

Summary of Substantive Changes in the Revised Gorge 2020 Management Plan

The following is a list of some of the substantive changes to the Management Plan for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, which was approved by the Gorge Commission on October 13, 2020 and received concurrence from the US Secretary of Agriculture on February 19, 2021.

- Adopts a Climate Change chapter with policies that are guiding the development and implementation of a Climate Change Action Plan for the National Scenic Area.
- Adopts a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement and policies that are guiding the creation and implementation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work plan for the Gorge Commission.
- Expands the buffer zone for certain identified cold water refuge streams from 100 feet to 200 feet.
- Updates wetlands protection policies to require no loss of wetlands, rather than the previous standard of no net loss.
- Includes new policies regarding the urban area boundary revision process, including a cumulative maximum increase of 50 acres or 2%, whichever is less, of the current acreage within an urban area. The Commission will further clarify the adopted policies in rulemaking; no timeline has been established for that process.
- Allows cideries, following the guidelines established for wineries.
- Allows fruit and produce stands to sell a broader range of agricultural products and other incidental materials.
- Includes new guidelines in some land use designations for owner-occupied “overnight accommodations,” limited to 90 room nights per year.
- Requires county planning departments to provide applicants with information on Firewise standards, and encourages applicants to meet those standards while meeting other National Scenic Area guidelines.
- Exempts buildings that are 1,500 square feet or less from the compatibility guideline for scenic resource protection.
- Updates guidelines for recreation developments, including new “recreation setting” descriptions for each Recreation Intensity Class.
- Updates the Economic Development chapter to be consistent with changes to the Management Plan and with current and projected economic development practices.
- Updates the Agricultural Income Test for new dwellings on Agricultural Land, requiring applicants to produce \$80,000 in gross agricultural income in 2020 dollars, indexed annually to inflation, before a dwelling can be permitted.
- Disallows new dwellings on lands designated as Commercial Forest or Large Woodland.

This is not a complete list of changes made to the Management Plan; many changes were clerical or did not have policy implications. The final adopted Management Plan is available on the Gorge Commission’s website, www.gorgecommission.org. For anyone interested in all the edits made, a redline version is also available on the Commission’s website.

