



Agency Contact Information

P.O. Box 730, White Salmon, WA 98672

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Agency Responsibilities

The Commission sets policy for land use and resource protection on non-federal lands in the Scenic Area, and is responsible for coordinated and consistent implementation of the Management Plan and land use ordinances among two states, six counties, four treaty Indian tribes, the federal government, and numerous stakeholders and citizens. The Commission's program is based on the statutory responsibilities described by the National Scenic Act and Columbia River Gorge Compact.

Statutory Authority

The Columbia River Gorge Commission was authorized by Congress in the 1986 Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act (P.L. 99-663). The Act provided advance consent for an interstate compact between Washington and Oregon to create the bi-state Columbia River Gorge Commission. The Columbia River Gorge Compact (ORS 196.150 et seq., RCW 43.97.015 et seq.) enacted in 1987, created the Commission and directed it: “to perform all functions and responsibilities in accordance with the provisions of this compact and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act. . .

Organization Chart and Budget

The Commission has thirteen appointed members; six appointed by local government (one by each of the six Gorge counties), six appointed by the states of Oregon and Washington (three appointed by each Governor), and a thirteenth ex officio member appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. A roster of Commission members is attached.

The Commission employs one executive director, three land use planners, one secretary, one assistant, counsel (.75 FTE) and GIS coordinator (.5 FTE) with offices in White Salmon, Washington.

The agency’s expenditures are heavily dominated by personnel and fixed costs. In the 2003-2005 biennium, personnel and fixed costs represented over 95% of the operating funds. The joint program is required, by the Columbia River Gorge Compact to be funded equally between Washington and Oregon.

Source of Funds	2003-2005 Allotment
Washington Joint fund allotment	\$609,940
Oregon Joint fund allotment	\$609,940
Washington Commissioner fund allotment	\$28,080
USDA Forest Service Contract for GIS Services	\$53,231
National Endowment for the Arts Grant (one time)	\$10,000
Donations	\$10,433
Savings Incentive	\$5,000
Oregon Dept. of Transportation Contract (one time)	\$ 23,050

Washington matching funds for ODOT contract (one time)	\$ 23,050
TOTAL ALLOTTED FUNDS 2003-2005	\$1,371,724

Major Issues

- Meeting the demands of the public. By its nature, the Commission is a regulatory agency that easily generates conflict. The Commission has been charged with protecting the scenic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources while encouraging compatible growth and economic development within the Scenic Area. This broad, difficult mission opens itself up to many interpretations by the various individuals and groups that recreate and live in the Columbia River Gorge. As a result, the Commission is a lightning rod for controversy regardless of which side of an issue the Commission chooses.
- Maintenance of Services. For the 2003-05 biennium, the Commission's budget was reduced by nearly 20%. This drop in funding has resulted in a reduction in staffing levels and in the quality and timeliness of the services they offer. Some consequences of the decreased services include:
 - Longer response and processing times for permits and citizen requests.
 - Decreased coordination among Gorge counties and federal and state agencies.
 - Inability to resolve problems early in the process, resulting in appeals and litigation which increases legal costs and delays projects proposed by Gorge residents.
 - Inability to properly research and respond to issues affecting the Scenic Area in a timely manner.
 - Discontinued public outreach.
- Implementation of revised Management Plan. During the 2001-03 and 2003-05 biennia, the Commission worked to revise its Management Plan as required by law. In April 2004, the Commission adopted a revised Management Plan, which was submitted for concurrence to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Secretary of Agriculture deferred the decision to the Regional Forester for the United States Forest Service, who then issued her concurrence in September 2004. The revised Management Plan will then need to be adopted by Gorge counties to fully implement the changes. One lawsuit regarding this revised Management Plan has already been filed against the Commission by the Friends of the Gorge. This legal challenge may delay implementation of the revisions and may also increase Commission legal expenses by an unknown amount.
- Work Plan. During the 2003 Legislative Session, the Oregon Legislature required that the Commission put together a work plan and schedule for addressing:
 - Requirements to meet Oregon statutes regarding permit-processing timelines.
 - Developing a process by which appeals are adjudicated by neutral third parties in the state where the subject property is located.
 - Working with congressional delegations to secure additional funds for economic development as authorized in the National Scenic Area Act.
 - Revising the guidelines to address the selection of finishes, colors, and reflectivity of surfaces in relationship to applying the definition of "visual subordinate" as it applies to the Scenic Area.
 - Streamlining the adjudication process so that an appeal can be resolved within reasonable time frames and requiring consolidation of causes of action and/or findings so that property owners do not face multiple appeals.
 - Implementing a fee schedule to recover a portion of operational expenses due to Klickitat County's failure to adopt ordinances.

These new requirements were imposed without consultation or consent of the State of Washington.

Board Member Listing by Board Position

COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE COMMISSION (NS021)

Agency 103 - Community, Trade & Economic Develop	Senate Conf. Y	Positions: Maximum 013
Authority Governor	Public Disc. N	Minimum 000
Authoriztn. RCW 43.97.025	Term Length 048	Actual 013
Rem. Auth. GP	Meetings/Yr. 12	

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
001	Jacobsen, Jane L. 703 East Reserve Vancouver, WA 98661	A	C	06/13/2003	06/12/2007
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
002	Abbe, Harold 696 Northwest Sierra Camas, WA 98607	A	C	08/11/2004	06/12/2008
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
003	Akers Sheehan, Katharine 921 Riverside Drive Washougal, WA 98671	A	C	06/13/2001	06/12/2005
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public/Resident Of Scenic Area		

