



**Skamania County**  
**Community Development Department**  
Building/Fire Marshal ♦ Environmental Health ♦ Planning  
Skamania County Courthouse Annex  
Post Office Box 1009  
Stevenson, Washington 98648  
Phone: 509-427-3900 Inspection Line: 509-427-3922

## **NATIONAL SCENIC AREA LAND USE APPLICATION & INFORMATIONAL PACKET**

### **WHAT IS THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA?**

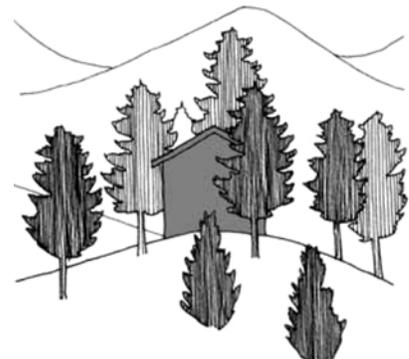
The Columbia River Gorge is home to an incredible combination of scenery, geology, rare plants, wildlife, recreational opportunities, and rich human history. National recognition of the importance of the Gorge resulted in creation of the National Scenic Area Act, signed by President Ronald Reagan on November 17, 1986. The Act and its corresponding regulations aim to protect these resources.

The Act mandated that each county within the National Scenic Area (NSA) either adopt ordinances to implement these regulations or relinquish control of land use to the Columbia River Gorge Commission. Skamania County adopted Title 22, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Ordinance on December 21, 1993. When you apply for development approval in the NSA your application is made to Skamania County and the final decision on your application is made by Skamania County.

### **HOW WILL MY PROPOSAL BE REVIEWED?**

Almost all structural development and ground-disturbing activity in the NSA requires some level of review for impacts to cultural, natural, recreation, and scenic resources. Most land use applications are approved, but typically include conditions addressing color, location, landscaping, and protection of natural resources.

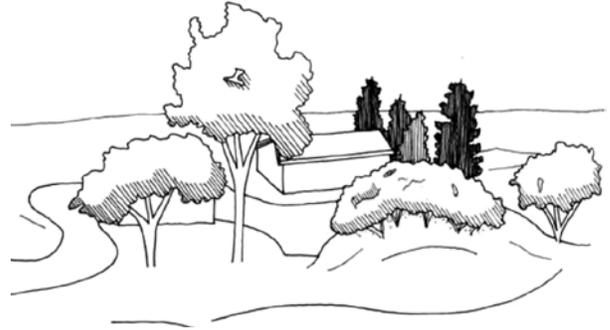
- **Cultural:** Cultural resource surveys are often required before development is approved. Most often, the survey is done by a Forest Service archaeologist at no cost to you. If archaeological or historical resources are present, you must either avoid them or prepare a mitigation plan.
- **Natural:** Stream, pond and wetland setbacks are evaluated by the County. If your development is within 1,000 feet of a rare plant or sensitive wildlife habitat, state natural resource agencies review the potential impacts to these sensitive areas. Most often, buffer zones are required for riparian areas and rare plants. Management plans may be required when near sensitive wildlife habitat.
- **Recreation:** If your property is close to an existing recreation site, a buffer may be necessary to ensure new development does not detract from others' use and enjoyment of the site.
- **Scenic:** Impacts to scenic resources are primarily determined by evaluating your property's "topographic visibility" from a Key Viewing Area. Key Viewing Areas are important roads, trails, recreational sites, and other places where people view Gorge scenery. Topographic visibility means visibility of the property if all vegetation were absent. The County will determine if your site is visible.



## HOW WILL SCENIC REGULATIONS AFFECT MY PROPOSAL?

If your site is visible from Key Viewing Areas, your development must be "visually subordinate," or blend with the landscape. You are encouraged to design your proposal to fit the landscape, not redesign the landscape to fit your proposal.

