



Pacific Northwest Region
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News Release

January 26, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Invited to Information Sessions on National Scenic Area Management Plan

Hood River, Ore. – The Columbia River Gorge Commission, the U.S. Forest Service, and the six Gorge counties have jointly scheduled four public information sessions to share progress on the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan review and revision process, called Gorge 2020.

The four sessions will summarize comments received during initial public scoping in January through April 2017, as well as Government to Government consultations with the four Treaty Tribes.

“The Gorge Commission and Forest Service have carefully considered all the comments we received in 2017 from the public, local governments, state and federal agencies, and the four Treaty Tribes, and we will now focus our energy on four key topics, engage experts and stakeholders, and move forward with necessary revisions in the next two years,” said Krystyna U. Wolniakowski, Executive Director of the Gorge Commission.

The sessions will include details about the Gorge 2020 process, and outline public participation opportunities for the four main focus topics selected for in-depth analysis. These topics include: economic vitality, urban area boundaries, emerging land uses & the development review process, recreation resources. Participants in the meetings will also learn about a new online tool for providing additional input on Gorge 2020.

Meetings dates and places are below. Doors will open for all sessions at 5:30 with coffee and conversation.

- February 6. 6:00–7:30 p.m. – Corbett School MPB Building. 35800 Historic Columbia River Highway Corbett, OR
- February 7. 6:00–7:30 p.m. – Liberty Middle School. 1612 NE Garfield St Camas, WA
- February 15. 6:00–7:30 p.m. – Hegewald Center. 710 SW Rock Creek Drive Stevenson, WA
- February 20. 6:00–7:30 p.m. – Ft. Dalles Readiness Center. 402 E. Scenic Drive, The Dalles, OR



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(continued)

“We saw general agreement in the scoping that our management plan meets the intent of the National Scenic Area Act,” said Lynn Burditt, scenic area manager, “The focus topics we’ve chosen represent complicated aspects of the plan which are most in need of further discussion and consideration. Some of the issues we face today were not envisioned 30 years ago when the plan was created.”

Gorge 2020 is an opportunity for the agencies to examine these complex issues. For more information about public meetings, future opportunities to comment, and how to provide feedback online, visit <http://www.gorgecommission.org/management-plan/gorge2020/>.

Congress directed the Gorge Commission to conduct a review every 5 -10 years to determine whether any parts of the National Scenic Area’s Management Plan should be updated and revised. The original plan was released in 1997, and was last reviewed in 2000 and revisions were adopted by the Gorge Commission and Forest Service in 2004.

The review process is expected to take several years to complete, and any proposed revisions to the National Scenic Area Management Plan must be adopted by the Gorge Commission and undergo review by U.S Department of Agriculture officials for final concurrence.

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The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act was passed by Congress in 1986 to protect and provide for the enhancement of the scenic, cultural, recreational and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge, and to protect and support the economy of the Columbia River Gorge area by encouraging growth to occur in existing urban areas and by allowing future economic development in a manner consistent with the goals of the Act. More information on the Gorge Commission is available on the web at www.GorgeCommission.org.

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area encompasses 292,500 acres of Washington and Oregon, where the Columbia River cuts a spectacular river canyon through the Cascade Mountains. The USDA Forest Service manages National Forest lands in the National Scenic Area and works with the Gorge Commission, states, counties, treaty tribes, and partners to protect and enhance scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Columbia River Gorge while encouraging local economic development consistent with that protection. Learn more about Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area at www.fs.usda.gov/crgnsa or follow us on social media at facebook.com/crgnsa or www.twitter.com/crgnsa.