ABS 029 Summarized Revenue by Account and Source
Columbia River Gorge Commission
Agency Level
2023-25 Regular Budget Session

23R - 23-25 Budget Request

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintenance Level</th>
<th>Policy Level</th>
<th>Annual Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY2024</td>
<td>FY2025</td>
<td>FY2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>001 - General Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0310 - Dept of Agriculture - F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>90 - Maintenance Level Revenue</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total - 0310 - Dept of Agriculture - F</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0541 - Contributions Grants - P/L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8L - Lease Adjustments</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 - Maintenance Level Revenue</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1 - Geographical Information System Mgr</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2 - Legal Counsel</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3 - Build Resilience to Climate Change</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D4 - DEI Outreach and Implementation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DB - ACCESS Database Replacement Project</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total - 0541 - Contributions Grants - P/L</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>001 - General Fund - Federal</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>001 - General Fund - Private/Local</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total - 001 - General Fund</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agency: 460  CRG - Federal
647  573  766  565  1,413  1,138  2,551

Agency: 460  CRG - Private/Local
631  557  766  565  1,397  1,122  2,519

Total - Agency: 460  CRG
647  573  766  565  1,413  1,138  2,551

- unknown source title - Z

8L - Lease Adjustments
This package will provide sufficient funds to cover the lease increase for the Columbia River Gorge Commission's (CRGC) 2900-square-foot facility.

D1 - Geographical Information System Mgr
The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) requires a full-time Geographic Information System (GIS) Manager. The current 0.5 FTE GIS Manager can maintain the agency’s GIS at a minimal service level but increasing demands exceed the capacity of a half-time position. Increasing the position to full-time will allow the GIS manager to accommodate additional responsibilities including GIS analysis for the new Vital Signs Indicator Program, the Climate Change Action Plan, and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives as well as integration of the GIS with CRGC’s new land-use and permitting database, improving public web maps and dashboard applications.

D2 - Legal Counsel
Request 1.0 FTE for legal staff to increase legal capacity and handle current and future workload of litigation, appeals, public records management, and disclosure, maintain rule compliance with Oregon and Washington law as required by the National Scenic Area Act and Columbia River Gorge Compact, and legal advice to commission and staff. One additional staff is especially needed when the Commission’s one current legal staff cannot legally advise both the Commission and staff in enforcement and appeal hearings.

D3 - Build Resilience to Climate Change
Request 1.0 FTE Climate Change Program Manager to lead implementation of the Columbia River Gorge Commission’s (CRGC) Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) and support implementation of the Vital Sign Indicators (VSI) monitoring program using climate indicators. Climate adaptation and mitigation strategies are a priority for Washington state. This senior-level position is critical to moving these two highly integrated CRGC priorities from the planning to the implementation phase.

D4 - DEI Outreach and Implementation
The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) is requesting additional funding to cover costs related to implementing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan for internal operations, public outreach, and engagement in the National Scenic Area.

DB - ACCESS Database Replacement Project
The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) is nearing successful completion of Phase 1 of our Access Database Replacement project funded in the 2021-2023 biennium. CRGC is now requesting Phase 2 funding to complete the project in the 2023-2025 biennium. Phase 1 was funded equally by Washington and Oregon and resulted in a Feasibility Study and recommended solution. Phase 2 will implement the recommended solution and include reviewing, indexing, and digitizing 35 years’ worth of paper records, migration of digital data and files into the new platform, a data governance strategy, and an organizational change management plan.
## Report Number: ABS029
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Agency Recommendation Summary

The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) is nearing successful completion of Phase 1 of our Access Database Replacement project funded in the 2021-2023 biennium. CRGC is now requesting Phase 2 funding to complete the project in the 2023-2025 biennium. Phase 1 was funded equally by Washington and Oregon and resulted in a Feasibility Study and recommended solution. Phase 2 will implement the recommended solution and include reviewing, indexing, and digitizing 35 years’ worth of paper records, migration of digital data and files into the new platform, a data governance strategy, and an organizational change management plan.

Fiscal Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Summary</th>
<th>Dollars in Thousands</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2024</td>
<td>2025</td>
<td>2023-25</td>
<td>2026</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing</strong></td>
<td>FTEs</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<td><strong>Operating Expenditures</strong></td>
<td>Fund 001 - 1</td>
<td>$553</td>
<td>$352</td>
<td>$905</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fund 001 - 7</td>
<td>$553</td>
<td>$352</td>
<td>$905</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,106</strong></td>
<td><strong>$704</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,810</strong></td>
<td><strong>$40</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td>001 - 0541</td>
<td>$553</td>
<td>$352</td>
<td>$905</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>$553</strong></td>
<td><strong>$352</strong></td>
<td><strong>$905</strong></td>
<td><strong>$20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decision Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

**Project Background:** For at least 15 years, CRGC has relied upon Microsoft Access as the main database system to store, maintain, and track the information needed to fulfill its mission of protecting the Scenic, Natural, Cultural, and Recreation resources while supporting economic development within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (NSA). Over time, planners have added new fields to the database while other fields have been orphaned. The existing database is comprised of over 100 fields. With each revision, data integrity processes have not remained consistent. Newly added fields were not backfilled with historical data. As a result of this inconsistent data entry, conducting any kind of search has been difficult at best. Many data fields require information from our Geographic Information System (GIS), but since it is not possible to integrate Access and GIS these fields cannot be automatically populated with accurate and consistently formatted data. Instead, the data must be manually entered which requires more time and is susceptible to erroneous data entry. The database is not the only source of records used by the CRGC. CRGC also stores hundreds of boxes of historic paper documents that have not been digitized and indexed due to the lack of a public records clerk, thus making earlier records practically impossible to retrieve without countless hours of searching.

By making data easily searchable and linked to our current GIS, a new system configured to our current and future needs will allow CRGC to be more organized and responsive. We will be able to better serve stakeholders such as residents and county planning departments who need information about specific parcels of land and development impacts on resources.

**Project History:** CRGC received funding to complete Phase 1 in the 2021-2023 biennium. With this funding, CRGC hired vendors for project management, business analysis, and quality assurance. This project team identified weaknesses, inefficiencies, and gaps in our current database workflow. They then determined that the best solution for a new database platform should consist of a cloud-based Configurable Off-The-Shelf (COTS) permitting platform that will increase efficiency, accountability, and transparency while reducing our legal liabilities.

Oregon and Washington equally contributed to the $425,000 total used to fund Phase 1. Phase 1 has continually adhered to the project’s Scope, Schedule, and Budget. With assistance and oversight from Oregon Enterprise Information Services (EIS) and the Washington State Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), CRGC kicked the project off with the development of a technology budget. The technology budget split Phase 1 expenditures and tasks (deliverables) across four gates, with the requirement that the deliverables within each gate be completed and approved by the state oversight teams before funds could be released for the next gate (items in bold have been completed as of the date this document was prepared).

1. Gate 1 - Planning & Initiation (Completed)
   a. 0.5 FTE Internal Staff Project Coordinator established
   b. Project Management and Business Analyst Vendor Procured: CRGC submitted a Request for Proposals (RFP) during November 2021, with Portland firm Sitka Technologies (now dba Environmental Science Associates or “ESA”) selected as the successful bidder
   c. Established Project Roles & Responsibilities
   d. Developed Investment Plan
   e. Developed Project Management Plan
   f. Development of Governance Criteria
   g. Established a weekly meeting schedule with the project team
   h. Formation of Executive Steering Committee comprised of ESA and CRGC staff along with representatives from Oregon EIS
and Washington OCIO. Meetings are held monthly and facilitated by CRGC Project Coordinator

2. **Gate 2 – Needs Assessment (Completed)**
   a. **To-Be Workflows** - Improved process diagram for the three Categories of workflows
   b. **Gap Analysis** - Analysis to identify the gaps between the current processes and ideal to-be processes
   c. **Target State Objectives** - Eight objectives for a new system that addresses gaps and inefficiencies in the current system and processes.
   d. **Request For Information (RFI)** - Posted March 21 and resulted in 13 responses which were then scored. The top 4 vendors were selected for demos based on the applicability of solution type and estimated cost of implementation.
   e. **Business & Technical Requirements** - Requirements that specify what the solution must provide to meet CRGC’s objectives, vision, and goals, and requirements that specify how the solution’s architecture and interfaces with other systems and software must function to meet the business requirements
   f. **Risks and Impacts** - Six categories of risks and impacts were analyzed: Funding, Staff Capacity, Data Migration, Vendor Solution, Procurement, and Partner and Community Engagement
   g. **Solution Alternatives** (see Table 1 and 2 below)
   h. **Recommended Access Database Replacement Solution**
      i. **Recommendation for the Decision Package 2023-25 Biennium** – An informed but high-level estimate of the costs to implement the new database solution. Costs for the COTS vendor, software, and support were derived from the responses to the RFI (described above). While developed specifically for informing the Washington State Decision Package, the categories and costs are applicable to this Policy Option Package as well. Table 1 is a summary of this deliverable (note that these are total project costs, with Oregon and Washington equally splitting that total).

3. **Gate 3 – Decision Package Development (In Progress)**
   a. **Procure Quality Assurance Vendor** – Bluecrane, Inc. was selected to perform quality assurance and completed this deliverable in August 2022. (Links to the assessments and evaluation letter are attached below.)
   b. **Prepare Oregon Policy Option Package and Washington Decision Package** for 2023-25 Biennium for Phase 2

4. **Gate 4 – Phase 2 Planning & Phase 1 Closeout (January-June 2023)**
   a. Develop System Functional and Technical Requirements
   b. Prepare Request for Proposals for the Phase 2 Implementation Vendor
   c. Draft Investment Plan for Phase 2

Phase 1 will be completed by June 30, 2023.
The required deliverables, tech budget, and project status reports for Phase 1 are available for review on the [Washington State IT Project Dashboard](#).

**What is your proposal?**
CRGC is proposing Phase 2 implementation to replace the current Access database with a modern cloud-based configurable-off-the-shelf database specifically designed for permitting workflows (Solution #4 in Table 2 below). The request in this decision package is for Phase 2 and will allow the Access Database Replacement Project to get over the finish line and be implemented.

Deliverables during Phase 2 will include:
- Migrating data currently in Access to the new system
- Scan, digitize, geo-reference, and index critical historic paper files to merge with the new database using a Public Records Clerk and the GIS Manager
- Continue oversight of the project via a project team that includes a project manager, business analyst, and product owner to oversee the migration, management, training, and transition of the product to CRGC with coordination and oversight from the Washington OCIO, WA Tech, and Oregon EIS
- Quality Assurance vendor to provide external review
- Maintenance and operations over time with external contractor and internal staff coordinator
- Revamp CRGC’s website to make information publicly available
- Engage in organizational change management to ensure the new database system is integrated into the new workflow

Project cost was determined through responses to a Request for Information (see 2.d above) and consultation with WA OCIO, WaTech consultants, and Oregon EIS based on current costs for IT consultants and costs associated with IT management. CRGC is requesting **$905,000**
from Washington and matching funds from Oregon to reach the $1,810,000 total. The following table describes the projected cost by Service Category.

**Table 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Type of Cost</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>OITS Vendor for implementation of Permitting Platform</td>
<td>One-time</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>Contracted services for design, build, implementation of OITS solutions and training for CRGC staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>OITS Vendor hosting and license fees for Permitting Platform</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>First year of annual service fees for OITS solution</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>OITS Vendor ongoing support and configuration for Permitting Platform</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>First year of professional services for system support provided by OITS Vendor</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Data Digitization Vendor for scanning of paper files</td>
<td>One-time</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>Contracted services to digitize highest priority paper files</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Additional staff to support digitization effort and public records compliance</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>$190,000</td>
<td>Additional staff to support digitization effort, including adherence to public records laws and work to clarify and upload digitized paper files</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Project Management Items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a. Project Manager</td>
<td>One-time</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>Project coordination and oversight to keep project on budget, on schedule, andWithin scope.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6b. Product Owner</td>
<td>One-time</td>
<td>$355,000</td>
<td>Leadership between vendor teams and CRGC for defining and organizing requirements and maintaining project scheduling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6c. Business Analyst</td>
<td>One-time</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>Quality assurance testing of solution, requirements analysis and general project management tools like meeting scheduling.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Quality Assurance Consultant</td>
<td>One-time</td>
<td>$189,000</td>
<td>Contracted services for Phase 2 QA services.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$1,810,000</strong></td>
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</table>

**Alternative Considered:** Based upon responses to the RFI, four alternatives were ranked resulting in Solution #4 as the best option. While Solution #5 had similar rankings, a custom solution would have entailed much greater cost for little added benefit:

**Table 2:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution #</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Level of Effort to Operationalize</th>
<th>Robust Support for Personas</th>
<th>Responsiveness to Target Objectives</th>
<th>Meets Requirements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Status Quo</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Improve Current System</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Business Platform</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Custom CRGC Application</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Serving the Commission, Governments, and Stakeholders**

This new database will be designed to meet the day-to-day needs of the CRGC and will greatly benefit NSA landowners and stakeholders by providing easy access to more accurate information. It will improve staff efficiency, reduce the risk of missing data or being out of compliance with response time to public records requests, and will increase the amount of time available for our planners to conduct other essential work such as:

- Following up on complaints
- Post-permit compliance monitoring
- Taking enforcement actions when violations are identified
- Engaging with the public, agencies, and other stakeholders

Implementing the proposed solution during Phase 2 will improve efficiency by standardizing our operating procedures toward digital/online forms and eliminating cumbersome manual data entry/re-entry work for our planners, county planners, and landowners in the NSA who require timely permits. The new system will allow CRGC to centralize all historic casework, land use permit files, and correspondence to enable both our planners and legal team to respond to requests for development reviews, permits, and public records requests more quickly and accurately. It will also permit easier reporting of the metrics used to assess how well we are implementing the National Scenic Area Act to protect resources and support economic development.