- **Site selection:** Key considerations when selecting a site for new development include:
  - To screen development from Key Viewing Areas, choose a site that uses existing vegetation and topography, which are more effective for screening than new landscaping.
  - New buildings can be alongside or below a ridge, but not on top. This maintains the natural form of the ridge in the landscape.
  - Building and driveway location and design should minimize alterations to the existing topography. Select a level site to support the building pad or design the building to follow the existing grade. Access roads and driveways should follow existing contours as much as possible.
- **Building size:** All new buildings are required to be compatible with the general scale of existing nearby buildings. New buildings and additions are evaluated by height, square footage, and overall mass and compared to the size of nearby buildings.
- **Exterior colors and materials:** Color choice greatly influences how well a structure blends with the surrounding landscape. In most cases, the exteriors of new structures (siding, roof, trim, doors) visible from Key Viewing Areas must be dark earth-tone colors found in the surrounding landscape.
  - Structures made of shiny or smooth materials can be seen from miles away due to reflectivity and are difficult to blend with their natural surroundings. Metal siding and roofing typically are not allowed. Also, the amount of glass may be limited.
- **Planting vegetation for screening:** When your proposal does not blend into the landscape using existing vegetation and topography, you may be asked to redesign or plant new vegetation to screen it.



## ARE THERE RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESSORY BUILDINGS?

The total square footage of detached garages, sheds, shop buildings, and other accessory buildings depends on the zoning and acreage of the property. On parcels larger than 10 acres in Agriculture or Forest zones, the combined footprints of all accessory buildings cannot exceed 2,500 square feet and the maximum size for each building cannot exceed 1,500 square feet. For most other situations, the combined footprint of all accessory buildings is limited to 1,500 square feet.

## DO AGRICULTURE OR FOREST ZONES HAVE SPECIAL PROTECTIONS?

Dwellings and other buildings in Agriculture or Forest zones may be subject to additional requirements, such as demonstrating the farm can generate a minimum income, setbacks from adjacent properties, and fire protection standards.

## CAN I PLANT CROPS?

If the land you want to plant has never been cultivated or has not been cultivated for more than five years, Skamania County will review your proposed planting for impacts to cultural and natural resources.

## WHAT IS THE APPROVAL PROCESS?

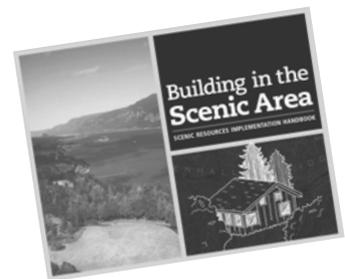
- Submit a **complete** National Scenic Area Land Use Application. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- Review generally takes between **seven to nine months**, but can be greater depending on the complexity of a proposal. Review for applications that qualify for the expedited review process generally takes three to four months. Only certain, small-scale projects qualify for expedited review. The list of uses that may qualify can be found in Section 22.10.050 of Title 22. Contact the Skamania County Community Development Department to find out for sure if your project can be expedited.
- Once a complete application is submitted, a file will be opened and assigned to a county planner:
  - Within twenty calendar days the planner will send a letter notifying the applicant that the application is deemed complete or that additional information is required. The planner will also send copies of the application to the Columbia River Gorge Commission, United States Forest Service (CRGNSA), and for natural resource review to Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and the Washington Natural Heritage Program (depending on the resources that are within 1,000 ft. of the subject parcel).
  - The Agencies listed above have twenty days to submit comments, but may request additional time if needed. The Agencies may also request additional information or reports, such as a Cultural Resource Reconnaissance Survey or a Wildlife Management Plan, if the project falls within a sensitive resource area.
  - If a report or additional information is required, then the project is put on hold until the applicant submits the necessary documents to satisfy the code requirements.
- After the County and other agencies have had time to review the application, the County will issue a notice of proposed development review to the owners of property within 500 ft. of the subject parcel, interested agencies, and Native American Tribal Governments for their written comments. Persons receiving notice of a development review application shall have twenty days from the date upon which the notice is mailed to submit written comments, and Tribal governments shall have thirty days.
- After the close of the comment period, the planner will issue an administrative decision on the application including findings of fact and conclusions, and may impose such conditions as determined necessary to ensure consistency with the provisions of this Title.
  - The decision shall be final unless a Notice of Appeal is filed within the twenty day appeal period.
  - The administrative decision shall be recorded by the applicant in the County deed records prior to commencement of the approved project.

