



THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM
 www.rivers.gov

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The Act is notable for safeguarding the special character of these rivers, while also recognizing the potential for their appropriate use and development. It encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection.

Rivers may be designated by Congress or, if certain requirements are met, the Secretary of the Interior. Each river is administered by either a federal or state agency. Designated segments need not include the entire river and they include tributaries. For federally administered rivers, the designated boundaries generally average one-quarter mile on either bank in the river 40 miles and one-half mile on rivers outside national parks on either bank in the river to protect river-related values.

Rivers are classified as wild, scenic, or recreational.

(1) Wild river areas — These rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except to trails, with remarkable or otherwise essentially primitive and unimpaired values. These represent vestiges of primitive America.

(2) Scenic river areas — Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with exceptional or unimpaired values largely primitive and unimpaired, but accessible to planes or roads.

(3) Recreational river areas — These rivers or sections of rivers that are really accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their alluvials, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

Regardless of classification, each river in the National System is administered with the goal of providing and enhancing the values that caused it to be designated. Designation neither prohibits development nor grants the federal government control over private property. Recreation, agriculture, residential development, and other uses may continue. Protection of the river is provided through voluntary stewardship by landowners and river users and through regulation and programs of federal, state, local, or tribal governments. In most cases, no land within boundaries, or will be publicly owned, and the Act limits how much the federal government is allowed to acquire from willing sellers. Visitors to these rivers are cautioned to be aware of and respect private property rights.

The Act purposefully strives to balance dam and other construction at appropriate sections of rivers with general protection of some of the country's most outstanding free-flowing rivers. To accomplish this, it prohibits federal support for actions, such as the construction of dams or other impoundment structures, that would harm the river's free-flowing condition, water quality, or outstanding resource values. However, designation does not affect existing water rights or the existing jurisdiction of states and the federal government over waters as determined by established principles of law.

With the passage of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, the National System protects more than 12,000 miles of 200 rivers in 39 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; this is a little more than one-third of one percent of the nation's rivers. By comparison, more than 70,000 large dams across the country have modified at least 800,000 miles, or about 17%, of American rivers.

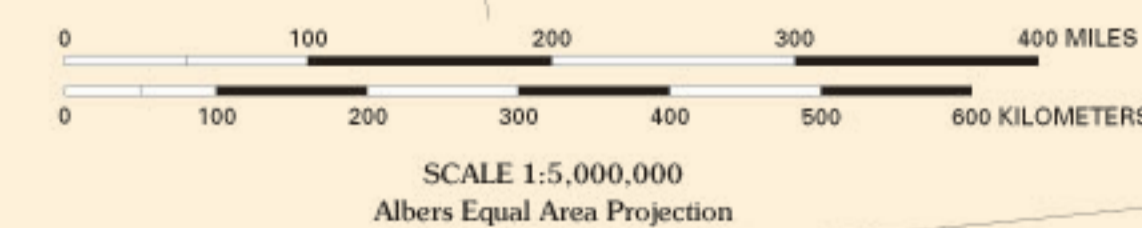
For general questions concerning the wild and scenic rivers program, refer to the Intergovernmental and State River Coordinating Council website at www.rivers.gov or contact one of the following:

<p>USDA Forest Service U.S. Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Wildlife Service 201 14th Street, SW Washington, DC 20250</p>	<p>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Department of the Interior National Wildlife Refuge System Division of National Resources 4401 North Fairfax Drive, 670 Arlington, VA 22204</p>
<p>Bureau of Land Management U.S. Department of the Interior National Landscape Conservation System 1621 L Street, SW Washington, DC 20008</p>	<p>National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior Conservation and Outdoor Recreation 1849 C Street, NW One Code 2284 Washington, DC 20008</p>

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CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES



PUERTO RICO
 SCALE 1:1,250,000
 Albers Equal Area Projection



Produced by the USDA Forest Service; USDI Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service in cooperation with the National Atlas of the United States.
 Alaska Wild and Scenic Rivers System map is available through www.rivers.gov. There are no Wild and Scenic Rivers in Hawaii.