Ag/forest transitioning to rural residential. The landscape is changing.
- Climate change
 - Effect on plant species and animal migration.
 - How do we plan around climate change?
- New things since last plan review.
 - Coal/oil change. What is the role of government?
- Landscape settings. How do we measure visual sub ordinance?
- Growing populations puts more demand on resources, particularly water. Co-mingling wells.
- Urban Area Boundaries
 - Major vs minor growth. How does that impact other resources?
 - Need to be fair to cities but also stick to goals.
 - Density in the Urban Areas. Getting people used to the idea is difficult but necessary to prevent sprawl.
 - Large average lot sizes in the Urban Areas.
 - What can we do about the "missing middle?" Duplexes, triplexes, grannie flats. Things that current codes do not allow.
 - UAB expansion should be fact based, like UGB expansion in Oregon.
 - Priority of land to expand into. Spare high value farm and forest land.
 - Create fair process.
 - Coordination between CRGC and state process. Eliminate redundancy.
 - Issues with expansion of when development butts up to existing agricultural uses.
 - Increased population in UA's might put more pressure on rec resources?
 - If UA's increases in size, they should still provide parks and rec.
- Recreation
 - Illegal trails. How can we control that? Does CRGC have any say?
 - Process for establishing trails?
 - Overcrowding at recreation sites? Rec intensity only really regulates parking spaces.
 - Rec is too focused. Move people through the gorge.
 - Social media brings more people to already over used sites.
 - Dispersion could inadvertently have negative impacts.
 - Regional parks in the Urban Areas?
- Forests
 - Small forest land owners need the ability to manage their lands. Often they are helping with forest health and maybe break even financially. Allow working forests.
- Cascadia earthquake preparation.

- Solutions
 - Analytical test of what qualifies for a minor change.
 - Recreation vision. Not just a series of one offs.
 - Unresolved issues from last plan review
 - Who manages/pays for rec facilities? Especially when trails cross different ownerships?
 - Streamline efficiently of app process.
 - Oil/coal transport
 - Clarification for forest practices on private property.
 - Communication to people new to the gorge about living, working, building tin the NSA. Building in the NSA handbook is a good example. Recruit realtors as well.

- Consider differences in how archaeologies vs Native Americans view cultural resources. i.e. landscape is a pharmacy and medicines can be damaged.
- More recognition of Native American “first foods”
- Ensure independent listening sessions for each tribe.
- Consider modern Naive American practices.
- There are no veteran’s monuments in the Gorge.
- Need safer access to water across train tracks.
- Concerns about real expansions. Need to ensure safe crossings.
- Safety inspections on train tracks. Carefully define safety.
- Driving safety is another concern i.e. winter hazards
- Review and update natural resource monument principles with up to date science and latest landscape changes.
- Outreach and transparency on why regulations exist so residents understand both natural and scenic views/angles.
- Outreach to disenfranchised and immigrant and English as a second language populations
- Ensure good notification of public and tribal listening sessions.
- Study key areas to determine what forms of access make science (on foot, vehicles, etc.).
- Need a land for addressing illegal trails.
- Consider expenses of lost hiker. Winter warnings? Signs?
- Consider global warming. Snow pack, fire, pests, weeds.
- Fish and wildlife (update with latest science)
- Permit process for housing is slow and frustrating.
- County planner – Commission coordination.
- Paint color on house is a challenge. Better consideration of availability.
- Boundary issue (city/urban)
- Fish and wildlife and treaty rights. Protecting the right habitat and protect corridors.
- Scenic area overall good but permitting and rigs a burden and implementation and enforcement are hard.
- Oil trains.
- Potential expansion of urban areas. Would like focus on development within boundary
- Housing restrictions on private property area a financial burden.
- Residents feel like they don’t own their property but they pay taxes.
- Compliance is uneven.
- Consider homeowner/builder perspective.
- Highway 30 – Better bike safety
- Hiking options nearby – ideas for recreation.
- Recreation can damage native fishing nets.
- Native plant gathering places – concerns about pest, invasive, and marijuana.
- Consider how distributing recreation might affect SMA’s (where to site). Put new facilities near already disturbed sites. Consider Oregon state parks recent approach.
- Everyday folks have a harder time with mitigation and problem solving compared to corporations.
- Disclosure to property owners about regulations.