**What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?**
See Table 1 and the narrative above.

**What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?**
There are two options for Phase 2:

**Option #1: Fund Access Database Replacement Phase 2**

In order to ensure that the investment of funding and time to complete Phase 1 was well spent, Phase 2 must be funded in the 2023-2025 biennium in order to get the project across the finish line efficiently and to enable CRGC to operate with a cloud-based, online data management system. Currently, the project management team of vendors and CRGC staff have an excellent working relationship, and oversight from WA OCIO and OR EIS through the Executive Steering Committee has worked smoothly performing as per the approved technology budget and work plan. Phase 2 will continue with the same project management team and will maximize efficiency and accountability.
Option #2: Do not fund Access Database Replacement Phase 2
If Phase 2 funding is not provided, then all the Phase 1 work will be shelved and CRGC will continue to operate with an antiquated Access database that will not be linked to GIS nor be available online for residents of the National Scenic Area nor the counties and other agencies and stakeholders. The 35 years of paper files will remain in boxes and continue to be difficult to access. The current project management team will be disbanded and all estimates for implementing the solution in Phase 2 will become outdated quickly. If Phase 2 were to be funded in later biennia, part of Phase 1 would need to be repeated with new vendors and potentially new CRGC staff.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:
Phase 2 implementation of the Access Database Replacement Project is a continuation of Phase 1 Access Database Replacement Project that was funded in the 2021-2023 biennium. Phase 2 is not an expansion but is needed to complete this four-year effort to modernize the CRGC data management system and digitize all records.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:
Please see Table 1 above.

Workforce Assumptions:
The proposed Access Database Replacement Project will use vendors/contractors to perform the Phase 2 work in 2023-2025. One additional limited-duration position for a 1.0 FTE public records clerk is associated with this Phase 2 decision package for $96,000 (salary, benefits, costs) for the Washington share of general fund appropriations in order to assist with records retention policy, sorting through 35 years of records and then digitizing and indexing records that need to be retained and uploaded into the new database. The current GIS Manager will continue to serve as an in-house project coordinator to provide oversight and day-to-day interaction with the vendors and staff. Other CRGC staff will also be funded through the normal agency budget and provide in-kind contributions for project implementation.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:
This proposal aligns with the Statewide Information Technology Strategic Plan 2021-25 vision of “Better Government Through Technology” and meets the following Goals, Objectives, and Initiatives stated in the plan:

- Goal #1-Efficient & Effective Government:
  - Advances digital government and Reduces barriers to access: For the first time, the new platform will provide online submittal of applications
  - Expands integration between system: the solution will integrate with CRGC’s existing Geographic Information System database. It will also provide the opportunity to integrate with partner agencies’ databases.

- Goal #2-Accountable IT Management:
  - Improve project outcomes with better practices: In contrast to our obsolete database, a modern platform can be configured to ensure CRGC staff are entering and tracking all relevant information without redundancy and errors.

- Goal #3-IT Workforce:
  - Improve support for remote work: The new database will facilitate easy access by staff working from home.

- Goal #4-Enterprise Architecture:
  - Advance adoption of modern, cloud-based technologies.

- Goal #5-Security & Privacy
  - Invest in proactive cyber solutions and practices:
    - A modern cloud-based solution will provide better security and privacy tools compared to the current outdated system
    - CRGC will collaborate with our local county government partners to improve data sharing practices
    - By digitizing 35 years’ worth of paper records, our historic records will be safeguarded from disasters such as floods and fires, as well as being more easily searchable

This Phase 2 decision package provides essential support to the following state priorities identified by Governor Inslee:

Washington Goal: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment
The Columbia River Gorge Commission implements the National Scenic Area Act passed by Congress in 1986 by protecting the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources while supporting economic interests in the NSA. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area is
the largest scenic area in the United States and the only one that has 13 urban communities. The Commission’s main focus is to review all development permits where a resource might be impacted and to then decide if that development can move forward, and if so, how to avoid or minimize the impact on resources. Given the mosaic of land use designations in each county and the numerous and complex multitude of regulations that control impacts within each of those land use designations, having accurate information on each of the resources in the NSA and the ability to do data analyses is critical. Through implementation of our management plan, we have to manage for no “cumulative adverse impacts” from our decisions and those of the county planners in the NSA and to ensure we protect resources and not make incremental decisions that chip away at the ecological integrity of the habitats and species. Having access to the best scientific information, as well as accurate data from each land use permit issued, is absolutely critical for us to be able to do the required analyses for long-term impacts and be in compliance with the National Scenic Area Act. With this decision package, we believe that our decisions will be better informed to ensure we are contributing to the Governor’s priorities for meeting this goal.

Washington Goal: Efficient, effective, and accountable government
The Columbia River Gorge Commission works with many landowners, county planners, and agencies on an everyday basis and must respond with information, analyses, and justification for all the decisions we make related to resource protection and stewardship. In order to be as transparent and accountable as we need to be as a public agency to review applications from landowners and to respond to public records requests, we need to have a database system that provides easy access to information, both archival and current, that is indexed so that it is easily searchable and available to those who need it or request it, and demonstrates that we are fulfilling the mandate of the National Scenic Area Act. We added and received approval for a state-reported performance measure related to measuring customer service and satisfaction, which comes from a desire to become more responsive and timelier in our service to the public through better data management.

Our proposed new database will make our agency:
- More efficient by reducing redundant manual data entry and GIS searches during the development review process, and increasing the amount of time that planners can use to complete tasks that have been delayed or neglected such as post-permit compliance and enforcement of permits, faster processing of development permits, and more frequent site visits;
- More accountable and transparent (speed and thoroughness of our response to public records requests);
- More effective in preserving our 35 years of institutional knowledge archived in paper files that need to be scanned and entered into the database, while assuring current and future data is digitized, searchable, and linked to GIS;
- More user-friendly to the public/landowners in designing an online application system that clients/landowners could use that populates the database at the Gorge Commission and removes duplication of efforts and manual entry, saving planner’s time to work directly and more frequently with the landowners, and can notify landowners of any updates or changes needed in an electronic format.

CRGC Strategic Plan
CRGC approves an annual strategic plan that reflects the Commission’s priorities. The Commission reviews existing and new initiatives needed to meet Oregon and Washington executive orders as well as issues that arise while implementing the management plan. The Access Database Replacement Project Phase 2 is ranked as the highest priority for the Commission in 2022-2025. The inadequate Access database has led to “Database Tracking” being listed as the highest risk in the CRGC Annual Risk Register submitted to Washington state Risk Management Office.

Performance outcomes
- **General Citizens/Landowners:** CRGC works with many landowners seeking permits to develop their land, rebuild a home, plant a vineyard, or do many other types of development activities. In order to do any kind of improvements on their land, they need to get a permit from CRGC if they are located in Klickitat County (one of the six counties within the National Scenic Area). There were double the requests for permits in 2021-2023 as compared to the 2015-2017 time periods, with only one FTE planning staff to do the reviews. The queue is long, and each permit takes six months to one year from start to finish since the requirements of the National Scenic Area Act can be complicated to meet. However, a new database system linked to GIS will allow the planner to access more accurate records and allow them to easily locate the site of the development on the parcel. An upgraded system will help us search faster and more efficiently to answer questions about past developments on the parcel and deed history. If we are able to integrate our database with our website, the owners -- or potential owners -- of a parcel can search the information themselves faster rather than scheduling an appointment with a planner. This will greatly reduce frustration by people seeking information or those not close to CRGC’s office in White Salmon. For all landowners who interact with CRGC, we have feedback forms that can be written by hand or downloaded off our website. However, we hope to build in an evaluation section that would be part of the application much like other entities’ survey customer satisfaction—to make it easy for them to respond and for us to track the performance metrics more reliably.

- **Public Records requestors:** As mentioned earlier, CRGC has received many public records requests over the years. Recent requests have left staff overburdened by the time required to sift through haphazardly maintained electronic files and paper archives. Once the new database system is up and running and all records have been digitized, indexed, and searchable by keywords, responses to public records requests will be faster, more thorough, and more reliable. This will result in more transparency and accountability. A new database management system will make it feasible for us to fulfill public records requests much more rapidly, with less risk of errors/omissions, thus curbing the cost of accountability in an increasingly litigious environment, while also reducing our legal liabilities.
Performance Outcomes:

Implementation of the Phase 2 Access Database Replacement Project will allow CRGC to maintain the consistent improvement it has made on the following performance measures. These are the OFM-approved performance measures for Washington and CFO-approved measures for Oregon:

- Percentage of Commission development reviews issued within 72 days of receiving a complete application.
- Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the Commission’s overall quality of services provided as “good” or “excellent”.

Activity: A001 – Implementation of the Management Plan and National Scenic Area Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>FY 2020</th>
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<th>FY 2022</th>
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<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CRGC believes that performance metrics will consistently improve when we can meet or exceed the number of times landowners can access information and application materials online, which will also assist the planners in streamlining the application processing timeline to meet the 72-day target more frequently.

While difficult to quantify without a current baseline, we expect that the counties within the NSA will realize significant time savings as a result of having access to a centralized database. Each county currently relies on its own land use database, Geographic Information System (GIS), and a collection of potentially outdated hard-copy maps when performing development reviews. Our vision of an easily accessed NSA-specific database that is integrated with CRGC’s authoritative GIS will make it easier for county planning staff to quickly locate sites of interest. Once located, the planner will then be able to examine consistent spatial and tabular data relevant to their task of completing a development review. This will result in less time spent on reviews while increasing confidence in the data used to justify decisions.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Public outreach in the form of surveys (online and hardcopy) and live interviews are currently being conducted during Phase 1 and are scheduled for completion by November 30, 2022. CRGC is making a determined effort to reach out to our tribal communities that have historically been excluded and marginalized by governmental budget decisions.

Once feedback from the surveys and interviews has been compiled and analyzed, the results will be integrated into the project’s Technical and Business Requirements documentation. CRGC does not anticipate that this proposal will result in exclusion, marginalization, or disproportionate impact on any populations or communities.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

There may be communities in the NSA without access to the internet and computers. CRGC is looking for ways to reach these communities to ensure they are fully informed of the work of CRGC in the NSA.

Target Populations or Communities:

Residents and communities located within the NSA will benefit the most by implementing the proposed solution.

CRGC works with four Columbia River treaty tribes. The improved database will enhance the CRGC’s ability to perform outreach and communications with the four treaty tribes and other underrepresented communities by having more information accessible on resources in the NSA. It will also improve the ability and time for staff to create and prepare the agency’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan.

The Access database replacement project includes plans for a public-facing online information management system where data, forms, and information about development in the NSA will be accessible to anyone with internet service. Treaty tribes will be able to easily search online and find information that is currently stored on a server or in paper files and is not accessible except through public records requests.
Other Collateral Connections

**Puget Sound Recovery:**

Not applicable.

**State Workforce Impacts:**

Not applicable.

**Intergovernmental:**

**County Government Planners:** During Phase 1 of this project, several county planners within the NSA were interviewed to obtain their feedback and desires for the new database. Each of the counties in the NSA has its own database for development reviews. Although their systems may be different from the one proposed here, they are all searchable and CRGC would be able to better access their information to import it onto our system. By being able to share information and clarify geographic locations of parcels, it will be easier to conduct development reviews and determine consistency with the management plan and resource protection. We coordinate our development reviews with Klickitat County. The other five counties in the NSA send us their development review permit applications to review and ensure consistency with the National Scenic Area Management Plan. The impact of this decision package would be positive for the counties we work with because we will have a better database system that will be able to geo-locate properties and give us an opportunity to look at historical property data (once the paper files are digitized and indexed). For this reason, county planners are supportive of the project.

