

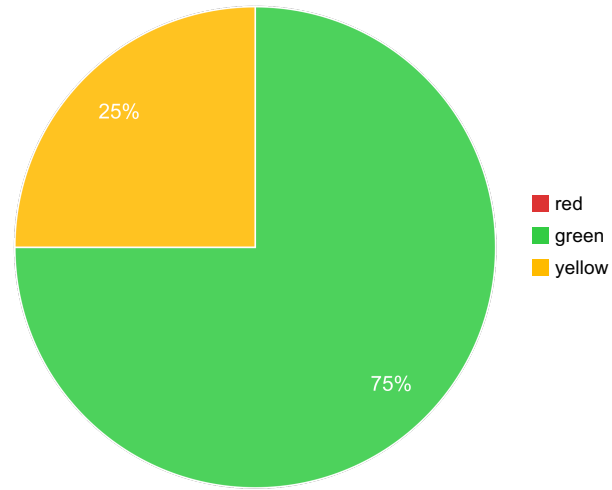
Columbia River Gorge Commission

Annual Performance Progress Report

Reporting Year 2025

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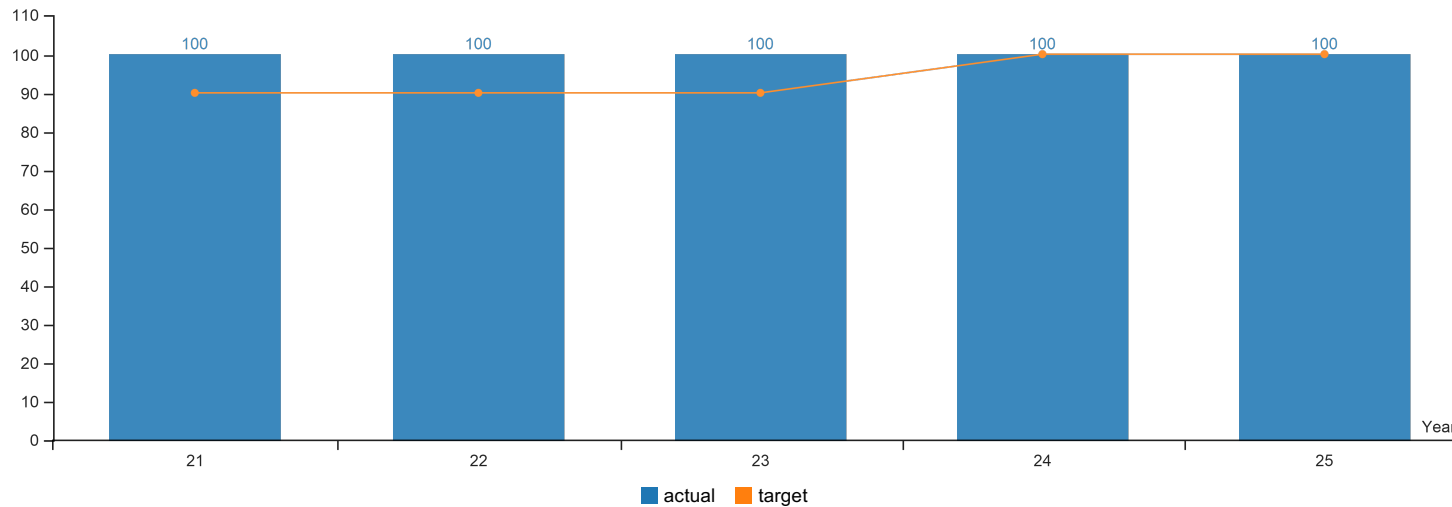
KPM #	Approved Key Performance Measures (KPMs)
1	County Decisions - Percentage and number of county decisions where Gorge Commission comments were addressed in the decision: a)fully; b) partially
3	Customer Service - Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the agency's customer service as "good" or "excellent"; overall customer service, timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise and availability of information.
4	Percent of total best practices met by the Board. -
5	Number of presentations to civic and community groups each year - Increase public awareness of the National Scenic Area Act and Management Plan.



