Working with RE:Vision Effects plug-ins to make a clip longer in FCP X.

If you want to slow down a clip with Twixtor, or use any of our plugins that need to make the original clip longer, this document is for you! Unfortunately, an FCP plugin such as Twixtor cannot automatically make a clip longer by itself, so there is some user setup required to make the clip longer. We do this using FCP's ability to hold a frame.

You might want to familiarize yourself with FCP's notion of making Compound Clips and using Generators before proceeding.

We do this by padding the sequence with a FCP's "Custom" Generator, although we can use any of FCP's built-in Generators.

Let's say we want to make a clip play 40% of regular speed using Twixtor. We set Twixtor's Speed % setting to 40%. Good enough. However, by playing at 40% we expect the clip to play 2.5 times the original duration. As we said before, FCP does not allow plug-ins to extend a clip. Also, we can't simply drag out end point like we can with FCP's Retime mechanism. Instead we'll be using nesting (via FCP's Compound Clip mechanism) to extend the clip.

Instead of applying the plugin to the clip directly, we will do the following:

Put the clip on the timeline:
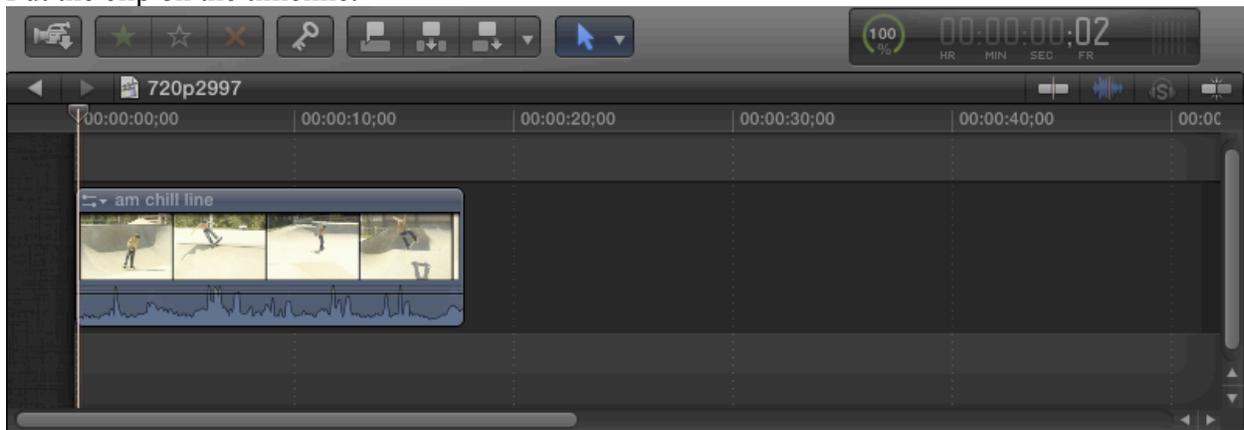
Next select Generators from FCP's toolbar.