## DO I NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?

A building permit is separate from your NSA approval. Most new construction, remodeling, and repair work that affects a building or structure will require a permit. Ask the Building Division to be sure. Once your NSA application is approved you will need to apply to the Building Division for a building permit.

## WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

- Skamania County Code Title 22, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Ordinance, is available on the County's website at [www.skamaniacounty.org/community-development/](http://www.skamaniacounty.org/community-development/).
- Building in the Scenic Area: Scenic Resources Implementation Handbook is available on the County's website at [www.skamaniacounty.org/community-development/](http://www.skamaniacounty.org/community-development/).
- If you would like to discuss a project in the NSA with a county planner, you may call the Community Development Department at (509) 427-3900 to arrange an appointment.



# National Scenic Area – Land Use Application Checklist

**PLEASE NOTE:** This form must be completed and submitted with all required documents for the application to be considered complete. Staff will review the application and check for completeness before accepting any application. Review will not begin on your proposal until all of the required information listed below has been submitted.

STAFF    APPLICANT

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>A non-refundable fee payable to Skamania County Treasurer:</b>                                     |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Level I Review - \$900 (most applications)                                   |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Level II Review - \$1600 (large-scale uses listed in SCC 22.22.010(E)(1)(e)) |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Expedited Review - \$450 (only uses listed in SCC 22.10.050)                 |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Reauthorization of Expired NSA Decision (no changes) - \$725                 |

**PLEASE NOTE:** If development is started prior to an application being submitted, the application fee will be three times (3x) the normal application fee.

Fees are subject to change by resolution of the County Commissioners.

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>A completed National Scenic Area Land Use Application form:</b>   |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Project narrative providing a detailed written description of the proposed use or development and a description of the current land uses for the parcel(s) involved.<br>PLEASE NOTE: The review is based on the project description the applicant provides. Changes to the project description may invalidate the NSA review. |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Information Required form  |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Detailed Request Form   |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Legal Description or Deed   |

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Physical samples of the exterior colors and exterior construction materials of the proposed structures:</b>  |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Dark</u> earth-tone colors found at the specific site or in surrounding landscape and materials that are non-reflective/low-reflectivity if the proposed development is topographically visible from Key Viewing Areas, or; |
|                          |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Earth tone colors found at the specific site if the proposed development is not visible from Key Viewing Areas and located in the Special Management Area.   |

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Site Plan:</b> Site Plans must be drawn to scale. The scale of the map must be large enough to allow the Planning Department to determine the location and extent of the proposed use or development and to evaluate its effects on scenic, cultural, natural and recreation resources. The map must be prepared at a scale of one (1) inch equals 200 feet (1:2,400) or a scale providing greater detail. If a parcel is very large, the map does not need to show the entire parcel. Rather, it can show only those portions of the parcel affected by the proposed use. <u>The map must include the following:</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|

- North arrow
- Map scale
- Boundaries, dimensions and size of the subject parcel
- Significant terrain features or landforms
- Groupings and species of trees or other vegetation on the parcel
- Landscaping details including the location and species of vegetation that would be removed or planted, and any irrigation provisions or other measures to ensure the survival of landscaping planted for screening purposes
- Bodies of water and watercourses
- Location and width of existing and proposed roads, driveways and trails
- Location and size of existing and proposed structures
- Location of existing and proposed services, including wells or other water supplies,

sewage disposal systems, power and telephone poles and lines, and outdoor lighting  
 Location and depth of all proposed grading and ditching

If your project is located within the Special Management Area your site plan must also include the following:

- Locations of sensitive wildlife or plant species
- Locations of riparian and wetland areas
- A description of erosion control measures to eliminate soil erosion and stream Sedimentation

If your application involves a boundary line adjustment your site plan must also include the following:

- Locations of the existing and proposed lot boundaries
- Area of existing parcels in acres or square feet
- Area of adjusted parcels in acres or square feet
- Distance between existing and adjusted lines

**Elevation Drawings:** Elevation drawings must show the appearance of each side of proposed structures and must include natural grade, finished grade, and the length, width, and height of the structure as seen from a horizontal view. Elevation drawings must be drawn to scale.

**Grading Plan:** Grading plans are required for any proposed structural development that involves any ground disturbance. Grading plans should be prepared by a professional engineer, engineering geologist or professional land surveyor licensed in the State of Washington. The grading plan must include the following elements:

A map of the site, prepared at a scale of one inch equals 200 feet (1:2,400) or a scale providing greater detail, with contour intervals of at least five (5) feet, including:

- Natural and finished grade
- Location of all areas to be graded, with cut banks and fill slopes delineated
- Natural and finished grade
- Estimated dimensions of graded areas

A narrative description (may be submitted on the grading plan site map and accompanying drawings) of the proposed grading activity, including:

- Its purpose
- An estimate of the total volume of material to be moved
- The height of all cut banks and fill slopes, including cross-sectional diagrams and road profiles
- Provisions to be used for compactions, drainage, and stabilization of graded areas
- A description of plant materials used to revegetate exposed slopes and banks, including the species, number, size and location of plants, and a description of irrigation provisions or other measures necessary to ensure the survival of plantings
- A description of any other interim or permanent erosion control measures to be used.

**Any additional information:** Other information may be submitted or required which may aid the Planning Department in making an informed decision on the proposal.

**SEPA (if required) and non-refundable \$400 fee:** Staff will determine whether or not SEPA review is required. The construction of a single-family dwelling is exempt from SEPA review. Otherwise, development such as grading or filling within a critical area or a buffer (shoreline, wetland or habitat) may require that a SEPA review of the potential environmental impacts of the proposal be conducted.

**Shorelines:** If the project is located on Shoreline, the JARPA application and non-refundable fee must be submitted.

- Land Divisions:** If the project involves a land division where the parcels created are smaller than 20 acres, a Short Plat application and non-refundable \$850 fee is required.
- Additional requirements for certain uses or situations:** Applications for the following uses or developments shall include the additional information required under SCC Title 22 or as required by the Planning Department.
  - The production and/or development of mineral resources and expansion of existing quarries. See Section 22.12.070.
  - Vegetation management projects in public rights of way along Scenic Travel Corridors. See Chapter 22.18.
  - All buildings, roads or mining and associated activities proposed on lands visible from Key Viewing Areas. See Chapter 22.18.
  - Large scale uses as defined in Chapter 22.22 shall include reconnaissance survey reports.
  - Proposed uses that would alter the exterior architectural appearance of buildings and structures that are 50 years old or older, or would compromise features of the surrounding area that are important in defining the historic or architectural character or buildings that are 50 years old or older. See Chapter 22.22.
  - New uses located in, or providing recreational access to the Columbia River or its fish bearing tributaries. See Chapter 22.20 and 22.24 of this Title.
  - Any review use in a water resource zone. See Chapter 22.20
  - Any review use within 1,000 feet of a sensitive plant wildlife area or site. See Chapter 22.20. Large scale uses shall also include field survey information.
  - Any review use within 1,000 feet of a sensitive plant. See Chapter 22.20. Large scale uses shall also include field survey information.
  - A single-family dwelling in conjunction with agricultural use on lands zoned Large-Scale Agriculture. See Chapter 22.14.
  - A single-family dwelling not in conjunction with agricultural use on lands zoned Large-Scale agriculture. See Chapter 22.14.
  - A single-family dwelling for an agricultural operator's relative. See Chapter 22.14.
  - A single-family dwelling on lands zoned Large Woodland. See Chapter 22.14.
  - A single-family dwelling on lands zoned Small Woodland. See Chapter 22.14.
  - A single-family dwelling in conjunction with agricultural use on lands zoned Commercial Forest, Large Woodland or Small Woodland. See Chapter 22.14.
  - A single-family dwelling for agricultural labor housing on lands zoned Commercial Forest, Large Woodland or Small Woodland. See Chapter 22.14.
  - Agricultural buildings. See Chapter 22.14.