Performance Summary	Green	Yellow	Red
	= Target to -5%	= Target -5% to -15%	= Target > -15%
Summary Stats:	75%	25%	0%

KPM #1	County Decisions - Percentage and number of county decisions where Gorge Commission comments were addressed in the decision: a)fully; b) partially
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Jan 01

* Upward Trend = positive result



Report Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Percent of County Decisions- CRGC Addressed fully and partially					
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Target	90%	90%	90%	100%	100%

How Are We Doing

This measure reflects the relative effectiveness of the Commission's oversight of county implementation of the National Scenic Area Management Plan for the five counties that adopted an ordinance to be consistent with the requirements of the Management Plan. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act authorizes counties to adopt and implement a local ordinance that achieves the objectives of the Act. For those five counties that adopted the ordinance to be consistent with the Management Plan, the Commission plays two roles in support of local implementation: first, it functions as a technical assistance resource for the county programs, and second, it serves to ensure consistency throughout the two-state, six-county region. For most county decisions, the Commission observes, reviews, and verifies the planning process and decisions without comment since consistency is achieved. For those decisions where the Commission offers technical advice or constructive suggestions, this performance measure indicates the percentage of Commission suggestions the counties fully accept in local decisions and the percentage of Commission comments that the counties partially accept. To track this measure, the counties must acknowledge that they accept or partially accept the comments by the Commission and refer to that in their written findings. The limited remaining percentage (not included in the measure) represents the portion of county decisions that either do not accept comments from the Commission or consider them but do not acknowledge those comments in writing.

Data reflects figures for the calendar year. For the 2024 reporting year (CY 2023 data), development review applications submitted from Wasco, Hood River, and Multnomah counties on the Oregon side, and Skamania and Clark counties on the Washington side, the Commission staff issued 11 comment letters to the five counties. Of the 11 development review applications the Commission staff commented on, all were fully or partially addressed.

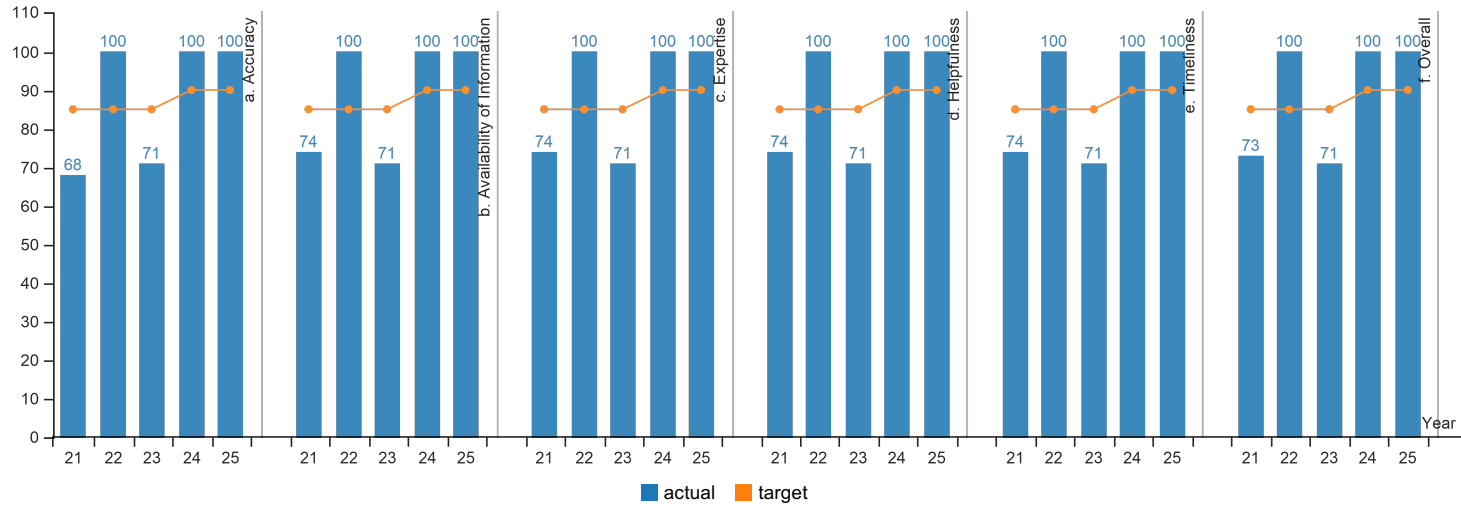
For the 2025 reporting year (CY 2024 data), development review applications submitted from Wasco, Hood River, and Multnomah counties on the Oregon side, and Skamania and Clark counties on the Washington side, the Commission staff issued 19 comment letters to the five counties. Of the 19 development applications the Commission staff commented on, all were fully or partially