You can select any Generator. We will navigate to the Solids and select Custom that, by default, will generate solid black.
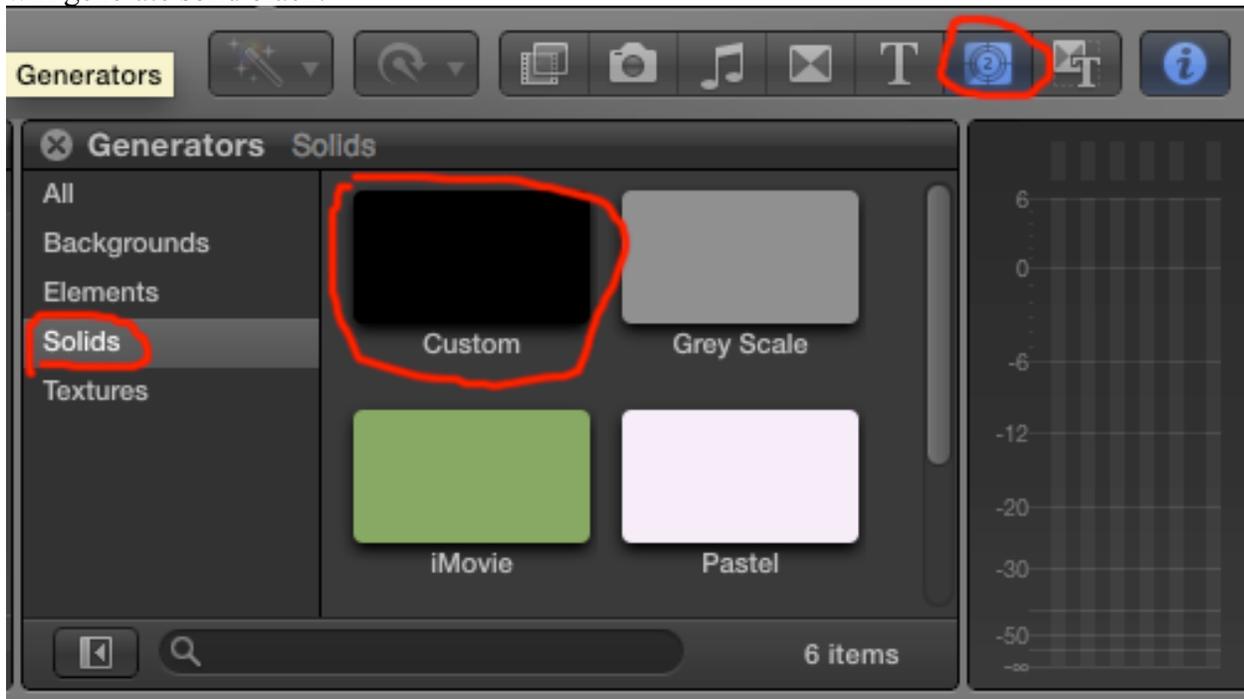
Drag the Custom generator to the timeline. Your timeline will now look something like this:
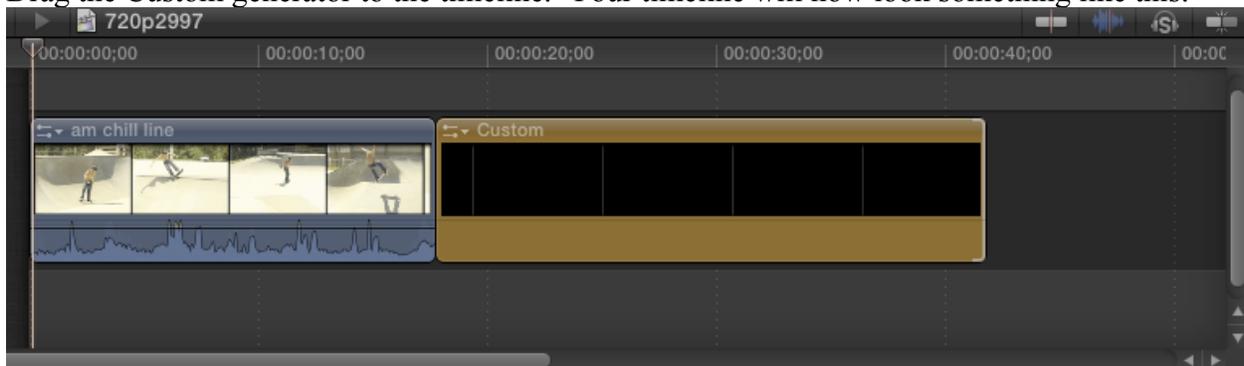
You can drag the end of the Generator in the timeline so that the original clip plus the Generator is as long, or longer, than you need your final Twixtored clip to be.