**U.S. Forest Service Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Office:** CRGC oversees management of the NSA in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Office. They are supportive of this project because it will facilitate easier collaboration and sharing of data.

**Tribal:** With three tribal members appointed as Gorge Commissioners, tribal interests are well represented at CRGC. Commission members have received monthly updates throughout Phase 1 and are enthusiastically supportive of Phase 2.

**Stakeholder Response:**

More than 55,000 people live in the National Scenic Area, and it is adjacent to the two major metropolitan centers of Portland, OR, and Vancouver, WA with more than 1 million residents having the opportunity to visit the Gorge. It attracts more than 3 million U.S. and international visitors each year (during normal non-Covid-19 years). One of the main stakeholders, Friends of the Columbia River Gorge, closely monitors the work of CRGC and is the CRGC’s most active non-governmental stakeholder. Interviews to discuss the needs they would like to see from the new database will occur during fall 2022. Their work often relies upon CRGC records and data. It is expected that they would be supportive of a database with a public portal that would allow them easy access without requiring them to request information via a CRGC staff member. Other non-governmental stakeholders include the landowners who apply to the CRGC for development permits to build on their private lands. A new database with the option of online permit applications will ensure landowners get a decision faster and know if they can begin developing their land when they want to rather than waiting in a long queue until a planner has time to do all the due diligence in order to determine if a permit can be issued or denied.

**State Facilities Impacts:**

None. CRGC has office space in White Salmon, WA which is adequate to house an additional

**Changes from Current Law:**

Not applicable.

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

Not applicable.

**Reference Documents**

1(a) - IT Fiscal Estimate Workbook - FINAL.xlsx
1(b) - IT Addendum - FINAL.docx
Feasibility Assessment.pdf
QA Readiness Assessment.pdf
QA Assessment of Feasibility Study.pdf
QA Evaluation Letter.pdf
IT Addendum

*Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?*

Yes

### Objects of Expenditure

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<tr>
<th>Objects of Expenditure</th>
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### Agency Contact Information

Krystyna Wolniakowski
(509) 493-3323
Krystyna.Wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org
Agency Recommendation Summary

The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) requires a full-time Geographic Information System (GIS) Manager. The current 0.5 FTE GIS Manager can maintain the agency’s GIS at a minimal service level but increasing demands exceed the capacity of a half-time position. Increasing the position to full-time will allow the GIS manager to accommodate additional responsibilities including GIS analysis for the new Vital Signs Indicator Program, the Climate Change Action Plan, and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives as well as integration of the GIS with CRGC’s new land-use and permitting database, improving public web maps and dashboard applications.

Fiscal Summary

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<tr>
<th>Fiscal Summary</th>
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<th>Biennial</th>
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Decision Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

Background: As a bi-state land use regulatory agency, CRGC relies on accurate and current location-based (“geo­spatial”) information to fulfill its mandate to protect the scenic, natural, cultural, recreational, and economic resources of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (CRGNSA). The GIS manager is tasked with procuring, developing, and maintaining the multitude of geospatial mapping data used not only by CRGC staff and Commissioners, but also by County and tribal governments, residents, and public interest groups in the CRGNSA. Access to a full catalog of mapping layers and online maps gives these stakeholders relevant data to inform decisions and to complete their work with confidence and efficiency. Several years ago, budget constraints forced CRGC to cut its GIS Manager from a full-time to a half-time position. The agency’s GIS is currently being maintained at a minimal level, with infrequent updates and no time for improvements to its functionality. This minimal level of service makes it impossible to meet several of the goals and objectives outlined in Washington’s Statewide Information Technology Strategic Plan 2021–2025.

CRGC needs to reinstate the GIS Manager position to full-time status (1 FTE). Currently, the position is funded at half-time (0.5 FTE), so the GIS Manager can support only minimal internal CRGC staff needs such as basic data maintenance and internal map updates. Restoring the position to full-time status will:

- Enable the GIS Manager to extend their output beyond basic data maintenance and map updates to better fulfill CRGC’s mission of protecting and enhancing the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the National Scenic Area, while also helping to further sound economic development.
- Allow full support to Commission initiatives such as the Climate Change Action Plan; the Vital Signs Indicator Program; and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan
- Development and maintenance of online sources for the public to access geographic information such as interactive maps, information dashboards, story maps, or a data download portal. These products decrease the need for residents to call or make a trip to visit the office, thus freeing up time for our single front office staff person.
- CRGC is expecting to implement a new land-use database in the coming biennium which will finally be integrated with our GIS. Maintaining this database integration will place increased demands on the GIS Manager.
- GIS staff must stay current on the latest software and techniques. Half-time status does not allow adequate time for training, conferences, or the continuing education credits required for GIS Professional (“GISP”) certification. Without the ability to stay current with GIS technology, the agency will miss opportunities to provide better service to those who live, work, and recreate in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

What is your proposal?

CRGC proposes to return the status of the GIS Manager position from 0.5 FTE to 1.0 FTE. CRGC is requesting funding in the amount of $64,000 for the 2023–25 Biennium. As a bi-state agency, matching funds are being requested from the state of Oregon. This is the best option to enable CRGC to maintain a modern Geographic Information System and to receive the technical GIS support required by a land use regulatory agency. This will directly affect staff, residents, and partner agencies.
• Planners will be able to readily access crucial geospatial information which will allow them to confidently complete accurate and thoroughly researched development reviews
• Program leads for the Climate Change Action Plan, the Vital Signs Indicator Program, and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan will realize better support as they work to implement these important initiatives
• Agency partners, landowners, and economic interests in the National Scenic Area will have access to a wealth of online geospatial information in the form of Web Maps, Story Maps, and Dashboards

How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?
The GIS Manager is responsible for acquiring US Census data relevant to the National Scenic Area. The manager has the requisite skills to analyze complex Census data and can use those skills to aid staff in identifying and locating target populations that may be marginalized or disproportionately impacted by Commission initiatives.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?
CRGC is requesting to increase the .5 FTE GIS Manager to a 1.0 FTE GIS Manager to restore the capability of assisting staff planners, other agencies, and the public. With a full-time position, the number of additional services the GIS manager can provide to clients is at least doubled. At a time when a new database will be configured, a full-time GIS Manager is needed to georeference all the data that will be digitized and migrated from the old Access database to the new cloud-based data management system. CRGC has not been able to keep up with requests from the public and county planners for important map information about resources in the NSA.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

Option #1: Provide funding to increase the GIS Manager position from .5 FTE to 1.0 FTE
This funding package will bring the GIS Manager from 0.5 FTE to 1.0 FTE. The additional services provided by this solution are described in detail above. These changes will coincide with the restoration of the GIS Manager to full-time at the beginning of the 2023-25 biennium. These service level changes will be achieved due to the increase in available time devoted to the duties of a full-time GIS Manager.

Option #2: Do not fund the additional .5 FTE for the GIS Manager
If this proposal is not funded, the GIS Manager will remain at 0.5 FTE:
• The GIS database and online maps will be maintained at a minimal level, with no time for developing new data and products
• The Climate Change Action Plan, Vital Signs Indicator Program, and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan initiatives will not receive the GIS support they need to be successful.
• New online resources such as Web Maps, Story Maps, and informational dashboards will not be developed, so agency partners, landowners, and economic interests in the National Scenic Area will not have easy access to critical geospatial information.
• Ongoing maintenance of the integration between the GIS and the agency’s new land use database will not occur, rendering the new database less useful to users
• The GIS Manager will not have time to attend continuing education classes and conferences, resulting in a loss of their GIS Professional accreditation and an inability to stay current on emerging spatial technology.

The only viable options are to retain the GIS Manager at 0.5 FTE and suffer the consequences listed above or restore the position to full-time and realize the benefits listed above. CRGC did not consider using services provided by other agencies or units of government, as they would not likely be able to provide the breadth of support comparable to a full-time GIS Manager. CRGC is a very small agency with 8 FTE, so processes are already necessarily streamlined to the maximum level possible.
**Assumptions and Calculations**

**Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

This request is an expansion of an existing position to restore it to a 1.0 FTE position, which it was historically until CRGC faced deep budget cuts a decade ago.

**Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>FY24 Total Costs</th>
<th>FY25 Total Costs</th>
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<td>Legal Counsel Benefits</td>
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<td>Goods &amp; Services, Fees, and Licenses</td>
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<td><strong>63,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>65,000</strong></td>
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</table>

The total cost increase for the 23-25 Biennium for restoring the GIS Manager to full-time status will be will be $128,000, and average $64,000 per year. Oregon will share in 50% of the cost for the additional Legal Counsel resulting in a net cost for Washington of $128,000 for the 23-25 Biennium.

**Workforce Assumptions:**

CRGC is requesting funding from Washington general fund appropriations to reinstate the GIS Manager position to full-time status (1 FTE) for $46,000 salary, $16,000 benefits, and $2,000 goods and services for the 2023-25 biennium. Currently, the position is funded at half-time (0.5 FTE), so the GIS Manager can support only minimal internal CRGC staff needs such as basic data maintenance and internal map updates. Oregon general fund will cover the other 50% share of costs.

**Strategic and Performance Outcomes**

**Strategic Framework:**

This package supports several objectives of the Washington OCIO’s 2021-2025 Statewide Information Technology Strategic Plan:

- **Advances Digital Government, Reduces Barriers to Access, and Improves Customer Experience Across Channels** by allowing for the expansion of accessible online resources available to partner agencies and the public
- **Aids in Expanding Integration between Systems** by providing sufficient staff time to maintain the integration between GIS and the agency’s new land-use database

This package also supports the Mission and Priorities of the agency’s IT Strategic Plan:

- **Secures and protects current and future CRGC data and applications:** The existence of a full-time GIS Manager in the past allowed the agency to build a robust GIS with a complete set of relevant spatial data and mapping applications. Restoring the position to full-time will allow the current system to be improved and expanded.
- **Ensure CRGC data and applications are available to staff, partners, stakeholders, and the public:** A full-time GIS Manager will be able to develop and expand online data offerings and applications
- **Improve procedures, leadership, management, and trained staff:** A full-time GIS Manager will have the opportunity to pursue continuing education, conferences, and training.
Performance Outcomes:

If approved, CRGC will quantify the results during the next biennium by comparing the number of completed outputs produced before the position was reinstated to full-time versus after it was full-time. Outputs will include the following items:

- Completed mapping projects to support staff and commissioners who inquire about development trends where the most up-to-date data is needed to make management decisions, as well as projects related to agency initiatives such as the Climate Change Action Plan and Vital Sign Indicators program
- Interactive online maps
- Story Maps
- Dashboards summarizing progress with CRGC initiatives that require GIS
- Linking the new cloud-based data management system with GIS

Adding .5 FTE to the GIS Manager will allow CRGC to improve the following performance measures:

- Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the Commission’s overall quality of services provided as “good” or “excellent”.
- Percentage of Commission development reviews issued within 72 days of receiving a complete application.

Activity: A001 – Implementation of the Management Plan and National Scenic Area Act

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With additional time to devote to building the GIS layers needed for land use planning in the NSA, more customers/landowners/stakeholders will increase their satisfaction with the services and information provided by CRGC. In addition, a full-time GIS manager can be more helpful to the Klickitat County Planner who must use GIS information to process land use development permit applications and who will be able to meet the 72-day target for completing land use permits more frequently.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

No answer was provided.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

No answer was provided.

Target Populations or Communities:

The GIS Manager is responsible for acquiring US Census data relevant to the National Scenic Area. The manager has the requisite skills to analyze complex Census data and can use those skills to aid staff in identifying and locating target populations that may be marginalized or disproportionately impacted by Commission initiatives.
Columbia River Gorge Commission
Policy Level - D1 - Geographical Information System Mgr

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:
Not applicable.

State Workforce Impacts:
This request is to increase the status of the current GIS Manager position from 0.5 FTE to 1.0 FTE.

Intergovernmental:
Tribal governments, county planning departments, state agencies, and the USDA Forest Service, as well as other federal agencies, rely on accurate geospatial data produced and maintained by the GIS Manager. It is anticipated that all would be supportive of restoring this position to full-time.

Stakeholder Response:
Landowners, economic interests, realtors, and developers benefit from easy access to geospatial information that accurately describes land use designations, wildlife corridors, and other features when considering development actions within the National Scenic Area. Public interest groups benefit from having access to spatial data online when considering conservation strategies and recreation opportunities. It is anticipated that these non-governmental stakeholders would be supportive of restoring this position to full-time.