Within the Special Management Area:

- A single-family dwelling in the Forest, Agriculture, and Public Recreation zones. See Chapter 22.16.
- Forest practices in Forest, Agriculture, and Public Recreation zones. See Chapter 22.26.
- Any new use or development on lands zoned Open Space. See Chapter 22.30.
- Farm labor housing on lands zoned Agriculture, Forest or Public Recreation. See Chapter 22.26.
- Agricultural buildings. See Chapter 22.26.

<b>FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY</b>		
Reviewed By:	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date:

# National Scenic Area – Land Use Application

(Please complete application in ink)

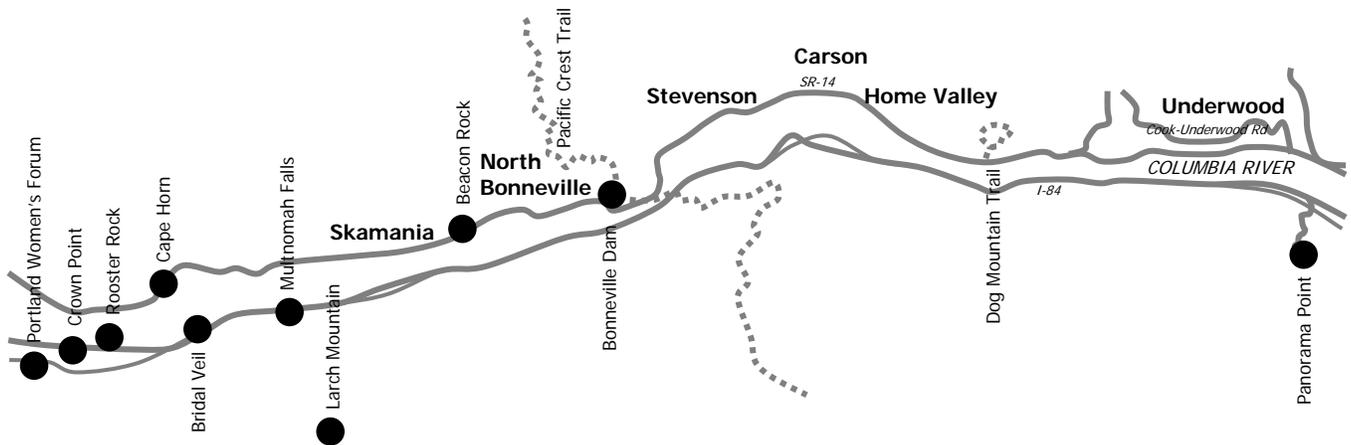
<b>APPLICANT:</b>		E-mail:	
Address:		Phone:	
<b>PROPERTY OWNER:</b>		E-mail:	
Address:		Phone:	
<b>PROJECT SITE ADDRESS:</b>			
Tax Lot/Parcel #		Total acres:	
Section:	Township:	Range:	Milepost (if known):
<input type="checkbox"/> GMA <input type="checkbox"/> SMA   Land Use Designation (zone):			
Please attach the Legal Description of the tax lot/parcel of this application. (If you do not already know the Legal Description you may obtain it from the County Auditor).			
<b>PROJECT NARRATIVE:</b> (Attach additional sheets if necessary)			
<b>APPLICANT SIGNATURE(S):</b>		Date:	
<b>OWNER SIGNATURE(S)*:</b>		Date:	
<i>*A site visit is conducted as part of the NSA review process. Signature of the property owner(s) authorizes the Community Development Department and other Agency personnel reasonable access to the site in order to evaluate the application.</i>			
<b>FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY</b>			
Date received:			
Date complete:			
File #:			
Notes:			

