

Interpretation and Education

Interpretive and educational programs and facilities are an important part of Congress's vision for the Scenic Area, as well as the vision of the Gorge Commission and Forest Service, expressed through the provisions of the Management Plan. Sections 6 and 8 of the Scenic Area Act specifically direct both agencies to "identify areas suitable for. . . public use facilities. . . including. . . educational and interpretive facilities."

This chapter provides a basic policy framework guiding the interpretive and educational programs for the Scenic

Area. Specific goals, objectives, and guidelines for interpretation are included in Part I, Chapter 4: Recreation Resources. The *Interpretive Strategy for the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area*, incorporated by reference into the Management Plan, is a separate document that provides detailed recommendations for interpretive themes, facilities, and programs at particular sites in the Scenic Area. It is recommended that readers interested in specific interpretive and educational opportunities and facilities refer to that document.

GMA/SMA PROVISIONS

GMA/SMA Goal

Protect and enhance the human and natural resources of the Scenic Area by increasing public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of them.

GMA/SMA Policies

1. Interpretive and educational facilities and activities should be provided that increase awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the diversity of Scenic Area resources and their interrelationships.
2. Interpretive and educational facilities and activities should be provided that increase awareness and understanding of how Gorge resources have affected

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human activity, and how human activity has affected and continues to affect all the resources of the Gorge.

3. Interpretive and educational opportunities should be provided that attract visitors to the Gorge, meet their needs, enhance their experience, and increase their knowledge.
4. A full spectrum of barrier-free (physical, linguistic, cultural, sensory) interpretive and educational opportunities should be provided.
5. Implementation of interpretive and education facilities and activities in the Scenic Area should follow the recommendations of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Interpretive Strategy.
6. The Gorge Discovery Center at Crate's Point should be the focus and nucleus of interpretive planning and activities in the Scenic Area. Interpretive staff should coordinate with other agencies and partners.
7. The interpretive program at the Skamania Lodge Conference Center should function as an extension of The Gorge Discovery Center, providing both orientation information and interpretive services.
8. An environmental education program based on the resources of the Gorge should be established for elementary through secondary students and adult groups.
9. Four gateway centers, a series of information stations, and Scenic Area entry signs should be established to provide Gorge-wide visitor orientation information and interpretation based on the immediate environment.
10. All interpretive and educational facilities, activities, and media shall be designed to comply with all the guidelines and policies of the Management Plan.
11. Measures to protect sensitive cultural and natural resources shall be required as part of any interpretive or educational effort. Tribal consultation shall be required for any efforts involving interpretation of Native American prehistory, history, or culture.
12. Interpretive and educational facilities shall be funded through recreation appropriations and partnerships.