State Facilities Impacts:
There are no impacts on facilities and workplace needs resulting from this proposal. The current .5 FTE GIS Manager already has office space in an existing facility.

Changes from Current Law:
Not applicable.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:
Not applicable.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?
No

Objects of Expenditure

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<th>Objects of Expenditure</th>
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Agency Contact Information
Krystyna Wolniakowski
(509) 493-3323
Krystyna.Wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org
Agency Recommendation Summary

Request 1.0 FTE for legal staff to increase legal capacity and handle current and future workload of litigation, appeals, public records management, and disclosure, maintain rule compliance with Oregon and Washington law as required by the National Scenic Area Act and Columbia River Gorge Compact, and legal advice to commission and staff. One additional staff is especially needed when the Commission’s one current legal staff cannot legally advise both the Commission and staff in enforcement and appeal hearings.

Fiscal Summary

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<th>Fiscal Summary</th>
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<td>$174</td>
<td>$91</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$87</td>
<td>$87</td>
<td>$174</td>
<td>$91</td>
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</table>

Decision Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) is requesting 1.0 FTE for legal staff to increase legal capacity and handle current and future workload of litigation, appeals, public records management, and disclosure, maintain rule compliance with Oregon and Washington law as required by the National Scenic Area Act and Columbia River Gorge Compact, and legal advice to commission and staff. One additional staff is especially needed when the current legal staff cannot advise both the Commission and staff in enforcement and appeal hearings. This additional legal counsel will better serve the states in litigation involving CRGC, including monetary claims, which would be paid by the states as required in the Gorge Compact. CRGC’s current counsel defends CRGC in litigation in Oregon and Washington trial and appellate courts, three federal trial courts, and the Ninth Circuit with no legal assistant, paralegal, or co-counsel assistance.

CRGC has had its own in-house legal counsel since 1990. Prior to that, Commissioners and staff used the Oregon and Washington Attorneys General for legal advice and litigation. For legal advice, CRGC sought concurrent advice from both states. In litigation, each state’s office of Attorneys General may only represent the members of the Commission appointed from that state; thus, in litigation, both states’ offices must appear and participate. CRGC’s legal costs were thus double. Having in-house counsel better manages legal costs and ensures continuity and a bi-state perspective and expertise.

CRGC currently has 1.0 FTE legal counsel who must handle all the following work:

- all legal advice to the Commissioners and to the staff;
- all litigation, except for claims covered by CRGC’s participation in each state’s risk pool;
- all legal work on appeals to the Commissioners (assisting parties with appeal procedures, motions, notices, advice to the Commissioners on deciding appeals, drafting the final order, and judicial review of decisions);
- compliance with and production of public record requests;
- maintaining CRGC’s rules in compliance with the National Scenic Area Act (including reviewing new legislation at the end of each legislative session);
- reviewing draft land use permit decisions;
- enforcement of the Commission land use ordinance; and
- technical legal assistance to CRGC’s federal, state, local, and tribal partners
- all support work including maintaining CRGC’s legal records; filing and serving litigation and appeal documents; legal research; writing
The Gorge Commission is currently adopting a climate change action plan with mitigation and adaptation strategies. Public and agency management, and disclosure, maintain rule compliance with Oregon and Washington law as required by the National Scenic Area Act and enforcement of the Commission land use ordinance; and on deciding appeals, drafting the final order, and judicial review of decisions).

The need for additional legal capacity cannot be achieved by internal efficiencies. A 2014 Legal Assessment for CRGC noted: “[T]he study found clear competence and skill on the part of Commission Counsel; well-developed materials on Commission litigation history and current activity; well-organized, complete, and efficient case files; and continuing efforts to ensure knowledge of relevant state and national law not only as to compact law but also such critical areas as administrative law.”

The Legal Assessment explained that the Commission needs its own legal counsel who knows the Commission and its unique law, and who is independent of, and unconflicted with, the federal, state, local, and tribal partners. The Legal Assessment described unique legal needs as follows:

- “In interviews with Commission staff, a review of the Commission’s case files, a reading of the relevant legal documents of the Gorge Compact, and review of opinions citing Gorge Compact cases, what becomes clear is that the Commission’s counsel is trying to deal with a weak fabric of law that has holes and thinly constructed aspects. He must continually assess the condition of the fabric and the stresses on it and also identify the often narrow and very technical – but important – pieces of the weave that require attention. He then needs to consider how to deal with those issues, whether by litigation (as a party or amicus curiae), consultation, education, or all of the above.”
- The Commission’s Legal “counsel deals with a complex body of law, both nationally and in terms of the Gorge Compact, that has unique requirements and special challenges. Even the publication of Commission administrative rules turns out to be a complex exercise in intergovernmental relations, dealing with two different sets of state processes for reporting and publishing rules and a Commission with a unique status that does not precisely fit either of them. Although the Commission can go outside to the state attorneys general for litigation work, a study of the challenges and history suggests that it is far better to have litigation capacity in-house for this particular agency and, indeed, for other compact agencies given the difficulties of this developing area of the law and the peculiarities of each compact.”
- “[E]ffectiveness and accountability are greatest with staff who know both compact law and the law of the Gorge Compact and are not operating from one state’s legal perspective or the other. Reliance on state attorney general staff often means both cost and additional work for Commission staff.

The 2014 Legal Assessment recommended 2.6 FTE for the legal functions of CRGC, which is consistent with other similar interstate agencies, including the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, both of which have two in-house staff attorneys and legal support staff.

What is your proposal?

There are more active and complex cases now than at any time in CRGC’s history. A second staff attorney is the most cost-effective manner of fulfilling all of CRGC’s legal needs because the Commission’s legal advisors must be competent with Oregon, Washington, and federal law, court practice, and national interstate compact law and practice. Each state’s attorney general office may only represent and advise commissioners appointed from that state, so CRGC’s cost to use the attorney general offices in litigation is double the cost of in-house staff. CRGC has not had a legal assistant since 1996 and has never requested financial resources for an additional staff attorney in the past.

This decision package will improve CRGC’s capabilities to coordinate with the Washington Department of Commerce Growth Management Services, and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development Commission, assist local governments in the National Scenic Area, and consult and collaborate with the four Columbia River treaty tribes on protecting tribal treaty rights.

This decision package will directly serve the Gorge Commission and partners from local, state, and federal agencies, and the four treaty tribes, as well as serve land use applicants by reviewing all applications for adherence to the Management Plan, parties in appeals, and other stakeholders that the Gorge Commission engages with each year.
How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?

The addition of a second attorney on staff will provide more CRGC staff time to work with land use planning staff and legal counsel for governments and agencies that work in the National Scenic Area, and more time to work with the four Columbia River treaty tribes on climate change and protecting tribal treaty rights and cultural resources. In 2020, CRGC updated its Management Plan to strengthen requirements for protecting cultural resources and treaty rights, including additional consultation requirements and direction for rulemaking to improve opportunities for tribal housing in the National Scenic Area. For several years, CRGC’s attorney worked with legal staff for the treaty tribes to use the unique National Scenic Area laws to protect treaty rights in ways that do not yet exist in state law. In the past few years, CRGC’s attorney has become fully occupied with litigation and has been unable to maintain that work with the tribal governments’ legal staff.

The Gorge Commission’s revised Management Plan also contains direction to consider equity and inclusion in rulemaking for urban area boundaries. CRGC has engaged a local non-profit, The Next Door, as part of its diversity, equity, and inclusion planning and work and has heard a need for outreach and engagement, as well as understanding the legal framework of CRGC. A second attorney on staff will enhance the Commission’s ability to focus on housing and economic opportunities for underserved populations.

The Gorge Commission is currently adopting a climate change action plan with mitigation and adaptation strategies. Public and agency comments have emphasized immediate implementation of the strategies in the plan. A second attorney on staff will enhance CRGC’s capabilities to revise current regulatory standards to address these climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and to develop non-regulatory approaches.

The Commission recently completed a study of compliance in the National Scenic Area and public comments have emphasized the Commission needs to develop new approaches to bringing current violations into compliance and keeping landowners in compliance. Local governments have emphasized that strict compliance raises equity concerns for persons with limited financial resources, mental and physical disabilities, and cultural norms. A second staff attorney will help develop compliance systems that take these issues into consideration.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?

Over time, an increase in the number and complexity of litigation cases, the complexity of appeals, and the length and complexity of public records requests have caused CRGC’s one legal counsel to be unable to fully accomplish the complete role of a legal counsel. Over the past five years, CRGC has had twelve active litigation cases in six different trial and appellate courts and twelve appeals of county and Executive Director decisions. CRGC currently has five active litigation cases and two appeals and expects four additional appeals during the current 2021-2023 biennium. Litigation and appeal cases often take years to resolve through the courts.

CRGC currently prioritizes its counsel’s work in the following order: maintaining the legal records of CRGC; litigation and appeals; advice to the Commissioners; and maintaining currency with the law. The remainder of the legal counsel’s tasks listed above is handled infrequently, as time allows.

Commissioners and staff have limited access to legal advice from their legal counsel for development review, enforcement, and planning actions, which increases the risk and complexity of litigation. CRGC is unable to maintain its administrative rules in accordance with the Compact, which reduces efficient administration of the National Scenic Area Act and Columbia River Gorge Compact and increases the risk of litigation. CRGC is unable to quickly respond to public record requests, which increases the risk of litigation and has already resulted in current litigation. For hearings before the Commission where the Executive Director acts as a party, the Commission’s one legal counsel cannot give advice to both the Executive Director and to the Commission; consequently, either the Executive Director or the Commission must proceed without legal advice, which increases the risk of litigation.
CRGC has identified a need for one additional attorney (1.0 FTE). The second legal counsel would provide expertise and perform the following tasks:

- assist and handle litigation;
- advise the Commissioners on appeals of county and CRGC staff land use decisions;
- advise the Commissioners and CRGC staff on ethics, open meetings, public records, and other legal training (The 2014 Legal Assessment recommended that CRGC “Recognize education as a central element of commission legal staff roles”);
- review and help manage contracts;
- manage public records retention and requests;
- coordinate with the federal government, tribes, counties, and state agencies in planning and implementing the National Scenic Area Act, Columbia River Gorge Compact, and land use regulations as described above;
- assist staff and county planners to review proposed developments and bring properties into compliance with National Scenic Area standards as described above;

- track, review and comply with new state legislation that affects CRGC and Gorge counties;
- work with attorneys of the four Treaty Tribes on issues of tribal rights in the NSA;

CRGC’s internal capacity and service levels to local governments, tribal governments, and other National Scenic Area partners will see an immediate increase. Implementation of DEI, climate change, and rulemaking will occur over the 2023-2025 biennium.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

**Option #1: Fund a 1.0 FTE Legal Counsel**

See justification above.

**Option #2: Fund a 1.0 FTE Paralegal or Legal Assistant**

CRGC considered whether a paralegal or legal assistant would be sufficient but determined that the amount of work requiring a licensed attorney was too great and knowledge of and advice on compliance with compact law, as well as federal, Oregon, and Washington laws, requires a licensed attorney.

**Option #3: Do not fund Legal Counsel and maintain the status quo**

If CRGC does not receive additional legal counsel, the current legal counsel will not be able to adequately represent the Commission and the Executive Director in appeals and litigation. CRGC will need to rely on the Oregon Department of Justice and Washington’s office of Attorneys General to assist with litigation, which as described above, doubles the cost of legal services to CRGC. The states’ legal advisors and litigators will also need to spend time maintaining proficiency with the unique law applicable to CRGC and in the National Scenic Area. CRGC will need funding for these services.

CRGC’s implementation of its DEI plan, climate change action plan, and rulemaking specified in the newly revised Management Plan, will occur with little legal assistance and advice, which may lead to additional litigation. CRGC’s current development review work will continue with little legal assistance and advice.
Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This is a new request. CRGC has had 1.0 FTE legal counsel on staff since 1990 to represent the Commission during appeals as well as to handle litigation and assist planners with legal review of all land use applications. However, the number of appeals and litigation cases exceeds current staff capacity, and utilizing the Attorneys General for each state is not feasible due to the cost and the need for legal counsel that is familiar with unique interstate compact law, federal law, and both states’ laws, policies, and regulations.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Item</th>
<th>FY24 Total Costs</th>
<th>FY25 Total Costs</th>
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<td>Legal Counsel Salary</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>174,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>174,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>348,000</strong></td>
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The total cost for the 23-25 Biennium for additional Legal Counsel will be $348,000, and $174,000 per year. Oregon will share in 50% of the cost for the additional Legal Counsel resulting in a net cost for Washington of $174,000 for the 23-25 Biennium.