addressed. (Note: Klickitat County in Washington did not adopt the ordinance, so the Commission staff issues all the decisions on development review applications.)

Factors Affecting Results

The Commission's comment letters may require extensive technical review and consultation with appropriate agencies. The Commission now has two experienced planners who fully review the development applications in the five counties. In addition, regular meetings between county and Commission planners have improved the application of standards and guidelines in the National Scenic Area Management Plan.

KPM #3	Customer Service - Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the agency's customer service as "good" or "excellent"; overall customer service, timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise and availability of information.
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Jan 01



Report Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
a. Accuracy					
Actual	68%	100%	71%	100%	100%
Target	85%	85%	85%	90%	90%
b. Availability of Information					
Actual	74%	100%	71%	100%	100%
Target	85%	85%	85%	90%	90%
c. Expertise					
Actual	74%	100%	71%	100%	100%
Target	85%	85%	85%	90%	90%
d. Helpfulness					
Actual	74%	100%	71%	100%	100%
Target	85%	85%	85%	90%	90%
e. Timeliness					
Actual	74%	100%	71%	100%	100%
Target	85%	85%	85%	90%	90%
f. Overall					
Actual	73%	100%	71%	100%	100%
Target	85%	85%	85%	90%	90%

How Are We Doing

In CY 2021, staff implemented a new process for collecting survey results. Due to the methodology change, survey responses increased significantly and included all customers, not just those who applied for a land use permit in one county. The new survey aligns with best practices recommended by the state of Oregon. The agency believes this change reflects a broad range of customer opinions and experiences, which was the Commission's goal. We aim to continue surveying our partners and the public more broadly in the future and to improve our scores as we more actively involve our Commissioners in public outreach and in providing information and guidance to landowners and other agencies as needed. We have trained our staff in facilitation, effective public outreach, and collaboration, and enhanced our communication tools to help the public better understand our roles, responsibilities, and the regulations that govern the National Scenic Area.

