



File Code: 1900

Date: October 31, 2003

Subject: Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan Review,
Special Management Area Topics

Dear Interested Party:

Proposed revised Management Plan guidelines for three Special Management Area (SMA) topics are available for public review. The issue papers are posted on our website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/columbia/>. (Look for “Special Management Area Plan Review” on the right hand column.) I invite your review and comment on these topics.

The topics with proposed revised Management Plan guidelines are:

- SMA Forest (particularly SMA forest practice guidelines)
- SMA General Land Use
- SMA Natural Resources

The SMA Forest analysis focuses on the SMA forest practice guidelines for protection of natural and scenic resources. It also includes guidelines for the conversion of lands in forest use to agricultural use.

The SMA General Land Use analysis addresses SMA lot line adjustment guidelines and proposes four potential changes in Land Use Designation (LUD) in the SMA. Two of the four areas are currently “undesigned” because Congress changed the land from General Management Area to Special Management Area without changing the LUD. The third area concerns residentially developed private property erroneously designated SMA Open Space. Fourth, the Forest Service proposes to extend the Public Recreation LUD at Multnomah Falls. In addition, I have documented my rationale for implementing Section 13(a)(1) of the National Scenic Area Act, which relates to the relationship between the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and SMA streams.

The SMA Natural Resources analysis proposes language for the SMA wetland policy I adopted July 22, 2003, which allows impacts to wetlands for purposes of public safety and resource restoration and enhancement. In addition, the SMA Natural Resources section proposes procedural changes, clarifications and more detailed direction to implement SMA guidelines. The SMA Natural Resources section appears greatly changed from the current guidelines. However, our intent is to ensure there is no reduction from the current guidelines in the level of resource protection while reorganizing the chapter, changing review processes and adding clarification.



I invite your review and comment on these proposals. We are taking comments until November 17, 2003. You may address comments to me at the above address, or email dharkenrider@fs.fed.us. I intend to make decisions on these proposals in late November.

Subsequent opportunities for public comment will occur during the Management Plan adoption process. A public hearing will be scheduled on the draft revised Management Plan. This hearing will be held in conjunction with the Columbia River Gorge Commission, and comments on SMA issues can be directed to me as Area Manager at this hearing.

Each topic has a leader whom you may contact for more specific information. In the table below, I have outlined the topic leader and contact information, and outlined the schedule.

Topic	Leader Contact Information	Schedule
SMA Forest	Diana Ross Phone: 541-308-1716 email: dlross@fs.fed.us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 26-Release Preliminary Policy Options for Public Review and Comment • Oct 10-End Public Review Period for Policy Options • Oct 31- Release Draft Issue Paper with Proposed Revised Guidelines for Public Review and Comment • Nov 17- End Public Review Period • Nov 28 – Release Final Issue Paper and Revised Guidelines
SMA Land Use	Virginia Kelly Phone: 541-308-1720 email: vkelly@fs.fed.us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oct 31- Release Draft Issue Paper with Proposed Revised Guidelines for Public Review and Comment • Nov 17- End Public Review Period • Nov 28 – Release Final Issue Paper and Revised Guidelines
SMA Natural Resources	Robin Dobson Phone: 541-308-1717 email: rdobson@fs.fed.us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oct 31- Release Draft Issue Paper with Proposed Revised Guidelines for Public Review and Comment • Nov 17- End Public Review Period • Nov 28 – Release Final Issue Paper and Revised Guidelines

I look forward to your participation as we review the Management Plan guidelines for these topics. For general information, you may contact Virginia Kelly at 541-308-1720, or vkelly@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

/s/ Daniel T. Harkenrider

DANIEL T. HARKENRIDER
Area Manager