Workforce Assumptions:

CRGC is requesting funding from Washington general fund appropriations to support 1.0 FTE Legal Counsel for $125,000 salary and $36,000 benefits, $9,000 goods and services, fees and licenses, $3,000 office equipment, and $1,000 for travel for the 2023-2025

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

CRGC approves an annual strategic plan that reflects the Commission’s priorities. CRGC reviews existing and new initiatives needed to meet Oregon and Washington executive orders as well as issues that arise in the course of implementing the management plan and addressing legal cases. Securing funding for additional legal counsel is a high priority for CRGC because the need for legal assistance currently exceeds the existing staff capacity. CRGC has identified compliance and enforcement of existing and new developments throughout the NSA as a high priority to ensure CRGC is meeting the NSA Act and management plan. Having only one legal counsel with knowledge of compact law and familiarity with both Oregon and Washington laws and rules is considered a “single point of failure” and was identified as a high risk in the CRGC Annual Risk Register submitted to the Washington state Risk Management Office.
Performance Outcomes:

Additional legal capacity at CRGC will improve the following performance measures for CRGC. These are the OFM-approved performance measures for Washington and CFO-approved measures for Oregon:

- Percentage of Commission development reviews issued within 72 days of receiving a complete application.
- Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the Commission’s overall quality of services provided as “good” or “excellent”.

Activity: A001 – Implementation of the Management Plan and National Scenic Area Act

<table>
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<th>Measures</th>
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<td>Measure: 002921</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the commission’s overall quality of services provided as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Measure: 002920

Percentage of Commission development reviews issued within 72 days of receiving a complete application

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2020</th>
<th>FY 2021</th>
<th>FY 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CRGC believes that performance metrics will improve when CRGC has the additional legal capacity to review land use development permit recommendations and advise the Executive Director in a timelier way to meet the 72-day target more frequently. By issuing more timely permits, customer satisfaction would increase. County planners will also benefit from additional legal counsel to assist them with compliance issues in the NSA since they are also under-staffed to handle all the development reviews, permitting and post-permit compliance inspections as well as enforcement actions. With additional legal capacity at CRGC, counties would benefit by being able to work with the CRGC legal counsel to resolve issues as they arise.
**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**
No answer was provided.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**
No answer was provided.

**Target Populations or Communities:**
The addition of a second attorney on staff will provide more CRGC staff time to work with land use planning staff and legal counsel for governments and agencies that work in the National Scenic Area, and more time to work with the four Columbia River treaty tribes on climate change and protecting tribal treaty rights and cultural resources. In 2020, CRGC updated its Management Plan to strengthen requirements for protecting cultural resources and treaty rights, including additional consultation requirements and direction for rulemaking to improve opportunities for tribal housing in the National Scenic Area. For several years, CRGC’s attorney worked with legal staff for the treaty tribes to use the unique National Scenic Area laws to protect treaty rights in ways that do not yet exist in state law. In the past few years, CRGC’s attorney has become fully occupied with litigation and has been unable to maintain that work with the tribal governments’ legal staff.

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**Other Collateral Connections**

**Puget Sound Recovery:**
Not applicable.

**State Workforce Impacts:**
Not applicable.

**Intergovernmental:**

**County Government Commissions and Planning Departments:**
CRGC works with the five counties in the NSA when reviewing their permit decisions to ensure consistency with the NSA Management Plan, handling appeals of county permit decisions, and being consulted on compliance and enforcement issues. The impact of this decision package would be positive for the counties CRGC works with because CRGC would have the additional legal capacity to assist them on legal issues that cross county boundaries, on interstate matters such as the bi-state Hood River Bridge re-development, and rulemaking to create more certainty on revising urban area boundaries. In addition, as described above, additional legal counsel could assist with following up on compliance and enforcement actions needed in the other NSA counties.

**USDA Forest Service Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Office:** CRGC oversees management of the NSA in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Office. CRGC’s current counsel works closely with the USDA Office of General Counsel on legal issues. The Forest Service is supportive of this request because it will facilitate easier and more timely collaboration on legal issues.
Other Interstate Entities: The 2014 Legal Assessment noted, “It is also important for the Gorge Commission to participate in the evolution of the law and policy of interstate compacts nationally. The educational task for staff includes the need to continue learning from what is happening around the country in other compact agencies, Congress, and the courts as well as contributing to and even providing leadership in educating others around the country.” Many states and compact agencies around the country seek the advice and assistance of CRGC’s legal staff. For example, in 2022, The Montana Governor’s office spoke at length with CRGC’s attorney about legal issues for establishing a unique state-tribal agency to manage an agreement between the state and tribes pursuant to a new Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes – Montana Compact. Locally, in recent years, consultants for the Columbia River Bridge Replacement and Hood River-White Salmon Bridge Replacement projects have spoken with CRGC’s legal counsel about interstate arrangements.

Tribal: With three tribal members appointed as Gorge Commissioners by the Governors of Oregon and Washington, tribal interests are well represented at CRGC. Commission members receive monthly updates and are engaged as Commissioners in appeals and litigation. In addition, legal counsel works closely with the tribal lawyers on protecting treaty rights and cultural resource protection, opportunities for tribal housing in the National Scenic Area, and reviews of any development permit applications requiring cultural reviews for the tribes to protect tribal resources.

Stakeholder Response:

More than 55,000 people live in the National Scenic Area, it is adjacent to two major metropolitan centers of Portland, OR, and Vancouver, WA with more than 1 million residents having the opportunity to visit the Gorge, and it attracts more than 3 million U.S. and international visitors each year (during normal non-Covid-19 years). One of the main stakeholders, Friends of the Columbia River Gorge monitors the work of CRGC, and the land use development permits issued by CRGC in Klickitat County and by the other five NSA counties. Friends is supportive of this proposal; it advocated for the Commission to develop this decision package. Other non-governmental stakeholders are the landowners who apply to the Gorge Commission for development permits to build on private lands or those that appeal CRGC or county permits in the NSA. CRGC expects they would be supportive of this funding request if it helped to decrease the time of making decisions on permits with the additional legal capacity to review and recommend decisions to the Executive Director.

State Facilities Impacts:

CRGC has office space in White Salmon, WA with adequate room for additional staff. No new facilities are needed.

Changes from Current Law:

Not applicable.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

CRGC has been considering this proposal for several years as it has experienced a continual increase in the number and complexity of litigation cases and the number and complexity of public record requests and appeals. This proposal is not in response to a single litigation case or legal decision. It is more cost-effective to have one attorney licensed to work in two states, than to work with two separate state attorneys general in each state.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

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<tr>
<th>Objects of Expenditure</th>
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<th>Biennial</th>
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<td>Obj. J</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Agency Contact Information

Krystyna Wolniakowski
(509) 493-3323
Krystyna.Wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org
Agency Recommendation Summary

Request 1.0 FTE Climate Change Program Manager to lead implementation of the Columbia River Gorge Commission’s (CRGC) Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) and support implementation of the Vital Sign Indicators (VSI) monitoring program using climate indicators. Climate adaptation and mitigation strategies are a priority for Washington state. This senior-level position is critical to moving these two highly integrated CRGC priorities from the planning to the implementation phase.

Fiscal Summary

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<tr>
<th>Fiscal Summary</th>
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<td>Total Revenue</td>
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Decision Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

Background: The National Scenic Area Act established the Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) as an interstate compact agency with Oregon and Washington to co-manage the National Scenic Area (NSA) with the USDA Forest Service. This governance structure provides CRGC with unique land use authorities to protect and enhance scenic, cultural, natural, economic, and recreation resources. As a bi-state agency, CRGC also coordinates with OR and WA Governor’s Offices on state policy initiatives and guidelines as applicable to the NSA. This decision package to implement the CRGC’s Climate Change Action Plan aligns with both states’ calls for comprehensive climate action, including Executive Order 20-04 in Oregon and the Climate Commitment Act in Washington. In the face of a changing climate, CRGC must address climate change impacts on the resources it is charged with protecting in order to achieve its mandate.

Phase 1: Developing the Climate Change Action Plan and VSI Monitoring Program (Accomplished in the 2021-2023 biennium)

- Climate Change Action Plan

In 2021, CRGC staff began work with regional partners on the Climate Change Action Plan, a guide to climate adaptation and mitigation in the National Scenic Area focused on CRGC’s regional land use role. Adaptation actions in the plan focus on protecting resilient lands and addressing the most pressing impacts on natural, scenic, cultural, and recreation resources, and local economies, within the NSA. Mitigation actions include reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and protecting and enhancing carbon storage in the NSA.

Through land use policies, best management practices, strategic partnerships, and regional convening and information sharing, the Climate Change Action Plan operationalizes climate change in CRGC’s work, while supporting regional priorities for climate resilient communities. Priority action areas include cold water refuge stream habitats, wetlands, Tribal Treaty Rights and First Foods, oak woodlands, regional transportation, and reducing fire risk. Commission approval of the Climate Change Action Plan is expected in late fall 2022.

- Vital Sign Indicators (VSI) Monitoring Program

In partnership with the USDA Forest Service, CRGC employs the VSI program to evaluate the long-term health of scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources, and local economies, of the National Scenic Area. Vital Sign Indicators are high-level measures that help us assess how well CRGC is protecting resources through current land use policies. Building on the original 2009 VSI effort, CRGC has been working with partners on a comprehensive indicator update that integrates climate change impacts. Climate-focused indicators, such as stream temperature and wildfire extent, will be used alongside Climate Change Action Plan activity measures to track changes in the condition of protected resources and evaluate effectiveness of our climate change actions over time.
Phase 2: Moving from Planning to Action (2023-2025 biennium)

In 2023 with additional resources, CRGC staff will begin implementing both the approved Climate Change Action Plan and Vital Sign Indicators developed in the previous biennium. As described in detail below, additional staff capacity is needed to move these critical efforts from the developmental to the action phase.

Climate change is a sweeping and urgent threat that impacts the resources and values CRGC is mandated to protect—scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources, and local economies, of the National Scenic Area. Recognizing the need for strategic and coordinated action, CRGC worked with partners across the region to develop a Climate Change Action Plan that identifies opportunities to adapt to climate change impacts and reduce the sources of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. According to the 2022 CRGC’s risk register, growing pressure on resources from increasing popularity, visitation, and use in the NSA ranks among the highest risks to achieving CRGC’s core mission. Climate change impacts, such as increased wildfire, higher temperatures, and drought, exacerbate the existing stress of recreation demand and land use change. To address the risk climate change poses to the resources CRGC protects, additional staff is needed to implement the policy development work, partnership coordination, community engagement, and monitoring called for in the Climate Change Action Plan.

Currently, CRGC has a 0.5 FTE Sr. Natural Resources Planner dedicating 100% of their work hours to Climate Change Action Plan development with support from a 1.0 FTE Vital Sign Indicators Planner contributing approximately 45% of their work hours to climate action planning and climate-focused indicator development. Current staff has worked with many partners to successfully develop the Climate Change Action Plan and establish the VSI monitoring framework over the past year.

What is needed now is additional capacity to move into the implementation phase for both efforts.

Adding a 1.0 FTE Climate Change Program Manager to lead implementation will allow CRGC’s 0.5 FTE Sr. Natural Resources Planner to focus on the ongoing review of forest practices and land use development applications for the six-county National Scenic Area, continued coordination with key partners to implement specific climate actions, and policy development work to inform the next Management Plan review process which will be initiated in 2025 as per requirements in the National Scenic Area Act. This new position will also enable the 1.0 FTE VSI Planner to focus on the extensive coordination needed with monitoring partners and CRGC’s GIS Manager to acquire, analyze, and report scientific data through an interactive monitoring dashboard that will complement the new database under development (DP-1: Access Database Replacement Project, Phase 2). To fully implement the VSI program in 2023-2025, the 1.0 FTE VSI Planner must be able to dedicate the full position to this effort.

In summary, if CRGC continues to use 0.5 FTE from the VSI Planner position and 0.5 FTE from the Sr. Natural Resource Planner position to develop the Draft Climate Change Action Plan, CRGC will not be able to resume the needed workload of the Sr. Natural Resource Planner and fully implement the VSI monitoring program and Climate Change Action Plan in 2023-2025.

CRGC requested additional funding for the VSI Planner in 2019-2021 to develop indicators and a report card for how well CRGC is protecting resources. CRGC is well on the way to achieving the goals established for the VSI position. The full-time VSI program manager will help ensure the Climate Change Action Plan strategies for resource assessments and monitoring are achieved, but the scope of climate change actions identified in the plan goes far beyond VSI and requires a full-time manager position as well.

What is your proposal?