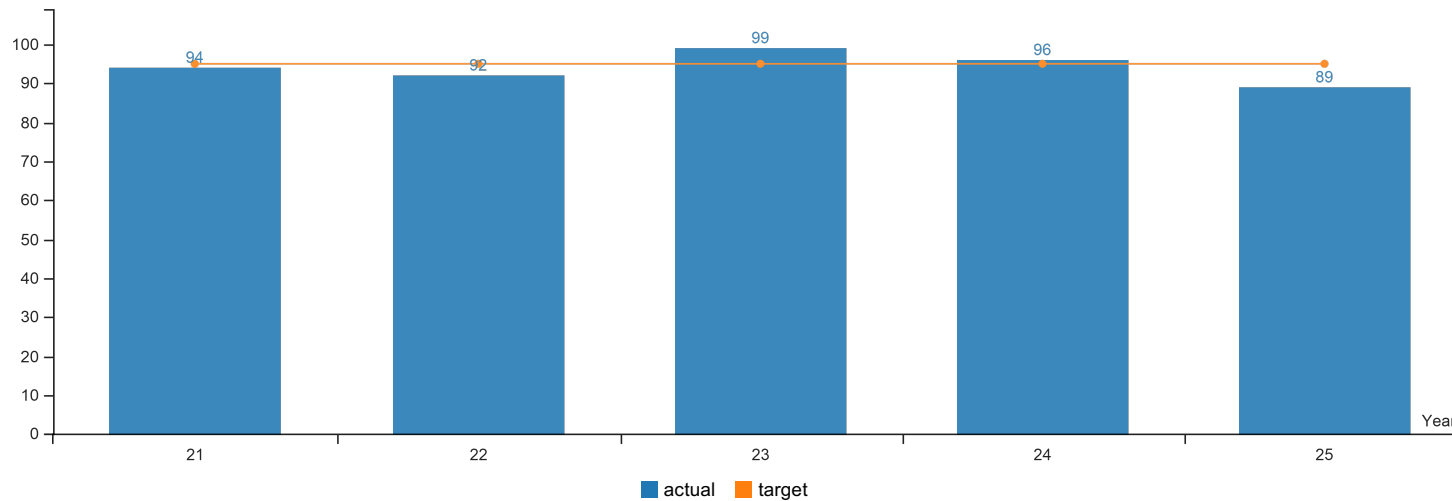
Factors Affecting Results

The role of the Columbia River Gorge Commission, the National Scenic Area (NSA) Act, and the Management Plan that guides our regulations to protect NSA resources is not well understood by the public. The land use laws of both states differ, and regional planning efforts are complex topics. The NSA Act was passed over 38 years ago, and public misinformation about the National Scenic Area, the Commission's role, and its collaboration with County Commissions, city councils, county planners, and agencies at the state and federal levels continues. Negative perceptions from the past three decades still linger but are improving. The 13-member Commission, appointed by the two state Governors, six counties, and the Secretary of Agriculture, along with its small staff (9.5 FTE in 2024), works diligently to communicate policies and management decisions to the public, partners, and government entities. Nevertheless, the lack of a dedicated communications expert and limited staff capacity hinder more frequent engagement and visibility efforts. The Commission and staff strive to inform and assist the public, residents, and landowners through the website and in-person meetings, though only as time permits, given daily operational demands. Following staff turnover in 2019 and 2020, ratings for timeliness and customer service declined due to the onboarding of new staff. Despite our small size, we remain dedicated to improving customer service and increasing public participation and access to information across all areas of our work. Enhancing communication tools with the public and decision-makers is a top priority. Our customer satisfaction survey, available online and in paper form at our office, helps gauge feedback. In July 2019, we added a tablet at the front counter for easy survey completion during visits.

For the 2023 reporting year (CY 2022 data), customer satisfaction averaged 71%, mainly due to delays caused by the USDA Forest Service's limited staffing, which affected permit reviews. The Forest Service also assesses impacts on cultural resources, but in CY 2022, a cultural resources specialist was assigned elsewhere, creating a backlog. This led to delays for landowners awaiting approval, resulting in dissatisfaction. In CY 2023 (the 2024 reporting year), customer satisfaction increased to 100%, thanks to more timely development reviews and responsive service. For CY 2024 (the 2025 reporting year), customer satisfaction remained at 100%.

KPM #4	Percent of total best practices met by the Board. -
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Jan 01

* Upward Trend = positive result



Report Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Percentage of total best practices met by the board					
Actual	94%	92%	99%	96%	89%
Target	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%

How Are We Doing

This performance measure indicates the percentage of best practices met by the Commission, as evaluated by Commission members through an anonymous survey. The best practices assessed include high-level indicators of the Commission's administrative processes. This measure consists of 15 yes-or-no questions regarding the Commission and the agency's performance in areas such as Commissioner meeting attendance, budget management, and personnel accountability. Responses from Commissioners provide a general indication of the agency's overall health and the administrative effectiveness of the Commission staff. These measures do not necessarily reflect the success of the Commission in fulfilling its federal, state, or programmatic mandates. The Executive Director hired in CY 2015 has effectively collaborated with the Commission to ensure adherence to all best practices and that objectives are met.

