

Wild and Scenic Rivers: Section II – Special Environmental Concerns, FOTG-Texas

Authority – National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542)

- Preserves certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for present and future generations,
- Safeguards special character of these rivers,
- Recognizes potential for their appropriate use and development,
- Encourages river management crossing political boundaries, and
- Promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection.

Rivers may be designated by Congress or, if certain requirements are met, Secretary of the Interior. Each river is administered by federal or state agency. Designated segments need not include the entire river and may include tributaries.

National Park Service Wild and Scenic Rivers website @ <https://www.rivers.gov>.

Rivers or sections of rivers classification:

- **Wild** — free of impoundments, generally inaccessible except by trail, watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive, and waters unpolluted. Vestiges of primitive America.
- **Scenic** —free of impoundments, shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive, and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.
- **Recreational** — Readily accessible by road or railroad, may have some development along shorelines, and may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in past.

Designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property. Recreation, agricultural practices, residential development, and other uses may continue. The Act limits how much land the federal government is allowed to acquire from willing sellers, and prohibits federal support for actions such as the construction of dams or other in-stream activities that would harm the river's free-flowing condition, water quality, or outstanding resource values. Designation does not affect existing water rights or the jurisdiction of states and federal government over waters.

Nation-wide Rivers Inventory – National Park Service maintains a register of river segments potentially qualifying as national wild, scenic, or recreational river areas.

As part of its normal planning and environmental review processes, each federal agency is required to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on rivers identified in the Nation-wide Rivers Inventory, and consult with National Park Service prior to taking actions which could effectively exclude wild, scenic, or recreational status for rivers on the inventory.

The inventory for Texas: <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/nri/states/tx.html>.