The requested 1.0 FTE Climate Change Program Manager will fill the critical capacity gap needed to implement both the newly adopted Climate Change Action Plan and VSI monitoring program for climate indicators by accomplishing the following work:

- Conduct government-to-government consultation with the four Columbia River Treaty Tribes to strengthen and protect Tribal Treaty Rights in our climate action program, VSI monitoring program, and Management Plan.
  - Coordinate with USDA Forest Service, OR and WA Governor’s Offices, and other state regulatory agencies to ensure alignment of CRGC policies and practices with emerging federal and state climate-focused guidelines and initiatives.
  - Oversee strategic integration of key CRGC programs including Climate Change Action; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); Vital Sign Indicators; and Management Plan review.
  - Facilitate a community advisory committee to provide guidance to implement the Climate Change Action Plan and DEI Action Plan
- Develop policy options for specific adaptation and mitigation priorities in the Climate Change Action Plan.
- Oversee climate action progress evaluation through activity measures and climate-focused Vital Sign Indicators.
Assist with data management and reporting for the VSI monitoring program for climate indicators.

All communities within the entire National Scenic will be affected and served through this initiative since the Program Manager position will be integrating science, policy, and public outreach into the implementation strategy.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?

Through an additional Climate Change Program Manager on staff, CRGC will be able to fully implement the Climate Change Action Plan and VSI monitoring program in the 2023-2025 biennium. Implementation of priority actions in the Climate Change Action Plan will begin in 2023, with an anticipated annual progress summary and updates to the plan as needed. Many of the Action Plan goals identify specific desired outcomes for 2025 and 2030. Hiring a Climate Change Program Manager in 2023 will enable CRGC to stay on track to accomplish initial goals for 2025 with the help of our partners across the National Scenic Area. This position will also facilitate strategic integration of the Climate Change Action Plan and VSI program with the Commission’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative. Engagement with diverse communities in the NSA will help ensure that climate action, VSI monitoring, and future Management Plan revisions are more inclusive and effective.

If funded, by the end of the 2023-2025 biennium, CRGC will achieve the following milestones:

- Achieve target goals for 2025 for each of the eight adaptation and mitigation priorities in the Climate Change Action Plan through coordination with key partners in the National Scenic Area.
- Develop policy options and operational changes in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan that improve outcomes for people in the Gorge who are most vulnerable to climate change.
- Develop climate adaptation and mitigation policy options for Commissioners’ consideration that are aligned with the OR and WA Governor’s Offices, and other state and federal regulatory agencies’ climate-focused guidelines and initiatives.
- Vital Sign Indicators and Climate Change Action Plan activity measures are fully operational with regular progress reporting through an interactive monitoring dashboard.
- Develop policy options that strengthen and protect Tribal Treaty Rights in the CRGC’s climate action program, VSI monitoring program, and Management Plan through regular government-to-government consultation with the four Columbia River Treaty Tribes.

CRGC prepares an annual Work Plan where priorities, timelines, and desired outcomes are described. Commissioners review and approve the Work Plan and conduct mid-year, annual and biennial evaluations with CRGC staff. This allows for developing realistic and trackable deliverables, meeting critical timelines, and making course corrections as needed after the evaluations.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

The Commission has identified three options for consideration:

Option #1: Hire a full-time “Climate Change Program Manager”

This option would provide for a full-time staff Program Manager who would be able to work with agencies and the public to meet the goals of the Action Plan, track progress and provide regular updates to the Commission and the public, evaluate the outcomes and ensure the plan stays up to date, further develop the vital sign indicators for climate and equity, and work with agencies and experts to develop monitoring plans that could provide data on the status of the resources and how to address vulnerability and adaptation in the Gorge that the Commission is obligated to protect.

Option #2: Continue with 7 FTE positions that work in both Oregon and Washington which includes 3 land use planners and do not hire a “Climate Change Program Manager”

With this option, CRGC would continue to work at its current level. We would not have the resources to do the consultation, monitoring, and
analysis needed to determine if we are in compliance with the NSA Act goals of protecting resources. In order to develop the Climate Change Action Plan, it required .5 FTE of a Senior Natural Resources Planner, and .5 FTE of the Vital Sign Indicators Planner. CRGC did not want to delay conducting a deep dive into developing the Plan with agency partners, tribes, and public stakeholders and so re-prioritized and delayed other work that the two planners already had as part of their day-to-day responsibility. Other work was put on hold until the Climate Change Action Plan could be completed. However, implementing the Climate Change Action Plan will also take at least 1.0 FTE. Without additional funds to hire a new position, implementation will be delayed and possible changes in policies to address climate change will be put on hold until resources are available.

**Option #3: Hire an outside contractor to help the Commission with Climate Change**

This option of hiring an outside contractor could work if there could be a liaison on the CRGC staff that would be responsible for pulling together all the information that the contractor would use in their role. Contractors are not implementers, so this position would be advisory only but could help facilitate meetings with agencies and the public. However, contractors are more expensive to hire than full-time agency staff, and there is no continuity of knowledge with a temporary contractor. In addition, they would not have access to CRGC computers or information sources, which are an important part of day-to-day work. CRGC would still need to dedicate the time of an existing planner to be the internal lead for this program, which would then reduce the amount of other planning work they need to do as part of their role with the CRGC.

### Assumptions and Calculations

**Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

Not Applicable. This is a new program.

**Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

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<th>FY25 Total Costs</th>
<th>BI23-25 Total</th>
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<td>Total</td>
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The total cost for the 23-25 Biennium for a Climate Change Program Manager will be $276,000, and $138,000 per year. Oregon will share in 50% of the cost for the Climate Change Program Manager and reimburse Washington resulting in a net cost for Washington of $138,000 for the 23-25 Biennium.

**Workforce Assumptions:**

CRGC is requesting $138,000 for a 1.0 FTE Climate Change Program Manager from the Washington general fund appropriations to lead implementation of the Commission’s Climate Change Action Plan and support implementation of the VSI monitoring program in the 2023-2025 biennium. This senior-level position is essential to ensure that CRGC can continue to achieve its mission in the face of climate change that threatens the resources we are charged to protect. Funding will cover $98,000 for salary and $31,000 benefits, as well as $1,000 for travel, and $5,000 for goods and services. A one-time expenditure would be approximately $3,000 for computer equipment and software. Oregon general fund will cover the other 50% share of costs for this position.
Strategic and Performance Outcomes

**Strategic Framework:**

**Washington Goal 3: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

1. Healthy Fish and Wildlife
2. Clean and restored Environment
3. Working and Natural Lands: Farmland, Forests, Outdoor Recreation, Habitat Protection

The Columbia River Gorge Commission implements the National Scenic Area Act passed by Congress in 1986 by protecting the natural, cultural, scenic, and recreation resources in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, the largest scenic area in the United States and the only one that has 13 urban communities. The Commission’s main focus is to review all development permits where a resource might be impacted and to then decide if that development can move forward, and if so, how to minimize the impact on the resources. Given the mosaic of land use designations in each county and the complex multitude of regulations that control impacts within each of those land use designations, having accurate information on each of the resources in the NSA, and the ability to conduct data analyses is critical. The NSA Management Plan requires that planning decisions result in no “cumulative adverse impacts” to ensure we protect resources and prevent incremental decisions that chip away at the ecological integrity of protected habitats and species. Having access to the best scientific information, as well as accurate data from each land use permit issued, is absolutely critical for us to complete the required analyses of long-term impacts to comply with the National Scenic Area Act.

The Climate Change Program Manager will provide one additional senior-level staff planner position needed to work with technical staff from local, state, and federal agencies, four Treaty Tribes, and stakeholders in Oregon and Washington to begin implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan, monitor progress, advance equity goals, and develop new adaptation and mitigation policies to protect resources and build resilience in the National Scenic Area.

**CRGC Strategy**

Through this decision package, we believe that our decisions will be better informed to ensure we are contributing to the Governor’s priorities for meeting Goal 3. When CRGC adopted the revised Gorge 2020 Management Plan for the National Scenic Area, a new chapter was included that committed CRGC to develop a Climate Change Action Plan. In 2022, CRGC identified the Climate Change Action Plan as one of its strategic priorities for the next five years. The first step was to better understand climate science, impacts, and predictions for Oregon and Washington through consultation with experts in agencies, universities, non-governmental organizations, and the four Columbia River treaty tribes. CRGC reviewed existing climate action plans prepared by Oregon and Washington agencies as well as the tribes to determine opportunities for alignment of goals and partnerships. CRGC then examined our own mandate through the National Scenic Area Act and the Management Plan to determine our roles and responsibilities related to climate adaptation and mitigation. After extensive public and agency meetings over the past year, proactive outreach to diverse stakeholders, and consultation with the treaty tribes, the Climate Change Action Plan was released for public review. Preparing the plan required 1.0 FTE of existing staff resources; however, this is not sustainable for 2023-2025 given the staff workload for other CRGC priorities and responsibilities. An additional 1.0 FTE lead program manager is required to coordinate with diverse partners to implement the full scope of work in the CCAP. Since climate change is a statewide priority for Governor Inslee and for the state of Oregon, coordination across both states will be a full-time effort. Without additional staff to lead implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan, progress will be much slower and only be made as other agency priorities are addressed.
Performance Outcomes:

The addition of a Climate Change Program Manager position will improve the following performance measures:

- Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the Commission’s overall quality of services provided as “good” or “excellent.”
- Number of presentations made to civic and community groups each year.

Activity: A001 – Implementation of the Management Plan and National Scenic Area Act

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<td>Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the commission’s overall quality of services provided as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’</td>
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Measure: 000047

Number of presentations to civic and community groups each year

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With an additional position, CRGC will be able to increase the number of public presentations and public engagement opportunities to provide input as we implement the Climate Change Action Plan. CRGC’s goal is to provide host 25 more presentations in Oregon and Washington communities during the 2023-2025 biennium.

As we improve public access to information about Gorge resources and the development decision process, landowner satisfaction will increase. This additional position will allow the other three planners to focus on other aspects of Commission work such as permit reviews, compliance, and enforcement, while the Climate Change Program Manager focuses on meeting resource protection goals in the Management Plan.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

CRGC is in the early stage of improving outreach and engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. As a first step, CRGC includes preliminary goals and actions in the CCAP for engaging diverse voices in climate action planning and implementation. CRGC is also currently working on a DEI plan to identify how CRGC policies impact climate vulnerable populations in the NSA. CRGC has met with three community organizations in the Gorge to ask for their advice as we engage historically excluded and marginalized groups. CRGC is in a process of gathering ongoing feedback as we convene our Pro Equity Anti Racism Team (DP #5) to discuss different aspects of Commission operations, ranging from equity in hiring practices to inclusive climate action work. We recognize that communities of color, Tribal communities, low-income communities, and resource-dependent communities are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change. We seek to start to address these impacts by developing specific goals and actions in our DEI plan we expect to complete by the end of 2022.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

No answer was provided.

Target Populations or Communities:

Target Populations: More than 55,000 residents of the National Scenic Area will benefit from a Climate Change Action Plan that focuses on adaptation and protection of resilient landscapes and habitats, as well as visitors who come to the NSA to enjoy all the resources. With equity consideration in the CCAP, underserved communities such as Latino/Hispanic communities as well as members of the Columbia River Treaty Tribes will benefit from increased stewardship and long-range implementation of strategies that slow down the pace of change from climate impacts.
Other Collateral Connections

**Puget Sound Recovery:**

Not applicable.

**State Workforce Impacts:**

Not applicable.

**Intergovernmental:**

CRGC’s proposal to add a Climate Change Program Manager position to implement the Climate Change Action Plan and improve outreach and engagement with diverse and underserved communities and stakeholders in the National Scenic Area will be supported by local, state, and federal agencies since all of them are also implementing climate change initiatives of their own and need coordination and alignment. CRGC is consulting with public agencies within the National Scenic Area to ensure alignment with priorities where possible, and to ensure CRGC is properly incorporating Governor Inslee’s Executive Order.

CRGC already works closely with the four Columbia River treaty tribes through formal government-to-government consultation and staff-to-staff meetings. Every policy and guideline that might impact tribal cultural resources, tribal treaty rights, First Foods, and other resources require engagement with the four treaty tribes. A Climate Change Action Plan that further increases the understanding of tribal resources, traditional ecological knowledge, history, and language will improve public understanding and support of Tribal interests and communities.

**Stakeholder Response:**

The CRGC proposal to implement the Climate Change Action Plan will improve outreach and engagement with diverse and underserved communities and stakeholders in the National Scenic Area and will be supported by traditional non-governmental partners who are also advocating for jurisdictions to adopt climate actions. There should not be any opposition to the request for this full-time position, and the only criticism that might be vocalized is that CRGC is not acting fast enough or going far enough with implementing new policies needed to protect resources from climate change in the National Scenic Area.