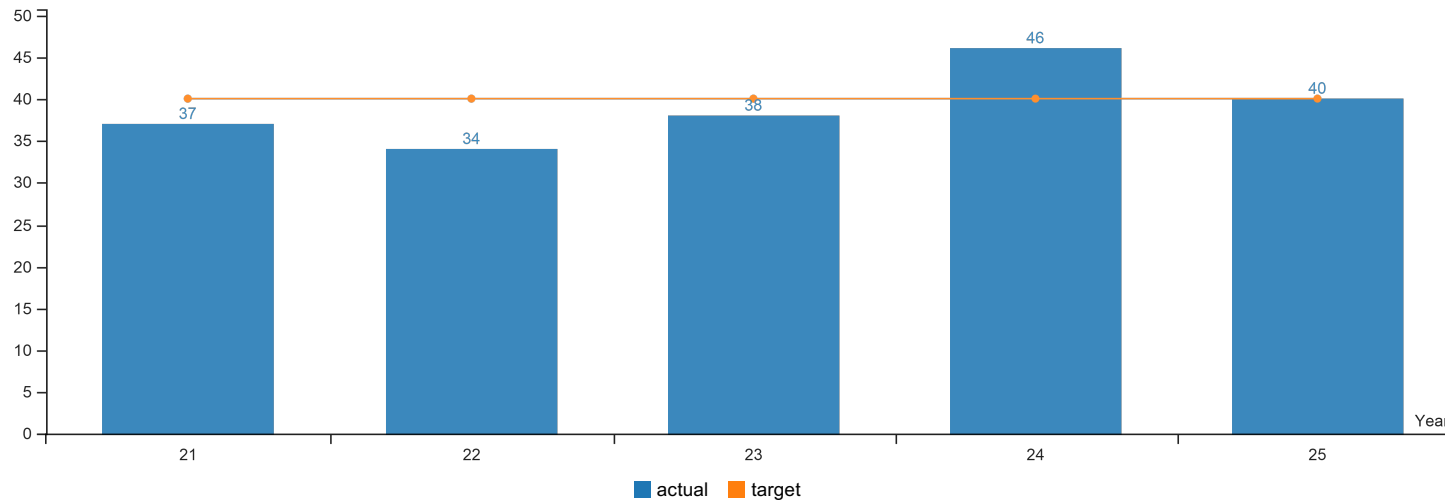
In 2022, the Commission began conducting training sessions to review the best practices established for the Commission and staff, based on accepted best practices for Oregon state boards and commissions. There are 15 best practices that the Commission has adopted and monitors each year. Examples include annual performance reviews of the Executive Director, reviews of policies and procedures, financial and IT audit findings, and the Commission's involvement in key communications. The Commission continues its comprehensive annual training process to ensure that all Commissioners stay current with their responsibilities, adhere to rules, periodically assess their effectiveness, promote transparency and accountability in decision-making, and provide effective oversight of the Executive Director. Data reflects figures for the calendar year. In the 2022 reporting year (CY 2021 data), the board's assessment was 92%. The board's assessment rose to 99% for the 2023 reporting year (CY 2022 data), and for the 2024 reporting year (CY 2023 data), it was 96%. For the 2025 reporting year (CY 2024 data), the board's assessment dipped to 89% primarily due to five newly appointed commissioners who had not been engaged with communications and other aspects of the Commission's work and performance measures. The new commissioners answered negatively, since there is no "abstain" column in the survey.

Factors Affecting Results

Factors that can influence our results include turnover within the 13-member Commission since their appointments are staggered annually, the appointment of a new Chair and Vice-Chair each year, and their leadership styles, and any loss of key staff positions. A comprehensive overview of best practices and additional presentations on audits and financial reports to the Commission are believed to have enhanced scores and an understanding of the best practices they should follow. Training for Commissioners on governance topics and communication also contributed to improved scores. The Commission plans to continue this practice of annual reviews. In CY 25, the Commission has planned additional training and reminders on topics related to implementing best practices.