Now select both clips, then choose File->New Compound Clip… to make a new compound clip out of the original clip and Generator.
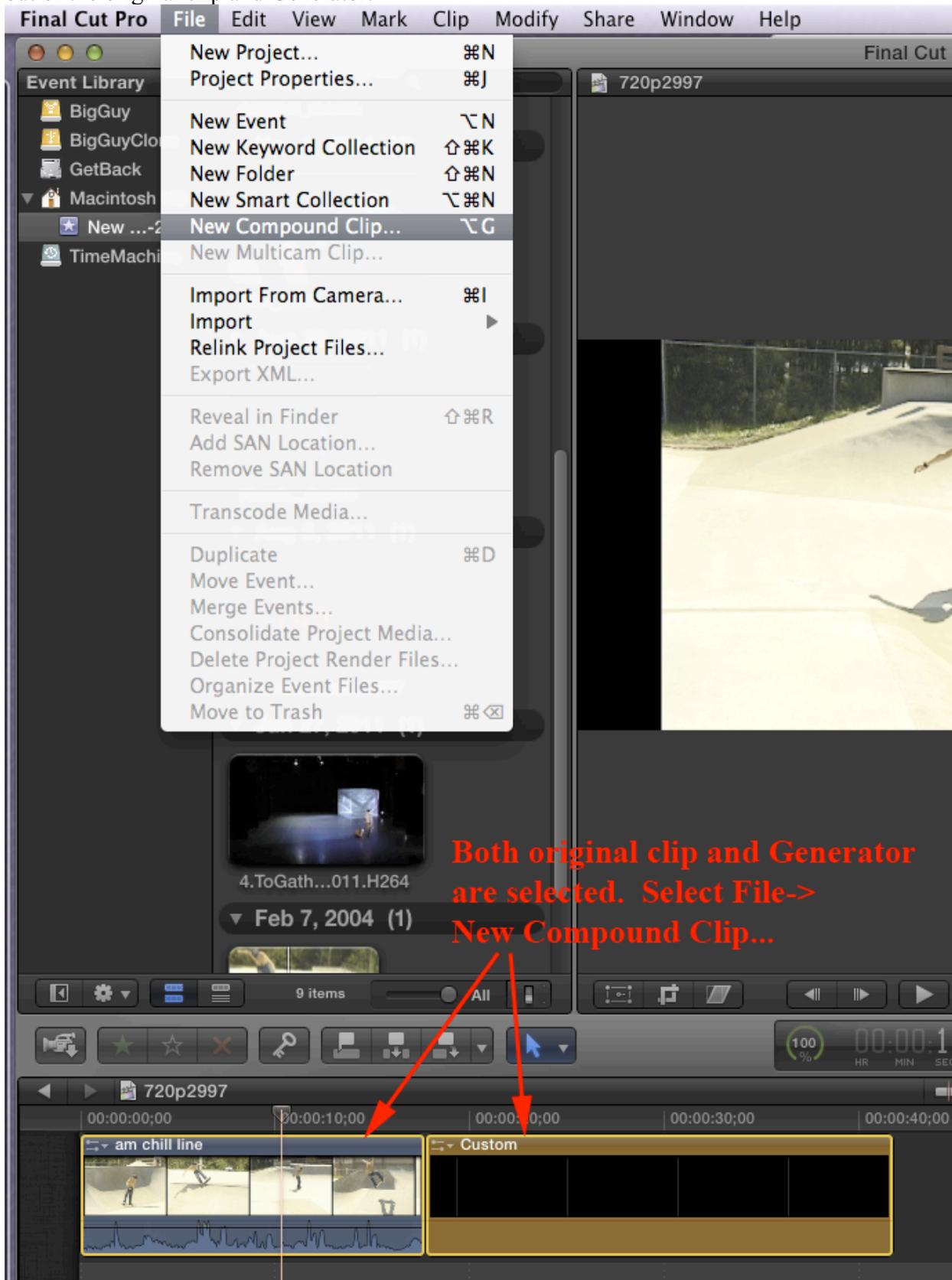
We can rename this Compound Clip to be Extended Clip.
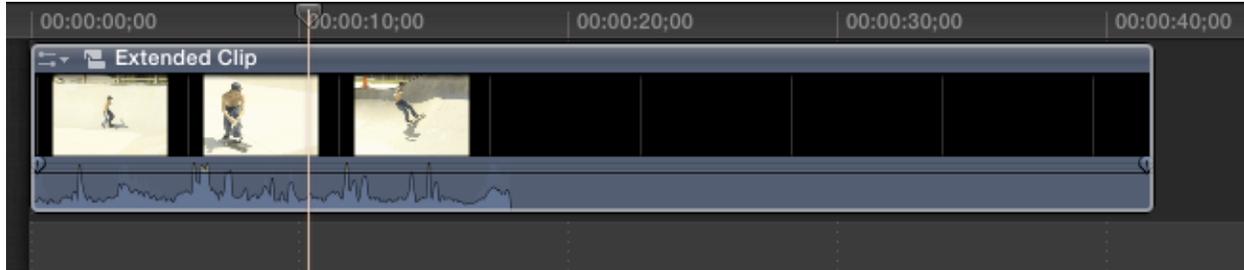
We now apply the RE:Vision Effect' plug-in to this extended clip. If you find that after playing with the plug-ins settings that you still need more extension, you can go into the compound clip and extend the Generator appropriately to give the desired final length.