**State Facilities Impacts:**

CRGC has adequate office space so no additional facility space will be needed for this new position.

**Changes from Current Law:**

Not applicable.

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

There is no specific mandate, but Governor Inslee has prioritized the development of state agency climate plans as well as PEAR (Pro-Equity Anti-Racist) plans to achieve Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals for the state.

**Reference Documents**

Draft Climate Change Action Plan.pdf

**IT Addendum**

*Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?*

No
Objects of Expenditure

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Agency Contact Information

Krystyna Wolniakowski
(509) 493-3323
Krystyna.Wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org
Agency Recommendation Summary

The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) is requesting additional funding to cover costs related to implementing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan for internal operations, public outreach, and engagement in the National Scenic Area.

Fiscal Summary

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<th>Fiscal Summary</th>
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<th>Biennial 2023-25</th>
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Decision Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) recognizes that the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (NSA) represents rich and diverse cultures. The NSA is located within the ancestral territories of Indigenous peoples who have protected these lands and waters since time immemorial. CRGC acknowledges that European settlers and their governing authorities took Indigenous land and resources within this region by unjust and inequitable means. Other cultures in the Gorge have prospered and have also been discriminated against to varying degrees. These historically excluded populations include immigrants from many parts of the world, migrant workers, and rural and low-income residents. CRGC acknowledges that this legacy of discrimination and exclusion created systemic inequities in the policies and decision-making of National Scenic Area governments and commissions. CRGC commits to listening and learning and understanding and developing diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies that address this legacy.

In October 2020, CRGC adopted a new diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) statement and policies in the revised Gorge 2020 Management Plan. One of the policies directs CRGC staff to develop a DEI Action Plan to address systemic inequities identified in its work and policies. During the 2021-2023 biennium, CRGC made a commitment to focus on internal management, explore Commissioner and staff perspectives on DEI, begin to build competency in DEI among Commissioners and staff, and develop the CRGC’s DEI Action Plan. The purpose of the DEI Action Plan is to address systemic inequities identified in the Commission’s work and policies.

To move from commitment to action, CRGC will focus on review of the revised Management Plan through the lens of DEI to identify any policies and guidelines that may need to be re-visited if deemed to be inequitable or discriminatory. CRGC will engage and seek advice from the four Columbia River Treaty Tribes, Gorge community members, partner organizations and agencies, and other impacted stakeholders who are interested in working with the CRGC.

In the recently developed DEI Action Plan framework, CRGC commits to listening, learning, and understanding how its work and policies can contribute to a more equitable and inclusive region. To move from commitment to action, CRGC needs additional resources for community outreach to implement the DEI Action Plan. CRGC seeks guidance and advice from stakeholders impacted by CRGC’s policies and programs and needs funding to convene groups where this education and dialogue can take place. CRGC has the internal capacity to do the work but does not have the resources to do the needed outreach.

The Commission’s DEI Action Plan framework serves as a guide for moving from the preparation phase to ongoing implementation and evaluation. The graphic below represents the main phases and steps in the DEI action planning process. It illustrates how the specific steps that the Commission will take to develop its DEI Action Plan align with the deliverables required by the Washington Office of Equity. Listening, learning, and building of relationships are integrated across all phases of our DEI action planning process.
The governors of Oregon and Washington have committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in their states, and to ensuring that all state agencies are proactively addressing inequities to achieve pro-equity and social justice across state government. The Oregon Governor’s Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion along with the Office of Cultural Change created a statewide DEI Action Plan, and in June 2022, the Office of the Governor issued Executive Order 22-11 “Relating to Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.” This executive order contains several directives for agencies aimed at promoting affirmative action and diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. This is an opportunity for CRGC to reflect on internal and external policies and programs to discover how its operations, policies, and programs might be perpetuating inequity. To make this discovery, CRGC needs to seek guidance from stakeholders affected by CRGC’s policies, as well as key partners and organizations.

In March 2022, Washington Governor Inslee issued Executive Order 22-04, which gives direction for implementing the inaugural five-year Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan & Playbook (“PEAR Plan & Playbook”), Washington State’s approach for achieving pro-equity and social justice across state government. CRGC and other Washington State agencies have been tasked with developing their own agency PEAR Plans by the end of 2022. CRGC is developing the agency PEAR Plan in tandem with the CRGC DEI Action Plan and is looking to the PEAR Plan and Playbook developed by the Office of Equity to help create a vision, values, and goals for the DEI Action Plan that are in alignment with Washington’s PEAR Plan.

Along with CRGC’s DEI action planning work, CRGC released a Draft Climate Change Action Plan for public review this summer with anticipated approval in 2023. The draft Climate Change Action Plan emphasizes learning from diverse communities in the Gorge about how they experience climate change impacts and ways CRGC can improve outcomes for those disproportionately affected by climate change. Social and economic resilience are important outcomes CRGC hopes to achieve through climate change action planning, informed by our DEI Action Plan efforts. Many of our objectives for equitable, inclusive climate change action depend upon the agency’s ability to meaningfully engage new voices in our work, as described in the DEI Action Plan. This budget request will improve outcomes for priority agency initiatives that affect all people in the Gorge, including climate change action, Vital Sign Indicators monitoring, and future policy development that will result from these initiatives. See CRGC’s decision package Building Resilience to Climate Change for details on how a requested Climate Change Program Manager position also supports this DEI funding request.

CRGC has not previously requested funding for a DEI Action Plan since CRGC approved a DEI framework in the 2021-2023 biennium and is now seeking additional funds to implement the plan.

What is your proposal?

CRGC is requesting $50,000 (this is 50% cost share with Oregon) to engage in necessary outreach to stakeholders impacted by CRGC’s policies. By having conversations with those affected by our work, CRGC will learn what opportunities might exist to create more equitable policies, engage in more inclusive practices, and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

The following outreach and engagement activities will be accomplished in 2023-2025 biennium through requested funds:

- **Translation of Materials:** Funds will be used to translate key National Scenic Area communication materials into Spanish, the most prominent language used in the Columbia River Gorge, aside from English.
- **Spanish Interpretation at Meetings and Public Workshops:** Funds will be used for verbal interpretation at in-person meetings as
Columbia River Gorge Commission
Policy Level - D4 - DEI Outreach and Implementation

well as closed-captioning translation for online meetings.

- **Agency DEI Coaching**: Funds will be used to contract with a local non-profit that provides training for Commissioners and staff on DEI competency and strategies.
- **Latino Outreach Workshop**: Funds will be used to contract with a local non-profit that provides this training. The workshop includes education on establishing relationships with community leaders and Latino residents and provides CRGC staff with tools to continue future engagement.
- **Community Advisory Committee**: Funds will be used to support participants’ engagement on this committee, including travel and stipend costs. The purpose is to facilitate conversations with community members to provide CRGC with guidance on developing and implementing the PEAR Plan, DEI Action Plan, and Climate Change Action Plan (see decision package *Building Resilience to Climate Change*), while building trust and strengthening relationships with community groups.

CRGC currently has the staff capacity to implement the program with a senior land use planner as the lead but does not have any funding to pay for facilitators to conduct outreach workshops, translate materials, make CRGC’s website more accessible to a broader group of stakeholders throughout the National Scenic Area, conduct trainings for staff and Commissioners, and compensate participants in the community advisory committee for their time and travel. There are more than 55,000 residents within the boundary of the National Scenic Area and thousands of them have not had any contact with CRGC, nor understand what the agency does and how it affects them. Outreach to these residents is essential for understanding how CRGC’s policies might be disproportionally impacting certain residents and how we can more effectively engage all community members in our work and future policy making.

**What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?**

CRGC is developing its DEI Action Plan with anticipated completion in the 2023-2025 biennium. Staff is defining Action Plan goals, strategies, actions, and activity measures to track progress. The implementation and evaluation phase of the Action Plan will occur in 2023-2024. If funded, by the end of the 2023-2025 biennium, CRGC will achieve the following milestones:

- Translate at least 2,000 pages of key National Scenic Area communication materials into Spanish.
- Provide Spanish interpretation for at least 20 Commission meetings and public workshops that will engage underrepresented communities in the NSA.
- Complete DEI training for Commission members and staff to prepare for review of the National Scenic Area Management Plan policies and to address systemic inequities identified.
- Establish a Community Advisory Committee with diverse perspectives that provides guidance to implement the DEI Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan.
- Complete DEI Action Plan with identified activity measures to track progress that will be used for CRGC’s annual agency performance report.

CRGC prepares an annual Work Plan where priorities, timelines, and desired outcomes are described. Commissioners review and approve the Work Plan and conduct mid-year, annual and biennial evaluations with CRGC staff. This allows for developing realistic and trackable deliverables, meeting critical timelines, and making course corrections as needed after the evaluations.

**What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?**

CRGC explored several alternative options, including hiring a full-time DEI program manager to develop and implement a DEI Action Plan. However, this option would still require additional funding to contract with experts to conduct workshops and trainings and facilitate public stakeholder meetings. This alternative would have required much more funding to hire and retain a new staff position. To reduce costs, CRGC decided to absorb this necessary staff work with existing staff, a senior land use planner, who is committed to leading this effort for the agency. CRGC decided to request funding only for contractors to assist with the tasks that internal staff cannot complete.

The consequence of not funding this request is that CRGC will not have the ability to fund contracts that are needed to hire outside experts for translation, public outreach, and trainings. CRGC is committed to aligning the agency DEI Action Plan to meet Governor Inslee’s Executive Order for implementing DEI across all agencies, but without additional resources, many of the public outreach activities will be put on hold or unable to be completed during the 2023-2025 biennium.
Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

Not applicable.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

CRGC will be using the requested funding to contract with experts to conduct the necessary outreach and engagement with diverse communities in the National Scenic Area. The full amount of the request will be used to contract for expertise to translate CRGC materials into Spanish, convene and facilitate workshops for the public, conduct DEI trainings for staff and Commissioners, and support participants’ engagement in the community advisory group, to be able to fulfill the objectives of the PEAR Plan.

Workforce Assumptions:

Not applicable.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

When CRGC adopted the revised Gorge 2020 Management Plan for the National Scenic Area, a new chapter was included that committed CRGC to develop a DEI Action Plan. In 2022, CRGC identified the DEI Action Plan as one of its strategic priorities for the next five years. Internal employment policies have been reviewed and updated already, but the outreach, consultation, and meetings that will be required to proactively engage with diverse stakeholders will require additional expertise, resources, and funding. In addition, Governor Inslee’s Executive Order 22-04 directs agencies to implement the Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan and Playbook. CRGC is actively working to assemble PEAR teams and align the DEI Action Plan with state priorities as part of the state’s PEAR initiative.

Performance Outcomes:

The addition of a DEI Action Plan will help consistently maintain and improve the following performance measures:

- Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the Commission’s overall quality of services provided as “good” or “excellent”.
- Number of presentations made to civic and community groups each year.

Activity: A001 – Implementation of the Management Plan and National Scenic Area Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
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<th>FY 2021</th>
<th>FY 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Measure: 000047</td>
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<td>Number of presentations to civic and community groups each year</td>
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With additional resources, CRGC would be able to increase outreach and the number of public presentations and increase public engagement opportunities to provide input on the implementation of the DEI Action Plan. CRGC’s goal would be to include 25 more presentations in Oregon and Washington communities during the 2023-2025 biennium.

With an increase in readily available information about Gorge resources and being more informed about where development can and cannot occur depending on resource protection levels, landowners and members of diverse communities would be more satisfied that they have access to information faster and decision processes would be clearer.
**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**
No answer was provided.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**
No answer was provided.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

CRGC made a commitment to develop a DEI Action Plan for the NSA which directly supports addressing equity initiatives in Washington State. CRGC will engage historically underrepresented and marginalized communities in the Columbia River Gorge, including communities of color, low-income residents, and members of the four Columbia River treaty tribes. As staff and Commissioners learn how to improve communications and engagement, these communities will benefit by being provided with greater access to information about the NSA, the roles the agency and Commissioners play, and how CRGC’s policies affect them. Their voices and perspectives will help to influence and inform CRGC’s priorities and decision-making now and in the future.

CRGC received funding from a community foundation grant to contract with a local non-profit specializing in assisting underserved communities, and in 2021 the non-profit conducted two outreach workshops that specifically included voices from the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities in the Columbia River Gorge. These workshops demonstrated that none of the Spanish-speaking participants had ever heard of the National Scenic Area or CRGC, and the majority of English-speaking participants also were unaware of the National Scenic Area and how CRGC operates. These findings highlighted the need for CRGC to improve its engagement and relations with Gorge communities, especially the Spanish-speaking community, by increasing opportunities for community members to learn about and engage with the Commission on a more consistent basis.