KPM #5	Number of presentations to civic and community groups each year - Increase public awareness of the National Scenic Area Act and Management Plan.
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Jan 01

* Upward Trend = positive result



Report Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of presentations to civic and community groups each year					
Actual	37	34	38	46	40
Target	40	40	40	40	40

How Are We Doing

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on November 17, 1986. The Columbia River Gorge Commission was established in 1987 by Oregon and Washington through an interstate compact, the Columbia River Gorge Compact. The purpose of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (NSA) Act is to:

- (1) To establish a national scenic area to protect and provide for the enhancement of the scenic, cultural, recreation, and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge; and
- (2) 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 that is consistent with paragraph (1).

Per the Act, the Columbia River Gorge Commission and the USDA Forest Service adopted a National Scenic Area Management Plan in 1991 to guide land use in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Covering 292,500 acres and 85 miles of the Columbia River in Oregon and Washington, the National Scenic Area is managed jointly by the Columbia River Gorge Commission and the USDA Forest Service.

Since the creation of the National Scenic Area, land uses were designated to be compatible with the intent of the Act, and a Management Plan was adopted to guide land development decisions. Any new proposed developments outside the urban area boundaries are assessed for impacts on protected resources. The National Scenic Area attracts more than 2.5 million visitors who sightsee and recreate, providing economic benefits to local communities. Additionally, the National Scenic Area attracts many new enterprises, small travel-related businesses, and industries that have created jobs for people in communities who value the quality of life that the Columbia River Gorge offers.

In 2020, the Gorge Commission completed its largest and most comprehensive public outreach program since its inception in 1986 to develop the 10-year vision through the Gorge 2020 Management Plan review and update process. Most of the current Management Plan was over 30 years old and outdated, requiring new policies and regulations to be developed to protect the National Scenic Area for the next decade. Complex topics such as climate change or the need for urban area boundary expansions were not envisioned initially, yet how the Gorge Commission addresses these issues will significantly impact the National Scenic Area. Communicating the need for monitoring and enforcement, protecting tribal treaty rights, and balancing economic vitality with resource protection is essential for the public to understand. The Gorge Commission is dedicated to increasing public outreach through workshops and engaging residents and visitors to develop a clearer and more understandable Management Plan that will guide development and protection policies for the next decade. The Commission staff collaborate with local, state, and federal agencies, four Treaty Tribes, stakeholders in Oregon and Washington, and realtors to better communicate information about the NSA, rules, regulations, and permit requirements. For the reporting year 2020 (CY 2019 data), the Commission organized and/or participated in 49 meetings or gatherings. In 2020, the Commission organized and/or participated in 37 meetings; in 2021, 34 meetings; in 2022, 38 meetings, which is just shy of the target of 40; and in 2023, 46 meetings. For the reporting year 2025 (CY 2024 data), the Commission organized and/or participated in 40 outreach meetings, so the performance measure target was met. The target of 40 meetings per year was met again in CY 24.

Factors Affecting Results

The role of the Columbia River Gorge Commission, the National Scenic Area (NSA) Act, and the Management Plan that guides our regulations to protect NSA resources is not well enough understood by the public. The land use laws of both states differ, and regional planning efforts are complex topics. The NSA Act was passed 38 years ago, and public misinformation about the National Scenic Area, the Commission's role, and its work with county commissions, city councils, county planners, state and federal agencies, economic development entities, Treaty Tribes, and landowners continues. Long-standing negative perceptions persist today. The 13-member Commission, appointed by the two state Governors, six counties, and the Secretary of Agriculture, along with its small staff (9.5 FTE in 2024), works diligently to communicate with the public, partners, and local, state, and federal agencies about policies and management plan decisions. However, the lack of a dedicated communications expert and limited staff capacity hinder regular engagement and visibility efforts, making information less accessible than desired. The Commission and staff strive to inform and assist the public, residents, and landowners through the website and meetings, but only as time allows within their daily responsibilities. Our goal is to organize and/or participate in at least 40 meetings or gatherings that help the public and agencies better understand the Gorge Commission and our role in managing the resources within the National Scenic Area.