



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Columbia River Gorge
National Scenic Area

902 Wasco Ave., Suite 200
Hood River, OR 97031
(541) 308-1700
FAX (541) 386-1916

File Code: 1900/2700

Date: October 15, 2015

Dear Interested Party:

The USDA Forest Service, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (CRGNSA), is seeking public comment for a proposal to authorize two new permits authorizing agricultural and livestock activity on National Forest System lands within the Scenic Area.

You are being notified because you are a known interested party, and/or you own land adjacent to National Forest lands in the area. The project will be reviewed for consistency with the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan, and assessed for its potential environmental effects under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Proposal

Permit Area I is proposed for low-intensity livestock grazing, located on approximately 10-13 acres in Skamania County, just south of Jemptegaard Road off of Belle Center Road. Area I is adjacent to existing permitted pasture areas for grazing cows and goats. The legal description for Area I is: Washington State, Skamania County, T.1N, R.5E, portions of Section 17, 18, Willamette Meridian. (See attached map.)

Permit Area II is proposed for wheat cultivation, located on approximately 25 acres. It is located in Wasco County off of Sevenmile Hill Road. Area II is adjacent to private lands and National Forest System lands. The legal description for Area II is: Oregon State, Wasco County, T. 2N, R. 12 E., Section 11 and 14, Willamette Meridian. (See attached map.) It has been recommended that this former agricultural area be restored to native oak woodland over time. The Scenic Area review and environmental analysis will include consideration of the effects of recommended restoration activities.

Background

The Forest Service authorizes the use of NFS lands for animal pastures, hay pastures and wheat field cultivation through the Special Uses program under the Organic Act of 1987. The Scenic Area administers a number of pasture special use permits, which allow local farmers the use of public lands to graze their animals or cultivate hay or wheat. Those permits are made subject to terms, conditions and timeframes as appropriate, guided by the Management Plan and other relevant law and policy. The Forest Service and the public both benefit from these permitted uses, which help maintain the historic pastoral setting and scenic qualities of the areas, curtail the encroachment of invasive species such as Himalayan blackberry and Cheatgrass, and support local economies throughout the Scenic Area.

Opportunity to Comment

We are interested in any comments you may have on the project described in this letter. Site-specific comments are the most helpful. Your comments will help aid in the identification of issues, concerns, or opportunities associated with this project. Please submit your comments by



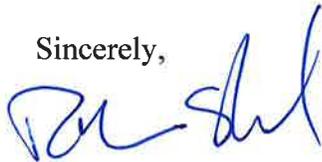
November 16, 2015. Comments received by that date will be taken into consideration during the consistency review and environmental analysis.

Please submit comments on this proposal to Nicole Carver, at 902 Wasco, Suite 200, Hood River, Oregon, 97031. You may email comments to comments-pacificnorthwest-columbia-river-gorge-nsa@fs.fed.us. Comments must be received by close of business on **November 16, 2015**.

If you have questions about this project or want additional information, feel free to contact the project lead, Nicole Carver at (541) 308-1746 or by email at nicolegcarver@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for your consideration of this project, and for your interest in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Your ideas are always welcome.

Sincerely,



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LYNN BURDITT
Area Manager



Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area

Washington

Proposed Permit Area I Location

Proposed Permit Area II Location

Oregon