# National Scenic Area – Additional Information Required

## KEY VIEWING AREAS

The areas listed below are roads, parks, and other vantage points from which the public may view Gorge scenery. Most properties within the National Scenic Area are visible from one or more of these KVAs. Please check the KVAs that are seen from the development site:

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Columbia River Highway | <input type="checkbox"/> Rowena Plateau                | <input type="checkbox"/> Sandy River                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crown Point                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Portland Women's Forum        | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Crest Trail             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interstate 84                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bridal Veil State Park        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multnomah Falls                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Larch Mountain                | <b>Special Management Area:</b>                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Washington State Route 14       | <input type="checkbox"/> Rooster Rock State Park       | <input type="checkbox"/> Old Washington State Route      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beacon Rock                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Bonneville Dam Visitor Center | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 Wyeth Bench Road             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panorama Point Park             | <input type="checkbox"/> Columbia River                | <input type="checkbox"/> Larch Mountain Road             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cape Horn                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington State Route 141    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sherrard Point (Larch Mountain) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Mountain Trail              | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington State Route 142    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cook-Underwood Road             | <input type="checkbox"/> Oregon Highway 35             |  |



## VISUAL SUBORDINANCE

The proposed development is sited to achieve visual subordination from Key Viewing Areas by utilizing existing topography and existing vegetation.

## MAINTAIN TOPOGRAPHY

The proposed development is has been designed to retain the existing topography and to minimize grading activities to the maximum extent practicable.

## COMPATIBILITY

The proposed development is compatible with the general scale (height, dimensions and overall mass) of existing nearby development.

Is any structure on the property 50 years or older?  NO  YES, list structures and age:

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Is the proposed development site adjacent to any agricultural uses?  NO  YES, explain type:

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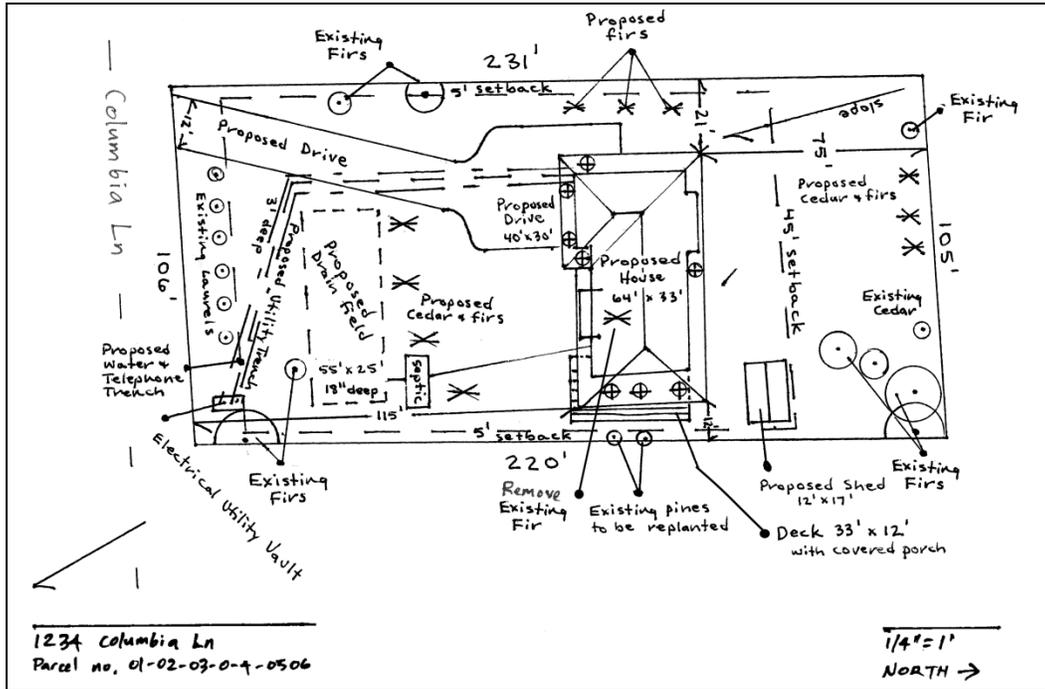
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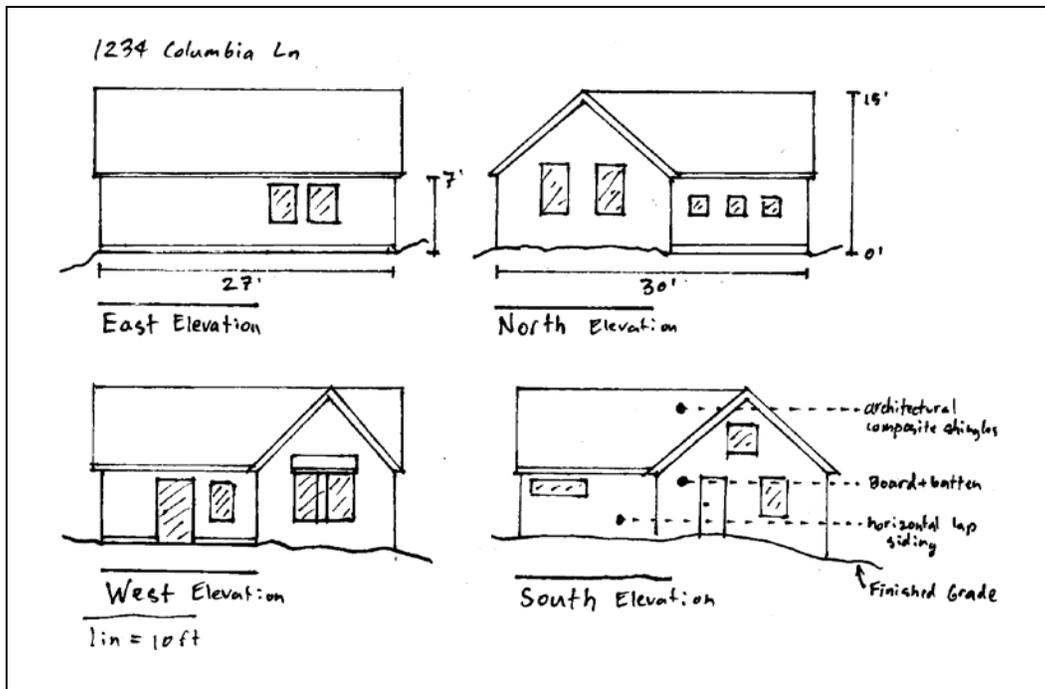
## National Scenic Area – Site Plan & Elevations

The site plan and elevation drawings are perhaps the most important elements of your application. Site plans and elevation drawings may be hand-drawn or computer drafted, but they must be legible and drawn to scale. Incomplete or illegible site plans and elevation drawings will not be accepted. If you have difficulty preparing these plans, it may be beneficial to have a capable friend or professional prepare them for you.

**EXAMPLE SITE PLAN:** The site plan must include all items listed in the site plan checklist (see pp. iv and v).



**EXAMPLE ELEVATION DRAWING:** Elevation drawings must be drawn to scale and must show the appearance of each side of each proposed structure and must include natural grade, finished grade, and the length, width, and height of the structure as seen from a horizontal view.