Through these listening sessions, conversations with other local agencies also working on DEI, and from trainings CRGC staff has attended, CRGC has received valuable recommendations for how to go about improving its community engagement. Funding is essential for putting these recommendations into action. By beginning pro-active outreach in the 2023-2025 biennium, CRGC will begin to make progress towards reaching its DEI goals.
Other Collateral Connections

**Puget Sound Recovery:**

Not applicable.

**State Workforce Impacts:**

Not applicable.

**Intergovernmental:**

CRGC’s proposal to improve outreach and engagement with diverse and underserved communities and stakeholders in the National Scenic Area will be supported by local, state, and federal agencies since all of them are also implementing DEI initiatives of their own. CRGC is consulting with public agencies within the National Scenic Area to ensure alignment with priorities where possible, and to ensure CRGC is properly incorporating Governor Inslee’s Executive Order.

CRGC already works closely on a daily basis with the four Columbia River treaty tribes for formal government-to-government consultation, as well as staff to staff on preparing the DEI Action Plan and the Climate Change Action Plan. Every policy and guideline that may impact tribal cultural resources, tribal treaty rights, First Foods, and other resources must engage the four treaty tribes. A DEI Action Plan that further increases the understanding of tribal resources, traditional ecological knowledge, history, and language will benefit CRGC.

**Stakeholder Response:**

CRGC’s proposal to improve outreach and engagement with diverse and underserved communities and stakeholders in the National Scenic Area will be supported by traditional non-governmental partners as well as agencies who are all undergoing similar initiatives. The only opposition might be that part of a land use planner’s time will be committed to implementing the DEI Action Plan and some stakeholders may believe that the agency should focus on land use planning only and not DEI outreach.

**State Facilities Impacts:**

Not applicable.

**Changes from Current Law:**

Not applicable.

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

In March 2022, Washington Governor Inslee issued Executive Order 22-04, which gives direction for implementing the inaugural five-year Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan & Playbook (“PEAR Plan & Playbook”), Washington State’s approach for achieving pro-equity and social justice across state government. CRGC and other Washington State agencies have been tasked with developing their own agency PEAR Plans by the end of 2022. CRGC intends to develop the agency PEAR Plan in tandem with the CRGC DEI Action Plan and is looking to the PEAR Plan and Playbook developed by the Office of Equity to help create a vision, values, and goals for the DEI Action Plan that are in alignment with Washington’s PEAR Plan.

**Reference Documents**


**IT Addendum**

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No
**Objects of Expenditure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects of Expenditure</th>
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<th>Biennial</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
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**Agency Contact Information**

Krystyna Wolniakowski
(509) 493-3323
Krystyna.Wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org
Columbia River Gorge Commission
2023-25 Regular Budget Session
Maintenance Level - D5 - Klickitat County Land Use Planner

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Columbia River Gorge Commission (CRGC) is requesting additional funding to cover increases in salary, benefits, and costs related to the Klickitat County Planner in Washington.

Fiscal Summary

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Fiscal Summary</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
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Decision Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area covers six counties – three in Oregon and three in Washington. Five of the six counties have adopted ordinances in their county to implement the policies, guidelines, and standards in the revised Management Plan and conduct all the work associated with development applications, permitting, and compliance. However, Klickitat County, Washington, never adopted an ordinance since the National Scenic Area Act was passed in 1986 so the responsibility falls to the Gorge Commission to do this work according to the National Scenic Area Act. This work requires a full-time land use planner to work with landowners and agencies to review applications, issue permits, and follow up on compliance and enforcement issues if permit conditions are not followed.

In FY 2020, the Washington Legislature approved additional funding for CRGC enabling the agency to hire a full-time Klickitat County Planner who works solely on Klickitat County tasks to clear the backlog of permits accumulated from years of being understaffed. The funding provided in the 2021-2023 biennium budget was insufficient to cover all the costs of the Klickitat County planner as provided in the proviso. If additional funding to cover the full cost of the position is not provided, the overage will reduce the joint funding budget. Any overage will reduce the joint funding match from Oregon. CRGC is requesting additional funding to fully cover the staff costs of the Klickitat County Planner in the 2023-2025 biennium.

What is your proposal?

The Gorge Commission requests $25,000 to cover the additional costs to support the Klickitat County Planner for salary, benefits, and costs as a full-time position. The Klickitat County Planner serves hundreds of landowners who seek development permits with the Gorge Commission. This position also works with county, state, and federal agencies to implement the ordinance in Klickitat County.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?

The Klickitat County Planner position is already funded by proviso with Washington state general fund appropriations and the planner is performing all their duties exceptionally well to meet key performance measures. The funding request is to fill the gap between the funding available in the proviso and the actual cost of the full-time position.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

The current Klickitat County Planner has been with the Gorge Commission for five years and is a very experienced land use planner. The planner understands the job thoroughly, how to implement the ordinance, how to work with diverse landowners throughout the NSA in Klickitat County, how to improve and streamline processes, and most importantly how to protect resources. Through the years, the planner has received annual performance reviews with commensurate step increases in order to retain them on staff and provide compensation for excellent performance. If this additional funding is not provided to fill the gap, then CRGC will need to reduce their salary and benefits or implement furlough days, which could lead to them departing the agency.
Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

Not applicable.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The additional funding requested for the Klickitat County Planner will cover the overage of salary, benefits, and costs above the amount provided for in the proviso at current service level.

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<tr>
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<td>Total Funding</td>
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<td>95,825</td>
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<td>(1,825)</td>
<td>(2,330)</td>
<td>(7,002)</td>
<td>(11,000)</td>
<td>(14,000)</td>
<td>(17,000)</td>
<td>(20,000)</td>
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Workforce Assumptions:

Not applicable.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

This additional funding to fully cover the cost of a Klickitat County Planner supports the CRGC strategic plan by implementing the requirements of the National Scenic Area Act which states that if a county does not adopt an ordinance to implement the NSA Management Plan, the agency must do the work to protect natural, cultural, recreation, scenic and economic resources. Without a full-time position to conduct the work, performance measures may not reach established goals. This funding gap to support the full cost of a 1.0 FTE planner will use proviso Washington general fund dollars.
Performance Outcomes:

Retention of the Klickitat County land use planner will allow CRGC to consistently maintain the improvement it has made with the following performance measures:

- Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the Commission’s overall quality of services provided as “good” or “excellent”.
- Percentage of Commission development reviews issued within 72 days of receiving a complete application.

Activity: A001 – Implementation of the Management Plan and National Scenic Area Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>FY 2020</th>
<th>FY 2021</th>
<th>FY 2022</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: 002921</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the commission’s overall quality of services provided as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>73%</td>
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</table>

| Measure: 002920 | | | |
| Percentage of Commission development reviews issued within 72 days of receiving a complete application | 83% | 88% | 100% |

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

No answer was provided.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

No answer was provided.

Target Populations or Communities:

The Klickitat County Planner primarily works on development reviews with landowners and agencies to ensure that resources are protected if development is approved. However, the planner is also responsible for analyzing the Management Plan to ensure that policies and guidelines are applied equitably. CRGC is currently developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan for internal operations and external land use management. The Klickitat County Planner will be viewing current policies and guidelines through an equity lens and will be making recommendations for Plan amendments if policies and guidelines can be improved to be more equitable. The Klickitat County Planner will also be part of the CRGC outreach workshops in Klickitat County to engage diverse stakeholders. If the DEI Outreach and Implementation decision package is funded, there will be a more proactive approach to reaching out to underserved communities and translating materials into Spanish. The Klickitat County Planner will also be part of the CRGC “PEAR” Team. Because this position specializes in knowing the communities within the NSA in Klickitat County, the planner will be able to help create opportunities for better communication and to address any equity issues that arise as outreach is increased.
Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

Not applicable.

State Workforce Impacts:

Not applicable.

Intergovernmental:

The Klickitat County land use planner works with stakeholders and landowners to process development review applications, monitor compliance with permit conditions, and conduct enforcement actions, if voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, within Klickitat County. In doing so, the land use planner consults with federal agencies such as the USDA Forest Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service, and state agencies such as the WA Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office, WA State parks, and the four Columbia River treaty tribes: Nez Perce, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, and Yakama Nation. Given that every permit application requires an assessment of impacts on scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources, the governments and tribes are supportive of CRGC doing this work to prevent adverse impacts on resources.

Stakeholder Response:

Stakeholders will be supportive of retaining the Klickitat County land use planner so that they may continue to have their development review applications processed in a timely manner.

State Facilities Impacts:

The Klickitat County land use planner has office space in CRGC’s office, so no additional facility space will be needed.

Changes from Current Law:

Not applicable.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

The National Scenic Area Act was passed by Congress in 1986 and required development permits for any actions that may affect scenic, natural, cultural, or recreation resources. Five of the six counties in the National Scenic Area adopted the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan as ordinances and they issue all development permits, with Gorge Commission staff providing oversight for consistency. Klickitat County did not adopt the ordinance, so it falls on CRGC staff to conduct this work to be in compliance with the National Scenic Area Act. Additional funding is required to keep the Klickitat County Planner on staff to fulfill the Gorge Commission mandate to conduct development reviews and post-permit monitoring and compliance.

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Objects of Expenditure</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
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Agency Contact Information

Krystyna Wolniakowski
(509) 493-3323
Krystyna.Wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org
Agency Recommendation Summary

This package will provide sufficient funds to cover the lease increase for the Columbia River Gorge Commission’s (CRGC) 2900-square-foot facility.

Fiscal Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Summary</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
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<td>Total Revenue</td>
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<td>$3</td>
<td>$6</td>
<td>$3</td>
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Decision Package Description

This package requests funding to pay for the increase of lease fees for the CRGC office space. This request is in alignment with the agency’s facility plan and the terms of the lease. CRGC has been in the same location since 2003.

This request will provide sufficient funds to cover the lease increase for CRGC’s 2900-square-foot facility. A new six-year lease was negotiated and became effective July 1, 2021. The Lessor increased the lease rate to align with the remainder of its office suites in the complex. Available office space has become increasingly scarce as new businesses have relocated to the area. Without this increased funding, the lease costs will have to be paid from existing funds, thereby reducing the resources available for implementation of the strategic plan.

CRGC is required to maintain an office in the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area. This request will allow CRGC to continue to operate from a centrally located office in the Columbia River Gorge. Due to the absence of any other large Washington state agencies in the area, the option of co-locating is not available. As such, CRGC will need to continue in its current location.

CRGC works in conjunction with the USDA Forest Service National Scenic Area office located in Hood River, Oregon. It is advantageous that CRGC’s office is located in White Salmon, Washington, less than 10 miles from the USDA Forest Service office.
Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

Not applicable.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The current lease term includes the base rate plus any applicable property tax increases above the base property tax rate.

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<th>$46,980/year</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Lease term for FY 2022:</td>
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<td>$41,342/year</td>
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Net FY 2024 Increase: $5,637/year

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<tr>
<th>Lease term for FY 2025:</th>
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<th>$46,980/year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lease term for FY 2023:</td>
<td>2,900 sq ft @ $1.188/sq ft</td>
<td>$41,342/year</td>
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Net FY 2025 Increase: $5,638/year

Workforce Assumptions:

There are no staffing impacts related to this decision package.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

All costs will be ongoing and will impact future biennia. The request will provide sufficient funding needed to maintain ongoing lease costs. As a small agency, CRGC does not have sufficient funding to absorb the increased costs without impacting the goals and services provided to the citizens of Washington and Oregon and will impact all elements of the strategic plan.

Performance Outcomes:

CRGC is required to maintain an office in the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area. This request will allow CRGC to continue to operate from a centrally located office in the Columbia River Gorge. Due to the absence of any other large Washington state agencies in the area, the option of co-locating is not available. As such, CRGC will need to continue in its current location.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

No answer was provided.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

No answer was provided.

Target Populations or Communities:

No answer was provided.
**Other Collateral Connections**

**Puget Sound Recovery:**
Not applicable.

**State Workforce Impacts:**
There is no staffing impact related to this decision package.

**Intergovernmental:**
CRGC works in conjunction with the USDA Forest Service National Scenic Area office located in Hood River, Oregon. It is advantageous that CRGC’s office is located in White Salmon, Washington, less than 10 miles from the USDA Forest Service office.

**Stakeholder Response:**
This request will allow the Commission to continue to operate and serve the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area stakeholders from a centrally located office in the Columbia River Gorge.

**State Facilities Impacts:**
Not applicable.

**Changes from Current Law:**
Not applicable.

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**
Not applicable.

**IT Addendum**

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**
No

**Objects of Expenditure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects of Expenditure</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Agency Contact Information**

Krystyna Wolniakowski
(509) 493-3323
Krystyna.Wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org