To Recap:

    1) Apply Twixtor or FieldsKit to your original clip.
    2) Extend the duration if necessary by adding an FCP Generator, making the original clip plus the Generator be at least as long as need your final plug-in-processed clip to be.
    3) Make a compound clip out of the original clip and Generator and apply the plug-in to that Compound Clip.

However, there is another level of Compound Clip you will need in order to trim or transition with the plug-in processed clip.

Setting up your RE:Vision Effects processed clip to be editable in an FCP timeline.

Trimming a clip or compound clip with Twixtor or FieldsKit applied can (and will) cause all kinds of headaches. Due to the way FCP allows plugins to get access to the original clip, trimming the clip after you apply Twixtor or FieldsKit will cause the Twixtored results to shift in time in unwanted ways. This will also happen if you change the duration of a transition between a clip with Twixtor or FieldsKit applied to it and it's surrounding elements on the timeline. Also, if you make the clip shorter because you are speeding it up, then the last frame of the original clip that Twixtor can access changes, causing yet another problem.

Good news! There is a simple workaround to using our plug-ins so you can trim and transition with the plug-in processed clip. As described in the previous section, put the source clip with Generator into it's own compound clip. Let's call this compound clip, Extended Clip. Then apply the RE:Vision Effects plug-in to Extended Clip. You can add more duration to the Extended Clip using the technique of the previous section, **but do not make it shorter.** When speeding up the clip, that means the last frame of the clip will freeze and repeat. Do not attempt to trim the clip in order to make the clip end at the appropriate time before the repeated "frozen" final frame of the original (yes, we realize that you will probably not need this extra "frozen" frame). So what should you do?

First: put the clip you want to retime on the timeline, add a Generator and make a compound clip. We'll call this Extended clip. Apply the plug-in to Extended Clip. See below (Twixtor is applied to Extended clip)
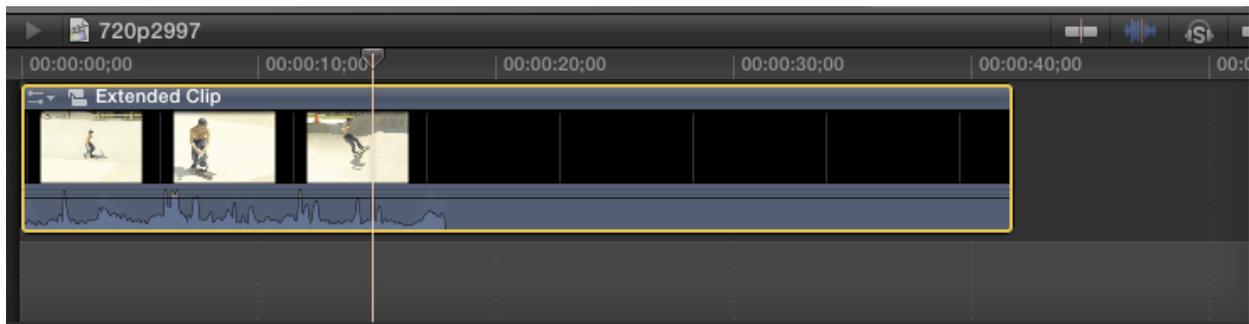
Then, while Extended clip is selected (highlighted in yellow), right-click (or control-click if you have a one-button mouse) and select "New Compound Clip..." to create ANOTHER compound clip.
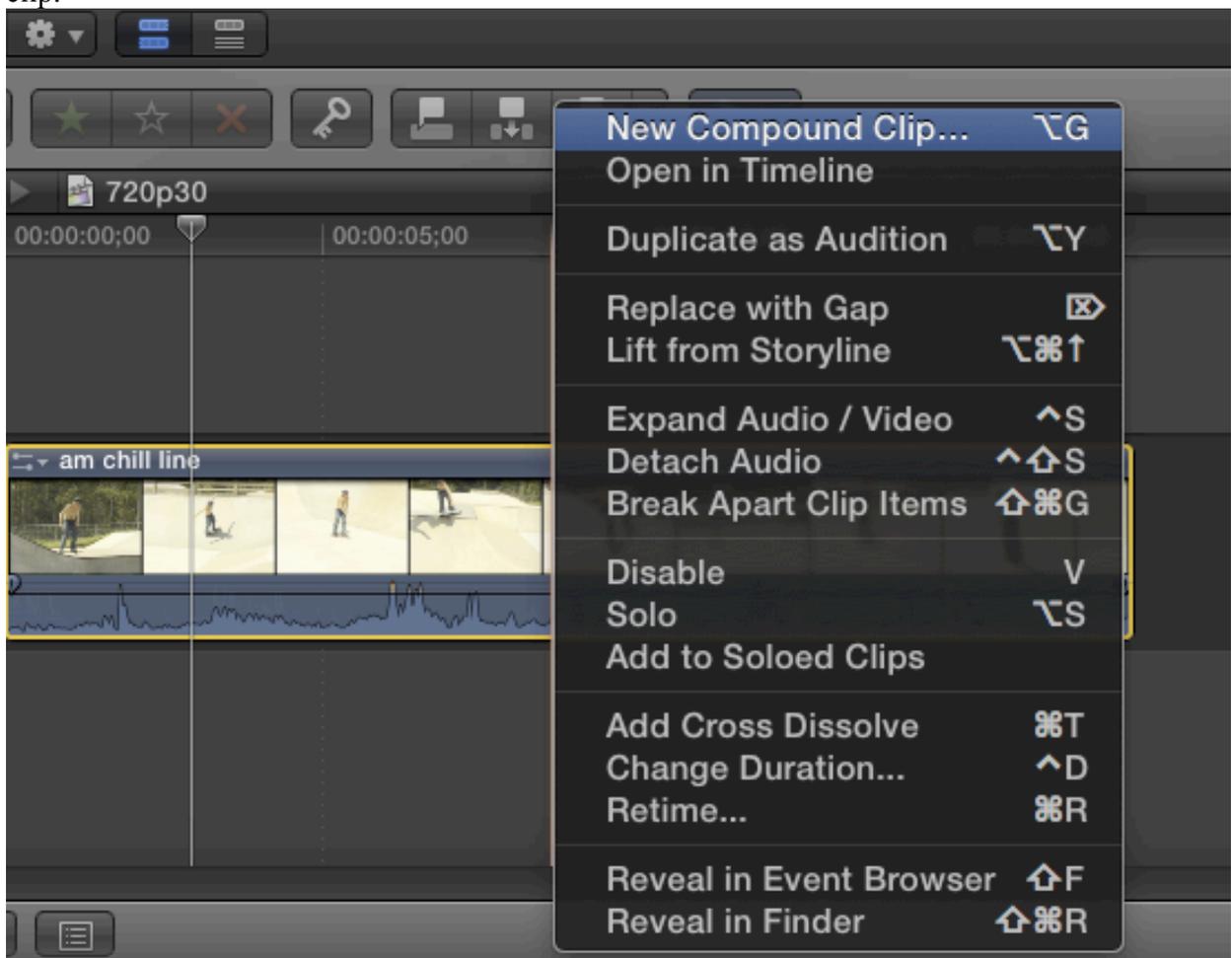
This will create a compound clip that has Extended the clip (with our plug-in applied) within it. After making the Compound Clip, you will see this on the timeline (note: it is now labeled "Compound Clip"):
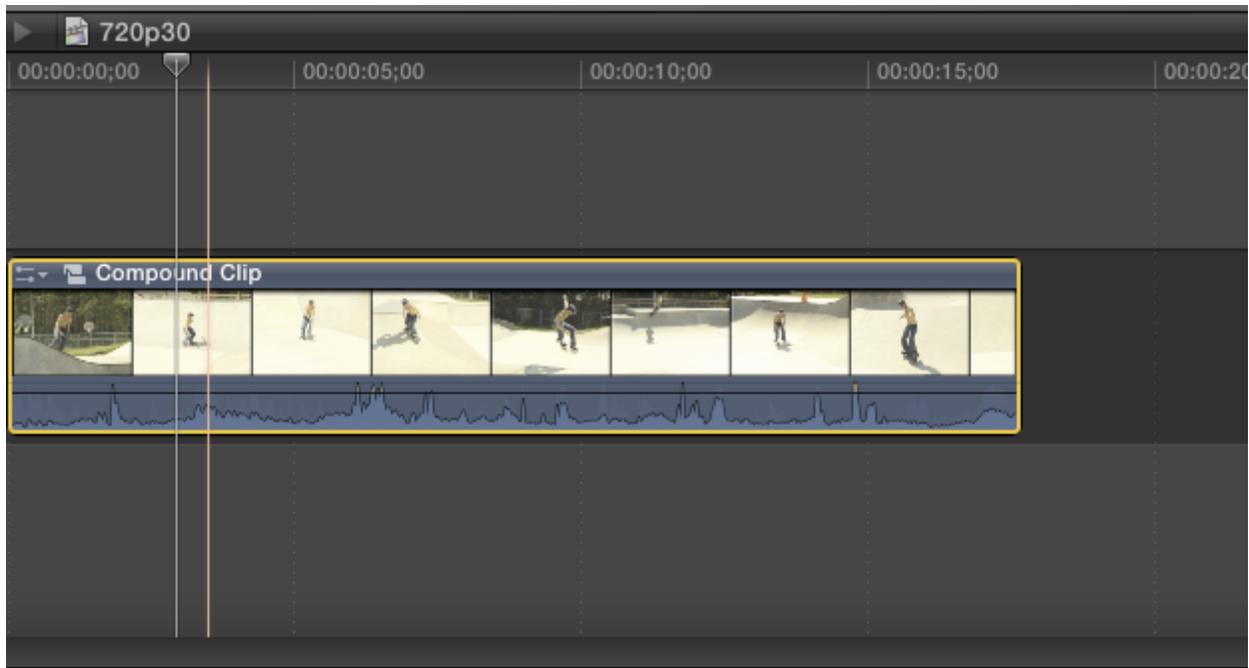
If you need to extend the clip because you are slowing it down (as described in a previous section) you will then double-click on the Compound Clip to go "inside it." Extend the clip as described in the previous section.

Note: you can make the clip longer using the technique of the previous section, but you should not ever trim the clip shorter. In order to edit/trim/transition the Twixtored clip, step up one level and trim the Compound Clip, not the original clip (with Twixtor) inside the Compound Clip.

     1) Apply Twixtor or FieldsKit to your original clip.
     2) Extend the duration if necessary by adding an FCP Generator, making the original clip plus the Generator be at least as long as need your final plug-in-processed clip to be.
     3) Make a compound clip out of the original clip and Generator and apply the plug-in to that Compound Clip. Let's call this Extended Clip.
     3) Don't trim the Extended Clip (with Twixtor or FieldsKit) directly, but make a compound clip out of and trim/transition with the compound clip.
     4) If you find you have not extended the clip enough, double-click on the compound clip, and then extend the original footage by going inot Extended clip and trimming the Generator to generate more footage, then step out of Extended Clip and the next surrounding compound clip in order to trim/edit/transition with the compound clip.