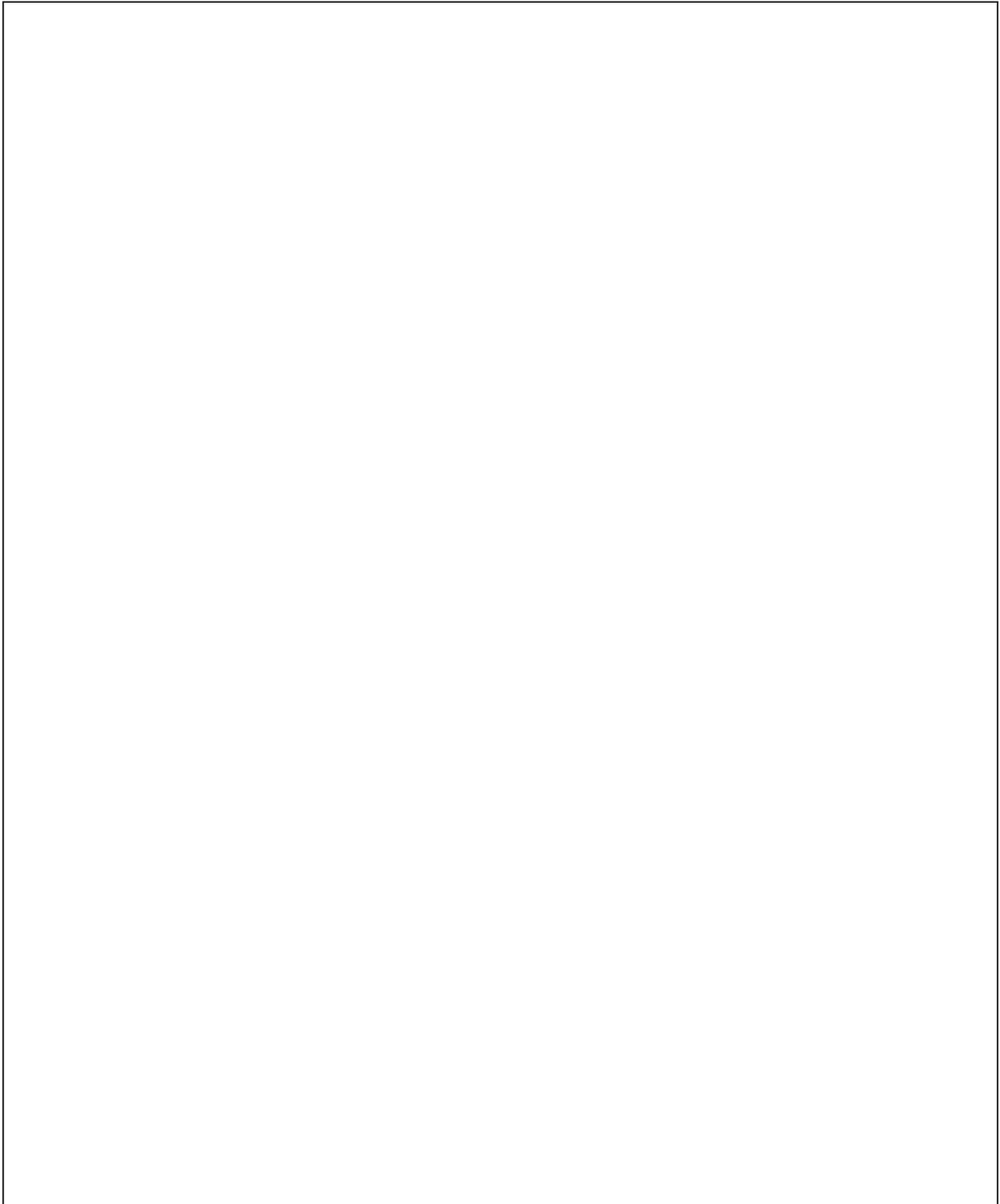
## SITE PLAN

\*Use this template or attach a separate site plan drawing. Your site plan must include all of the items listed in the site plan checklist on pp. iv and v.

Site Address:	Tax Parcel Number:	Scale used:
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## ELEVATION DRAWINGS

\*Use this sheet or attach a separate drawing. The elevation drawings must meet the requirements on page v.



Scale used: