



Feeling crowded on the Merced River in Yosemite Valley

by Bo Shelby, Doug Whittaker, and Dan Shelby

Most readers have heard about the Yosemite Wild and Scenic litigation, the subsequent Merced River Plan, and related responses (e.g., activities of the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council). These have been the focus of discussions at recent conferences, and exchanges among colleagues over the past decade. We've heard concerns or confusion about the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) itself, agency mandates, the ruling of the Ninth Circuit Court, the newest Merced River Plan, how capacities are actually developed, and what this means for other rivers (or perhaps more importantly one's own particular river).

This is a long list of complex concerns, and we won't try to address all of them here. An earlier article focused on the WSRA legislation, capacity-related agency mandates, and the court decision (Shelby and Whittaker, 2017). This article focuses on crowding results from a study of Merced River users, using a standardized crowding measure that allows comparisons with many other places. Readers who want more information or greater detail can follow the references, and the Merced River

Photo above: Crowding ratings were in the "greatly over capacity" range for Yosemite Valley's roads and parking lots. During the hours-long gridlock pictured here, a shuttle bus that was required to deliver passengers to the put-in area had boaters jumping out the windows to walk on the less-crowded trails.

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Executive Director's Eddy



Celebrating Rivers *Wild & Scenic* and ... Diverse?

Everyone loves a party, particularly those which celebrate the successful passage of time and its associated milestones. A toddler's first birthday invites family and friends to giggle as we witness him / her enjoy being center of attention and sharing cake icing with the cat. Great Grandma's 95th birthday includes marveling at photos of telephones dependent on operators, and hometown intersections and neighborhoods featuring dirt roads. The anniversary of one of the most important pieces of legislation supportive of river protection, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, has been the premise for many people getting together at many events across the country—on and off rivers, wild and scenic, and others.

Individuals, clubs, agency leaders, and office cohorts have produced inspiring and poignant films on tour with the year's film festivals and are promoting celebratory advocacy for current and potential

designation. Wild and scenic river-based craft brews have been developed. Special trips like the fundraiser for American Rivers, American Whitewater, and RMS on the Yampa are taking place. One time commemorative events have been planned and many familiar events have enhanced their programs with the WSR 50th Anniversary theme, the case with River Network's annual river and watershed conservation and stewardship conference, *River Rally*.

River Rally 2018 featured speakers included photographer and historian Tim Palmer, and Chris Brown, whose leadership at American Rivers, National Park Service, and the USDA Forest Service provides a uniquely comprehensive perspective on the history and progression of river conservation related to 'the Act.' These fellows have spent over a half century of combined years working to grow and tell the story of Wild and Scenic Rivers. Familiar with the work of both speakers, their words seemed thoughtful and reflective of unique perspectives that have helped grow and document historical aspects of the Wild and Scenic River System.

Interestingly, River Network fielded a number of comments by attendees for having chosen two old white guys – Chris Brown (veteran lead for WSR, Wilderness and partnerships at American Rivers, USDA Forest Service and National Park Service) and Tim Palmer (photographer, author) to speak to the history and legacy of the WSR Act. They spoke to the path of Wild and Scenic Rivers designation and management from having studied and worked for, on, and with them.

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RMS President's Corner

Greetings from Northern Arizona!

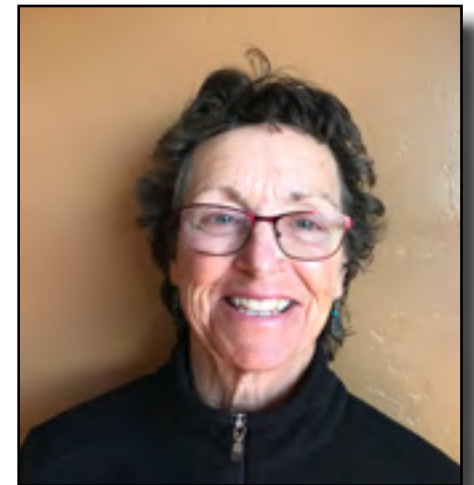
The transition from winter into spring was barely noticeable. Although the drought conditions were worrisome, the unseasonably warm weather made it more inviting to explore some local trail and rivers by foot and by boat. For a good portion of winter and early spring, I spent time between my home in Flagstaff (elevation 7,000 feet) and a "tiny home" in the Verde Valley (3,300 feet). Unless you chose to ski on a primarily man-made base at the local ski area, the Flagstaff winter offered little ski touring or snow play and cold hikes. However, 50 miles south and 20-plus degrees warmer, the creeks and trails in the Verde Valley offered some fine hiking and boating.

The Verde River has become a favorite day trip. One of two Wild and Scenic Rivers in Arizona (Fossil Creek is the other), the river offers several floatable sections through three towns, the most popular is the five to 10-mile trip within the designated Scenic section. While the river experience is fun and satisfying, what happens beyond the banks is inspiring. The Friends of the Verde River, partner conservation and business groups, local communities and landowners, and state and federal agencies work together to improve recreation access and protect the riverine environment while honoring the traditional land use practices and citizen needs for irrigation and water use. My tiny home (aka converted shed) sits on an acre of land with irrigation. A new challenge is to determine how best to manage and enjoy this tiny home with respect for the Verde River. For now, we've settled on simply raising scenery! Overall, it's been great to connect RMS with the Friends

group by participating in volunteer projects, attending fundraisers, educational forums on water use and other local river events.

River time on the Verde inspired more learning about the river resources and the people who care about the river. One source of inspiration is from local river advocates, namely, The Nature Conservancy staff and Chip Norton (RMS member and Friends of the Verde President). They are working with a Verde Valley farmer who has replaced acres of high water-use crops such as corn and alfalfa, with barley, a low water-use crop. Chip is the co-founder of a malt house that processes the barley grown by the local farmer. The malt is sold to four craft breweries in Arizona. Think farm to mug. Cheers to Chip and the Verde River!

Meanwhile back in Flagstaff, more inspiration! I had the pleasure of attending the first annual Student Water Symposium at Northern Arizona University (NAU). The goal of the symposium was to encourage students to engage in interdisciplinary collaborative solutions to water related problems while at the university and in the professional world. Undergraduate and graduate students presented on water-related research topics and received feedback on presentation techniques by volunteer community members and university professionals. Topics ranged from regional issues such as the effects of uranium mining on water resources within public and tribal lands to climate change and water rights at the national and global level. In addition to the student presentations, Tim Palmer



presented an evening program on Wild and Scenic Rivers. The symposium was organized by students under the leadership of Denielle Perry, PhD. It was great to see these current and future leaders and river managers at work. As reported in the last Journal, and thanks to Denielle, NAU is latest to join the RMS River Studies and Leadership Certificate (RSLC) Program. RMS is proud to have NAU and new student members join the ranks of the other colleges and universities in the RSLC Program.

In a few months, we will gather in Vancouver, Washington, to celebrate the anniversary of the *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act* and to celebrate our community. The agenda is impressive. Many thanks to the dedicated and talented team of RMS folks who have worked so hard to organize the event. I look forward to interacting with new members and long-time friends. ♦

Thanks for all you do for rivers,

Linda Jalbert
RMS President

(*Yosemite*, continued from page 1)
Plan home page has the complete slate of litigation, research, and planning documents for the truly committed (<https://www.nps.gov/yose/learn/management/mrp.htm>).

Why should I care about crowding?

Capacities are required for designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. Crowding is different from capacity, but if visitors feel crowded, we probably have some capacity problems. Capacities have a long history in recreation management generally and on rivers specifically, and recent activity of the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council, prompted by the Merced decision, is part of this tradition. The language varies, but different management frameworks have more similarities than differences (Nilsen and Tayler, 1997; Manning, 2013). Capacities typically involve indicators of quality, standards that specify thresholds for indicators, and a comprehensive management regime designed to protect high quality experiences by keeping indicators within standards (Manning, 2010; Whittaker, et al., 2011). The question remains: how is crowding related to capacities and managing rivers?

Background on crowding

Researchers recognize a difference between use density and crowding (Shelby and Heberlein, 1986; Shelby, et al., 1989). *Density* is a descriptive term that refers to the number of people per unit area (and it can be determined objectively). *Crowding* is a negative evaluation of density; it involves a value judgment that a particular number is too many. The term *perceived crowding* is used to emphasize the evaluative nature of the concept. Researchers have developed a simple measure that asks people how crowded they feel (first used by Heberlein and Vaske, 1977). Responses are given on the 9-point scale shown below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all Crowded		Slightly Crowded		Moderately Crowded		Extremely Crowded		

Results can be analyzed in several ways. The traditional analysis collapses the scale into two categories. This provides a conceptually meaningful break point between those who labeled the situation as “not at all crowded” (scale points 1 and 2, a positive evaluation), and those who labeled the situation as slightly, moderately, or extremely crowded (scale points 3 through 9, a negative evaluation). While analyses of other statistics (such as averages) can be done, a comparison showed correlations of .90 to .95 with the traditional analysis (Vaske and Shelby, 2008), suggesting few differences among these choices.

Since 1975, this single item measure has been used in over 200 studies across the United States (e.g., Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oregon, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Wisconsin), Canada (British Columbia, Alberta), New Zealand, Australia, and Korea. This has produced crowding ratings for over 600 different settings/activities (Vaske and Shelby, 2008), and the list keeps growing. The activities included rafting, canoeing, kayaking,

tubing, motor boating, hiking, backpacking, wildlife viewing, wildlife photography, hunting of many types, fishing of many types, rock climbing, sailing, and driving for pleasure. Some locations had extremely high density and use impact problems, others had low densities and no problems, and still others had management strategies designed to control densities and impacts.

A meta-analysis of 35 early studies (Shelby, et al., 1989) identified five “rule of thumb” capacity categories using the traditional analysis described above (see Table 1). The paper warns that these categorizations are “not a substitute for the information about use levels, impacts, and standards that a more complete capacity study can provide.” But this simple measure provides “useful comparative data that allow managers to understand better the carrying capacity challenges that face them, and give investigators an idea about what kinds of studies would be most useful.”

Measuring crowding on the Merced River in Yosemite

The Merced River study (Whittaker and Shelby, 2011) was a part of the larger Merced River Plan process (Whittaker and Shelby, 2013). Merced River visitors in Yosemite Valley were surveyed on 15 days during the high use season in July 2011, using roving and stratified sampling to represent the diversity of river locations and users. The survey included questions about visitor characteristics, perceived crowding during different parts of their trips, evaluations of boating and beach use densities via photo simulations, and support for different management actions. A total of 806 individuals completed surveys (92% response rate), including samples of private boaters, commercial raft renters, and shore users. Survey results were integrated with use information to assess differences at higher and lower use locations and times.

Using the standard crowding item, respondents were asked how crowded they felt during different parts of their Yosemite visit. These included: driving on roads, finding parking, riding shuttles, or hiking/biking on trails; while boating, relaxing, or swimming at the river; and overall during their visit. Data were analyzed using the traditional protocols, allowing interesting comparisons within the park and with other resources outside Yosemite.

Crowding ratings for the Merced

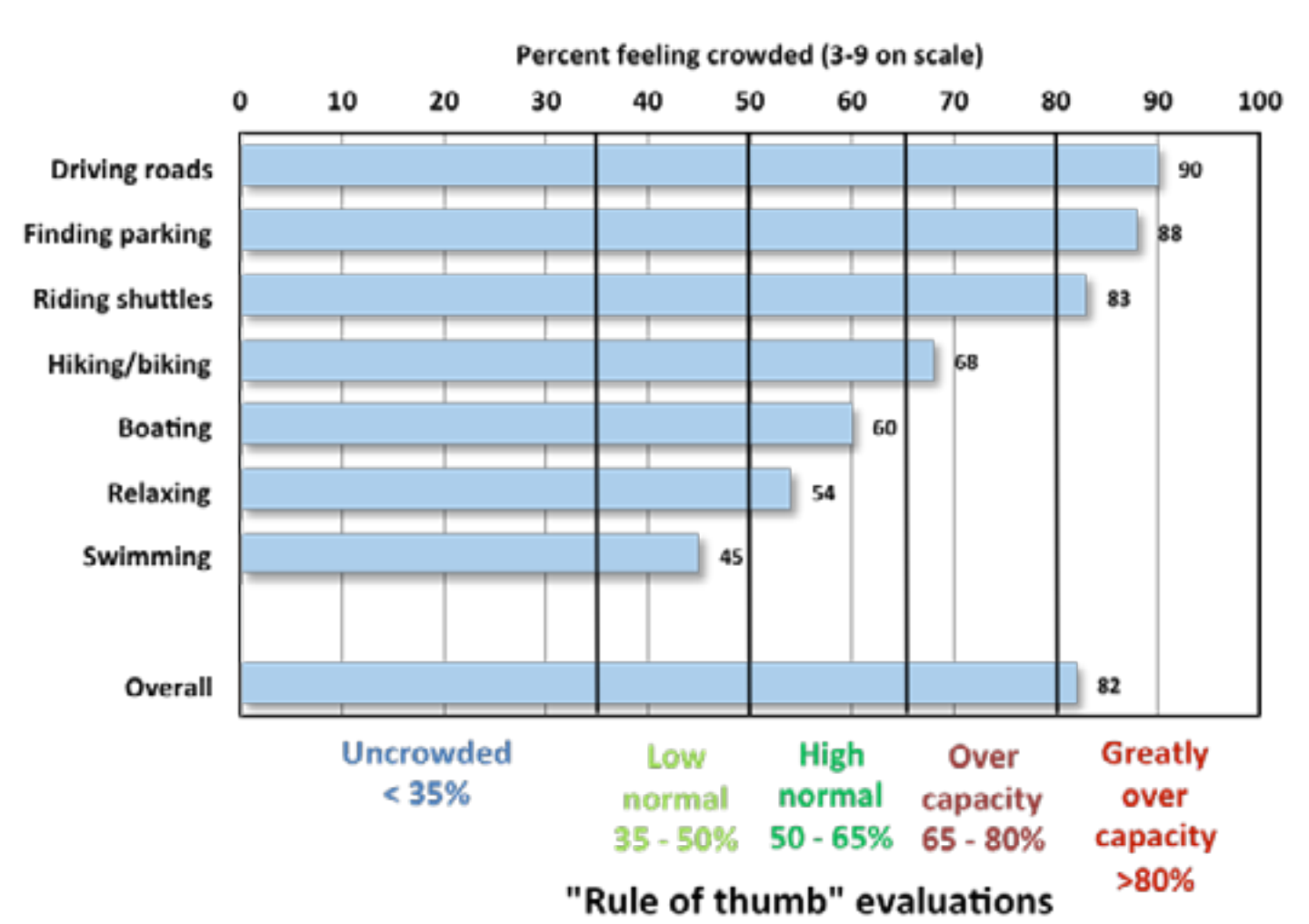
Figure 1 shows the percent feeling crowded (3-9 on the scale) for the activities specified on the survey, with the five “capacity rule of thumb” categories superimposed.

- River users feel the most crowded while using Yosemite Valley’s motorized transportation system (driving roads, finding parking, or riding shuttles). These are all in the “greatly over capacity” range.

Table 1. “Rule of thumb” capacity judgments based on levels of perceived crowding (from Shelby et al., 1989).

% Feeling Crowded	Capacity “rule of thumb” judgment	Shelby et al.’s recommendations for management or research
0-35%	Uncrowded	Crowding usually limited by management or situational factors (remote location, difficult access), or refers to low use areas.
35-50%	Low normal	Problem situation does not exist at this time.
50-65%	High normal	Should be studied if increased use is expected, allowing management to anticipate problems.
65-80%	Over capacity	Studies and management necessary to preserve experiences.
80-100%	Greatly over capacity	Manage for high-density recreation.

Figure 1. Crowding ratings for river users during different activities.



- Trail networks (hiking and biking) are also relatively crowded, and are in the “over capacity” range.
- Fewer visitors feel crowded during river activities such as boating or relaxing in shore areas, which are in the “high normal” range. Even fewer visitors feel crowded when swimming, which is in the “low normal” range.
- Overall crowding ratings are in the “greatly over capacity” range; these are apparently driven by ratings of the transportation system. Even though river-specific activities are less crowded, the transportation system has a dramatic effect on visitors’ overall experiences.
- Crowding ratings of activities were statistically different (p<.001) except for driving and parking, and relaxing and boating. There were few differences between boaters and non-boaters.
- Crowding ratings for river-related activities are lower in the morning and increase through the day, reflecting peak use during warmer afternoons. In contrast, ratings for driving roads and finding parking are in the “greatly over capacity” category throughout the day.

Crowding ratings for other places in Yosemite

Perceived crowding ratings from this study are shown in Table 2 in **bold**. Studies of other Yosemite locations also used the standard crowding scale (Manning et al., 1998, Manning et al, 1999; Newman and Manning, 2001). Crowding ratings from those studies are shown in Table 2 in *bold italics*. Bridalveil Falls and Glacier Point have crowding ratings in the “over capacity” range; like river users, visitors at these locations show higher crowding ratings for Yosemite overall, suggesting the same effect due to the transportation system. In contrast, wilderness hikers in remote areas had ratings in the “low normal” category, and wilderness hikers on trails in transition areas had ratings in the “uncrowded” category.

Comparing Yosemite to other resources

Perceived crowding ratings for several other comparable resources are also shown in Table 2. These were chosen from a “master list” assembled by Jerry Vaske from nearly 200 studies (available athttp://warnercnr.colostate.edu/~jerryv/CROWDING/Vaske_Crowding.htm). For example, busy weekend boaters on Oregon’s Deschutes River and high use bank anglers on Alaska’s Kenai River have ratings at the top of the “greatly over capacity” category. Bear viewers in Alaska’s Katmai NP, cell house visitors at Alcatraz Island NP, visitors at Oregon Caves NM, and Slick Rock Trail mountain bikers in Arches NP were also in the “greatly over capacity” category. Ratings for activities at other rivers and resource areas are found throughout the table. These results provide context for the Yosemite data, and “face validity” for the perceived crowding measure and analysis.

What happened in Yosemite?

As indicated above, crowding ratings by themselves are not a



Crowding ratings were considerably lower for river-specific activities such as boating, relaxing, and swimming. However, overall crowding ratings were in the “greatly over capacity” range, suggesting the overall quality of visitor experiences was dramatically affected by the congestion of the transportation system.

Table 2. Percent feeling some degree of crowding at various resources.*

% Feeling Crowded	Resource	Population/Comments
<i>Greatly over capacity: Should be managed for high densities; might be described as sacrifice area</i>		
100	Deschutes River, Or	Boaters on weekends
100	Kenai River, Ak	Upper river bank anglers on high use days
95	Nantahala River, NC	Canoers about other users (includes rafters and kayakers)
94	Brooks River, Katmai NP, Ak	Bear viewers at mouth of river (September)
94	Colorado River, Az	Anglers at Thanksgiving
92	Alcatraz Island NP, Ca	Prison cell house
92	Kenai River, Ak	Lower river powerboaters on high use days
90	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	River users about driving roads in Valley
90	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	River users about finding parking in Valley
88	Deschutes River, Or	Boaters on weekdays
87	Oregon Caves National Monument, Or	All visitors
85	Arches National Park, Ut	Mountain bikers on Slick Rock trail
<i>Over capacity: Studies and management likely needed to preserve quality</i>		
84	Bridalveil Falls, Yosemite NP (1999)	Bridalveil Falls visitors evaluating entire Yosemite Valley
83	Columbia Icefield, Banff-Jasper NP	Snocoach tourists
83	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	River users about riding shuttles in Valley
82	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	All river users taken together – Overall evaluation for river
81	Bridalveil Falls, Yosemite NP (1999)	Falls visitors at base of falls
80	Vernal Falls, Yosemite NP (1998)	Falls visitors at base of falls and for entire Yosemite Valley
78	Kenai River, Ak	Middle River powerboaters on high use days
76	Bridalveil Falls, Yosemite NP (1999)	Bridalveil Falls visitors evaluating the trail to the falls
74	Acadia NP, Me	Thunder Hole visitors
74	Rocky Mountain NP, Co	Visitor Center visitors
73	Boundary Waters, Mn	Canoers/boaters
72	Muir Woods NM, Ca	Visitors in the gift shop
72	Grand Canyon, Az	Rafters
71	Glacier Point, Yosemite NP (1999)	Glacier Point visitors evaluating entire Yosemite Valley
70	Mount McKinley, Denali NP, Ak	Climbers
69	Glacier Point, Yosemite NP (1999)	Glacier Point visitors evaluating viewing areas
69	Rocky Mountain NP, Co	Longs Peak hikers
68	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	River users about hiking and biking on trails in Valley
67	Mesa Verde NP, Co	Visitors overall
<i>High Normal: Should be studied if use increases expected; managers might anticipate problems</i>		
63	Gulkana River, Ak	All users – Lower Main Stem
61	Yosemite Falls, Yosemite NP, Ca	Falls visitors on trail and at base of falls
60	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	River users about boating on Merced River
58	Arches NP, Ut	Visitors to Delicate Arch
54	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	River users about relaxing along Merced River
53	Grand Canyon, Az	Rafters in winter
53	Snake River in Hells Canyon, Or/Id	Rafters
51	Yosemite NP, Ca (2001)	Frontcountry users along trails
51	Upper Youghiogheny, Pa	Kayakers (daily scheduling and use limit system)
<i>Low Normal: Unlikely to be a problem; may offer unique low density experiences</i>		
45	Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, Ca	River users about swimming in Merced River
45	Acadia NP, Me	Visitors on Carriage Roads
43	Brule River, Wi	Tubers
41	Kenai River, Ak	Lower river powerboaters during catch/release
38	Klamath River, Ca	Floaters
36	Yosemite NP, Ca (2001)	Remote wilderness hikers
<i>Uncrowded: No problem; may offer unique low-density experiences</i>		
35	Upper Youghigheny, Pa	Rafters (daily scheduling and use limit system)
33	Gulkana River, Ak	All users – on low use Middle Fork
26	Illinois River, Or	Rafters
25	Delta River, Ak	Canoers and rafters
23	Yosemite NP, Ca (2001)	Wilderness “transition” users on trails
23	Kenai Fjords NP, Ak	Visitors to Exit Glacier
23	Acadia NP, Me	Isle au Haut hikers
21	Hawaii Volcanoes NP, Hi	Visitors at Thurston lava tube
14-19	Gwaii Haanas, BC	Touring kayakers at various areas
1-9	Athabasca-Sunwapta Rivers, Al	Whitewater rafters at various areas

*Selections from table assembled by Jerry Vaske; available on-line at: warnercnr.colostate.edu/~jerryv/CROWDING/Vaske_Crowding.htm
River study findings in **bold**. Other Yosemite findings in *bold italics*.

substitute for the information about use levels, impacts, and standards that a more complete capacity study can provide. As required by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the management plan for the Merced River in Yosemite Valley developed capacities for activities such as boating and beach use. But the plan also developed capacities for other activities and facilities in the river corridor, including overall day use, overnight use in accommodations from hotels to campgrounds, and transportation elements such as roads and parking areas.

This was a contentious situation in a high-profile park, and capacity decisions were based on careful comparisons of impacts and standards using information from several studies and extensive public involvement. The plan also considered a full range of management options and tradeoffs, including infrastructure changes, restoration projects, and education programs as well as capacities. Crowding information provided a starting point for learning about Yosemite’s problems, but more work was needed to develop and choose management actions to protect and enhance the river’s outstandingly remarkable values.

What does this mean for my river?

The authors have worked on over a hundred river studies around the country. If asked to choose a single measure to learn about use, congestion, and capacity, it would be this crowding item. With thoughtful sampling from a range of locations and times, crowding ratings can reflect use patterns, identify trouble spots, provide rough indicators of capacity, and allow comparisons with other resources. And all this with an easy-to-answer question that fits on a single card.

What about your river? Wouldn’t your management benefit from crowding ratings for different locations like put-ins, take-outs, day use areas, camps, or scout spots for rapids? And wouldn’t you like to compare these ratings at peak versus off-peak times? More generally, this kind of crowding information could indicate whether capacity problems are imminent, and provide a starting point for determining capacity(s). It would also show where your river “fits” in the context of other rivers you may know something about.

We are willing to help. If you contact us at **www.confluenceresearch.com**, we can discuss your situation and data collection options, ranging from “do it yourself” to full studies. When data are collected, we can help with analysis, and show results in tables similar to those in this paper, including comparisons with other resources where the standard crowding measure has been used. The results will help your individual river, and improve our understanding of crowding ratings for rivers across the country. ♦



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Although the survey did not ask about visitor experiences at the put-in or take-out, concessioner rentals created facility- and ecological-impact problems. The River Management Plan included a “mobile warehouse system” (boats on a big truck) to remove storage from a heavily congested area and relocate the put-in to a more resistant beach/gravel bar.



Because the standardized crowding measure has been so widely-used, ratings from the Merced River can be compared to studies of other locations in Yosemite (Bridalveil Falls shown here), or other rivers around the country (anglers “combat fishing” on Alaska’s Kenai River shown here). Collecting crowding data for the river you manage (we’ll help) would allow similar comparisons.

All photos courtesy of Dan, Kathy, and Bo Shelby, Doug Whittaker, Confluence Research and Consulting

The Wildcat River: Milestones in Conservation and Stewardship

by Jessie L. Dubuque

With the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, Congress declared that America’s rush to develop rivers with dams and other improvements should be balanced by preserving certain outstanding, free-flowing rivers. This change in policy marked a historic turning point in our society’s regard for rivers. Instead of believing that every stream should be harnessed and flooded by dams or otherwise impacted by heavy development, we would begin to respect the fundamental values of these dynamic, free-flowing, natural features.

When one thinks of the broad array of Wild and Scenic Rivers across the United States, the Wildcat River in the small state of New Hampshire probably isn’t on the top of the list. The Wildcat River is a tributary of the Saco River in northern New Hampshire. The headwaters originate in the scenic White Mountain National Forest above the Carter Notch Lakes and flow south as a small mountain stream. The protected portion flows over Jackson Falls and terminates in the classically picturesque New England town of Jackson before entering the Ellis River just north of the Jackson Covered Bridge.

Protection of the Wildcat River became an immediate concern when construction of a hydroelectric dam at Jackson Falls was proposed in the early 1980s. Efforts soon began to preserve the scenic and natural values of the Wildcat River. The Town of Jackson initiated a voluntary conservation easement program to protect hundreds of riverfront acres and enacted strict new zoning ordinances. In 1984, Congress passed legislation for the study of the Wildcat River and its tributaries for possible inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Consequently, cooperation between the National Park Service and the Town of



Jackson began in 1985 to prepare a River Conservation Plan (RCP). The Town of Jackson established the Wildcat Brook Advisory Committee to oversee the plan’s preparation. The RCP, completed in 1987, provided guidance for portions of the Wildcat River outside White Mountain National Forest Lands.

Designated on October 28, 1988, the Wildcat River’s protection boundaries encompass 13.7 scenic miles and 0.8 recreation mile, totaling a small but mighty 14.5 miles. Most of the acres within the river corridor are part of the White Mountain National Forest. The remaining acreage is split between private ownership and land owned by the Town of Jackson. Designation of the Wildcat as a Wild and Scenic River serves as a classic example of the “bottom-up” approach:

the result of nine years of dedicated work by local residents, concerned citizens, governmental representatives, and conservation organizations working together toward the betterment of their community. The Wildcat River’s designation as a Wild and Scenic River is unique because it 1) is based on a RCP developed during the river study process, 2) resulted in adoption of significant new local zoning and land-use ordinances to protect river values by the Town of Jackson, and 3) allows acquisition of lands outside the boundary of the White Mountain National Forest only through donation or with consent of the owner.

Most Jackson citizens report that the Wild and Scenic designation has been a very positive experience. Private landholdings remain subject to

the provisions of local government, as overseen by the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the Conservation Commission. For the community, it has proven a useful tool for protecting a nationally significant river resource and maintaining the character of the local landscape for the enjoyment of future generations. The outstanding scenic beauty, high-quality water, and recreational value of the river and Jackson Falls has provided a centerpiece for the historic resort town, as Jackson evolved from its agricultural origins a century ago to the rural, tourism-based resort community that it is today.

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the 30th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic designation of the Wildcat River, we should also note the 100th anniversary of the creation of the White

Mountain National Forest. Following a similar storyline and the realized need for conservation, the Forest is a result of one of the most successful land conservation efforts in the United States. The Weeks Act, named after Massachusetts Congressman John Weeks, was signed into law in 1911, after a decade-long debate about the role of the federal government in protecting forestlands. The Weeks Act allowed the use of federal funding to purchase forest land for conservation east of the Mississippi River, and has contributed greatly to the conservation of natural resources in the eastern United States.

The White Mountain National Forest was originally established in 1918 under the Weeks Act, and has since grown to almost 800,000 acres in New Hampshire and western Maine. The White Mountain National Forest is currently one of the

most popular national forests in the country, with upwards of six million visitors annually, and within a day’s drive for 70 million people.

As we celebrate the accomplishments of these amazing stories of conservation, we recognize that public involvement has been paramount in safeguarding our country’s natural resources. A plethora of success stories in our history of conservation reveals dedicated stewardship of natural resources by local individuals and communities. Continued public involvement is prudent and necessary to continue this stewardship for future generations. ♦

Jessie L. Dubuque is a Wildlife Biologist for the Saco Ranger District, White Mountain National Forest.

Photos: Joe Klementovich



Eastern brook trout

The *Wild & Scenic* Rivers of the Rockies, Drylands, and Plains



Cache la Poudre, Colorado

Article and photographs by Tim Palmer

Editor's note: Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, this is the fourth in a 2018 series of five Journal articles by Tim Palmer, author of Wild and Scenic Rivers: An American Legacy. The first article described the history and workings of the Wild and Scenic Rivers program. This and three other articles highlight designated rivers in each major region of the country.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers of the Rocky Mountains, the deserts, and the drylands of the Interior West evoke some of the most powerful images, connections, and memories that many river aficionados are likely to have.

Once there, who can forget the wildness of these streams? Here is the long perfection of the Salmon, the intricate rapids of the Selway, the magical mix of wonders on the Middle Fork of the Salmon, and the power of the Snake, running like the flow of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon, only often bigger.

Idaho had the most rivers included in the 1968 Wild and

Scenic Act: the Middle Fork Salmon, Selway, Lochsa, and Middle Fork Clearwater—four of the twelve rivers and tributaries originally designated. Here the Middle Fork of the Salmon defines many wild river enthusiasts' idea of what a river should be. With splendid rapids, a hundred miles of wild, forested canyons, bighorn sheep, spawning salmon, trails along the river and up tributaries, and hot springs, this has been the gold standard for wilderness river trips in America.

Then there's the Salmon's main stem. Excised from the final draft of the original Wild and Scenic Act owing to political resistance in Idaho, this is the longest undammed river in the West (only a fish weir at a hatchery blocks the river at its headwaters). It crosses the largest block of designated wilderness, and flows powerfully all year long. Though its Chinook salmon survive at only a small fraction of their historic numbers owing to four dams serving little purpose on the Snake River downstream, remnants of those fish still return on 900-mile spawning journeys from the ocean to Sawtooth Mountain headwaters, and the

Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition works for restoration through removal of the four dams. When conservationists met in 1973 to form the American Rivers Conservation Council (now American Rivers) and embarked on a path to expand the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system, the Salmon was the one river they explicitly highlighted for inclusion. In 1980 Congress designated 119 miles of the 420-mile waterway.

Northward, the Selway is another premier wild river of the West, flowing with challenging whitewater for 97 miles across Idaho, much of it in wilderness. Comparable to the Selway except for the highway in its corridor, the Lochsa River meets the Selway to form the Middle Fork Clearwater. This contiguous trio was included as one "river" in the original Wild and Scenic law.

At Idaho's western border, the Snake River—with the biggest whitewater in the West next to the Colorado in the Grand Canyon—carves through Hells Canyon where Wild and Scenic designation in 1975 halted High Mountain Sheep Dam. Construction had been virtually assured until a young Sierra Club lawyer, Brock Evans, filed a Federal Power Commission appeal, putting plans on hold while a campaign against the dam was mounted.

Though recommended for Wild and Scenic designation for years, Idaho's political delegation avoided protecting the Bruneau Canyon with its vertical slot in Columbia Plateau basalts. Then in 2009, Bill Sedivy of Idaho Rivers United did what had seemed impossible by gaining rancher support for 16 rivers and tributaries in the remote Bruneau and neighboring Owhyee basins.

In neighboring Montana, the Middle Fork Flathead presides in the Wild and Scenic system with a special honor: fighting a dam proposal there, wildlife biologists John and Frank Craighead conceived the idea for this federally protected system of rivers in the 1950s. In 1976, the Middle Fork, along with the wild and crystalline South Fork above Hungry Horse Reservoir and the vivid blue waters of the North Fork at the border of Glacier National Park, were all made Wild and Scenic.

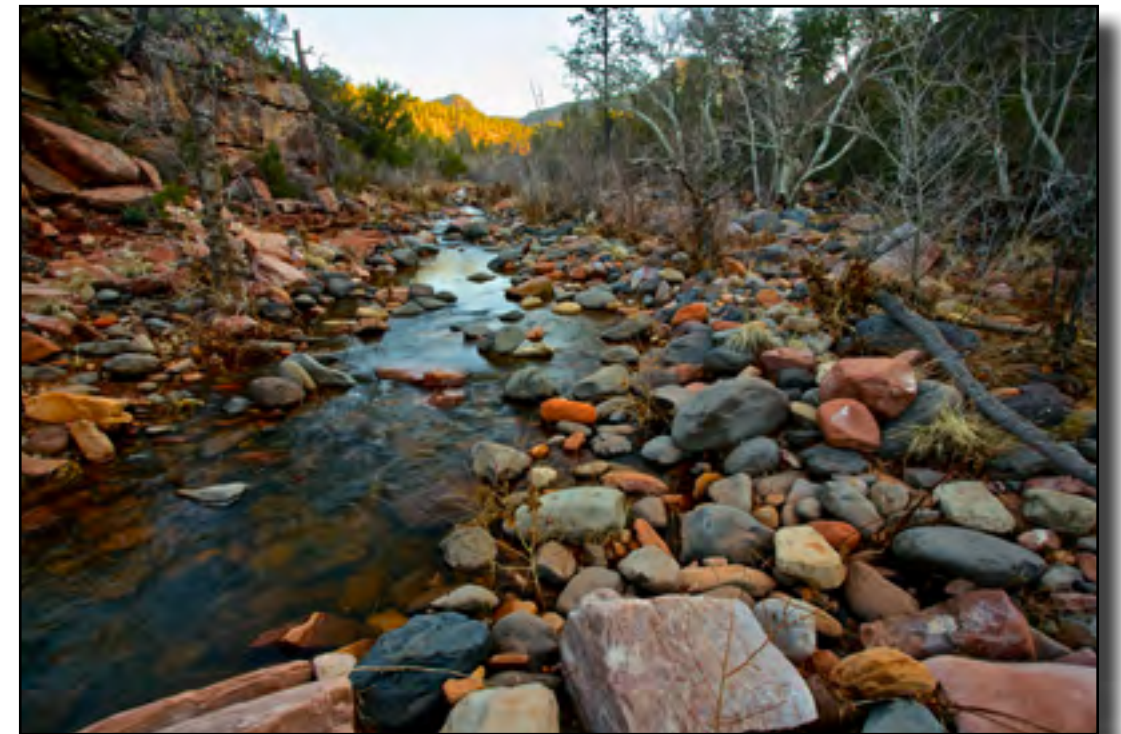
Except for designation of the wild canyon of the Clarks Fork Yellowstone, political powers in Wyoming had resisted Wild and Scenic protection of even the majestic Snake as it curves in front of the Grand Teton, but in 2009 a coalition of groups achieved Wild and Scenic passage for the upper river in Grand Teton National Park, plus nearby but discontinuous mileage above and below. Fifteen magnificent tributaries, collectively called the Snake River Headwaters, were designated.

In Colorado, years of negotiation and political groundwork along the Cache la Poudre led to designation of that river and

its South Fork in spite of a Colorado state firewall against Wild and Scenic enrollments owing to ranchers' fears—however unfounded—of losing water rights. The "Poudre" remains the only Wild and Scenic River in this river-rich state, though others were recommended in Forest Service reports.

In Utah—where a breathtaking suite of desert arteries as significant as the Green River in its 400-mile, free-flowing descent between Flaming Gorge Dam and Powell Reservoir remains unprotected—the state was one of only eleven with no designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. That changed in 2009 with inclusion of the North Fork Virgin and tributaries, though the legislated reaches were all short and already sheltered within Zion National Park or established wilderness areas.

In Arizona—a state without much political will to set rivers aside from development opportunities—the Verde is protected for 40 miles including passage through a saguaro cacti forest. Tributary Fossil Creek became the first National Wild and Scenic River to be brought back from virtual non-existence; for a hundred years the stream had been dried up by a hydropower dam. But that was removed, and the flows returned, and the small, clear-water stream was born again. Because it had been desiccated all that time, the reclaimed waters were free of exotic trout that infect virtually every other cold water stream in Arizona. State wildlife officials were able to reintroduce only



Fossil Creek, Arizona

native fish, making Fossil Creek the region's best stream for native cold water fish. Ironically, since water has been returned, managers are challenged by multitudes of swimmers during the long hot summers.

In northern New Mexico the Rio Grande was among the initial Wild and Scenic designations, including its famed Box—the Southwest's most intense regularly run whitewater. Below the 61-mile designated section, hundreds of miles are diminished by dams and diversions, but then the Rio Grande at the Texas-Mexico border is re-nourished by flows from the Rio Conchos in

Mexico. At Big Bend National Park and in the “Lower Canyons” below it, 193 miles of the Rio Grande are Wild and Scenic through harsh and often vertical-walled borderland canyons.

Flattening at the Rocky Mountains’ eastern escarpment, the Great Plains are the transitional zone between the Interior West and the Midwest, and dubiously distinctive for having fewer Wild and Scenic Rivers than any other major region of the nation. But two waterways are exceptional: the Missouri for 149 miles in central Montana remains much like it was when Lewis and Clark explored its path, and the Niobrara, in the picturesque Sand Hills region of Nebraska, is designated through rangeland. Here Norden Dam was slated to flood the valley until it was protected from damming with the Wild and Scenic designation.

In the American West, the only states with no National Wild and Scenic Rivers are Nevada—our driest state, though it still has some fine streams—and Hawaii, which has some splendid flowing waters, though small and short on their tropical paths from volcanic heights to sea.

Management issues

The popular rivers of the Interior West have long been a laboratory for effective recreation management. Early crafting of permit systems on the Middle Fork of the Salmon led the way to stewardship elsewhere, and at the Selway the Forest Service took the bold and enlightened step of deciding that recreational use should be minimized on at least one outstanding river. The agency limited Selway boating to one party per day. Unlike a popular river such as Oregon’s Rogue—where you can see 120 people if you just sit and watch them go by each day—on the Selway you would likely see no one.

With a push by Idaho Rivers United and the Nez Perce Tribe along the Lochsa River, the management responsibilities of federal agencies within Wild and Scenic corridors were broadened to include intervention in highway issues when they threaten the river and the visitor experience. This was debated as the oil industry started to run “megaloads” of drilling equipment thirty feet high and 300 feet long up the Lochsa highway, within the Wild and Scenic corridor, with thousands of loads projected to come. After an injunction, and establishment of some newly refined roles for the Forest Service as the Wild and Scenic management agency, the megaloads were stopped.

While the West Coast has far more designated Wild and Scenic Rivers, and greater total mileage, some rivers of the Interior West rank among the most popular and the most sought after for river expeditions. Permits for trips on the Middle Fork Salmon, Salmon, and Snake are hard to get, and at the Selway the chances for an independent boater (not on a commercial trip) were, at last count, forty-to-one. The “disappointment” factor here can be mitigated somewhat by running other sections of some of these streams. The Lower Salmon, for example, is spectacular and without permit restrictions. Other reaches of the lengthy Salmon also offer great paddling and are seldom run. The Selway has a trail alongside, offering an alternate way to see that enchanting place. Low-water trips—increasingly popular with inflatable kayaks—can be run by competent paddlers after the Selway permit season closes at the end of July.



Rio Grande River, New Mexico

On the water

All the Wild and Scenic Rivers of this region offer varying degrees of access and availability. Starting in the north, Montana’s North Fork Flathead is one of the nation’s finest canoeing rivers, with class 2 water spiced by a few minor class 3 drops but doable for experienced open boaters and beginning rafters. The mosaics of colored metamorphic rocks awash in blue-green water of all three Flathead forks are unmatched.

The Idaho rivers are usually run as major multi-day expeditions, though a few shorter runs are possible.

In Wyoming, the Upper Snake in Grand Teton National Park is welcoming all summer long, and its scenic extravaganza of mountains rising from the river has no equal in America. Below Jackson Hole, Alpine Canyon of the Snake is the second-most floated whitewater in the West. Day-trips of varying difficulty can also be run on designated tributaries including the Hoback, Gros Ventre, and Buffalo Fork.

Colorado’s Cache la Poudre has challenging whitewater in a small channel with road access along the river’s length.

The Verde of Arizona has an intriguing upper run, possible as a day-trip with rough access, and with a longer reach below, though its overgrowth of reeds within the channel in recent years has seriously blocked the passage of boats and created safety problems.

The Rio Grande in New Mexico has its remote Upper and Middle Box reached only by trail; boaters carry gear from the canyon rim or hire horse packers for these exquisite whitewater runs. The famed whitewater of the Lower Box has road access

Missouri River, Montana



at its put-in and take-out. Other sections of the Rio Grande run alongside the road. Texas’ Rio Grande offers several day-trips in splendid canyons of Big Bend National Park, above the designated reach, and then long wilderness sojourns that require significant planning and preparation. These are excellent in springtime when other rivers are still gripped by winter.

On the Great Plains, the Missouri offers a classic multiday canoeing journey with wide gentle flows beneath bluffs and badlands in a cottonwood corridor, though headwinds can hamper downriver progress. Farther east and south, the Niobrara is used heavily by canoeists and tubers and popular among weekend party-boaters for a short run below the town of Valentine. Fewer floaters are seen farther downstream.

Any tour of America’s Wild and Scenic Rivers is incomplete without including at least some of these western gems of free-flowing water. ♦

As a planner, author, photographer, and paddler, Tim Palmer has been involved with the Wild and Scenic Rivers system almost since its founding, first crafting management proposals for Pine Creek (PA) — one of the original study rivers. He authored the first citizen-sponsored Wild and Scenic River studies at the Stanislaus, Kings, and South Yuba Rivers of California. His 1993 book, *The Wild and Scenic Rivers of America* was the first book to comprehensively describe and catalog the system. His 2017 book, *Wild and Scenic Rivers: An American Legacy*, was published by Oregon State University Press. Tim is available with his *Wild and Scenic Rivers: An American Legacy* slide show for 50th anniversary events. Contact: tim@timpalmer.org.

On the Big Screen: Award winning film on rivers may give you a new model for river conservation



Paddlers taking a break on the Missisquoi Wild and Scenic River, between Richford and East Berkshire. Photo: Scott Staples

by Shana Stewart Deeds and Corita Waters

Rivers tell stories. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Scenic and Wild Rivers System, River Management Society (RMS) and our partners including the National Park Service and 13 Partnership Rivers created a short video — *River Connections: Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers*. Our fellow river managers often ask “What makes a partnership river?” We hope this video provides an understanding of the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers (PWSR) designation. The full video, from Director and camera operator [Kate Geis](#) and Editor Alex Rappoport may be found on www.nps.gov/pwsr.

Highlighting an option for river conservation that is locally-initiated and managed, this video is intended to train river managers and other advocates and stewards in the Partnership Wild and Scenic designation model. With its acceptance into the Wild and Scenic Film Festival (world premier) and the

D.C. Environmental Film Festival, this video provides a unique opportunity for new and diverse audiences to connect to existing Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The Partnership approach to National Wild and Scenic River designation is a proven river protection model with over 20 years of success on diverse rivers in the eastern United States. In this video, we highlighted three Partnership rivers to show how and why people interested in river protection may choose to explore designation through this model. PWSR ownership is various, though most river miles are typically bordered by private lands. The Federal designation brings recognition of the rivers’ beauty and values for which they were designated, and the ability to leverage Federal, State and local funds and resources for river protection. PWSR groups provide many services to their communities, including: restoration efforts, cleanups, protection

of historic resources, monitoring of water quality, improvements to recreational access, control of invasive species, outreach and education to their local communities and schools, and more. Information may be found in the resource links provided, including the PWSR 20 years of success report. An overview of the program is well summarized in the article from the [George Wright Society](#) written by Jamie Fosburgh, Acting Manager of the North East Region Rivers Program.

In the video, Jamie states “I think Partnership Rivers are all about trying to help communities achieve the goals that they have for a river. Everybody wants clean water. They want to preserve the recreational opportunities that they love about their river. They want to preserve the wildlife. They want to preserve the historic character. They can’t do these things alone. It’s going to need to be a collaborative effort with state, federal agencies, nonprofits. A lot of the draw of partnership rivers is that we bring these parties together to preserve that resource and make the most of it for future generations.” ♦

Right: The filmmaker’s family gets a new perspective on one of the Partnership Rivers. Photo: Kate Geis.

Below: Kate Geis (left), filmmaker, and “stars” enjoy the river.

Relevant Resources/Information:

- [Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers 20 years of success www.rivers.gov](http://www.rivers.gov)
- www.nps.gov/pwsr
- www.nps.gov/wsr
- www.river-management.org
- www.americanrivers.org/initiatives/wild-and-scenic/
- <https://rms.memberclicks.net/PWSRToolkit>



Virginia Commonwealth University RSLC Program Hosts Wild & Scenic Film Festival Fundraiser



L to R: Rachael Moffatt*, Katie Schmidt*, Reid Anderson*, Thomas Tedesco*, Risa Shimoda (RMS), Andrew Parent (Director, VCU OAP), James Vonesh (Assistant Director CES, VCU RSLC advisor). * VCU RSLC student

On March 14th, celebrating International Action Day for Rivers and 50 years of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, the VCU chapter of the River Management Society's River Studies & Leadership Certificate (RSLC) Program hosted the Wild & Scenic Film Festival as a fundraiser and community outreach event at Vasen Brewery in Richmond, Virginia. The event was cosponsored by Vasen, the James River Outdoor Coalition, and a grant from Patagonia. The evening featured 10 short films spanning watersheds from summit to sea, a silent auction, and information tables from regional nonprofits engaged in river stewardship, including the James River Association, Virginia Department of Recreation and Conservation Scenic Rivers Program, Chesterfield County Park System, Richmond Metro Park System, Coastal Canoe Club, the VCU Rice Rivers Center and Outdoor Recreation Program, and RMS. Films were introduced by current RSLC students, faculty, and community partners. Proceeds from ticket sales and the silent auction will be used to support the professional development of VCU RSLC students. Approximately 200 people attended the filmfest, raising awareness of RMS and the VCU RSLC program and netting more than \$2,000 for student support.

The RSLC Program is interdisciplinary and combines learning about river science, geographic information systems (GIS), policy, and river field experience with a chosen emphasis in one of three areas: river science, river-based policy, or river-based education, recreation, and tourism. RSLC students demonstrate real-world application of their knowledge and skills through professional experience or an internship with a river project.

VCU joined the consortium of schools participating in the RMS RSLC Program in 2017 and currently has seven students pursuing the certificate. VCU RSLC advisor, Dr. James Vonesh, Assistant Director of the Center for Environmental Studies said,

"We are excited to be the first school in the East to join the RSLC program. It's a great fit. Richmond was recently voted Best River City in America by Outdoor Magazine and we have a vibrant river community focused on the James River. Combine that with having a large urban research university, the VCU Rice Rivers Center, and the regional headquarters for government and NGO partners based here in the state capitol, you can literally mix river science, policy, conservation, and recreation in a very meaningful way in our own backyard."

Although just getting rolled out, enthusiasm for the RSLC program is high. VCU RSLC student Thomas Tedesco, a Junior pursuing a bachelor's in Environmental Studies, commented,

"I love VCU's new partnership with RMS and the addition of the RSLC to the Center for Environmental Studies because it is a unique opportunity for students like myself who have a strong interest in and love for rivers. As a student in this program, I get to meet and network with other students and professionals in all aspects of the field — from conservationists and wildlife specialists to biologists and cartographers. As an employee of VCU's Outdoor Adventure Program, I also get to help plan and guide some of the trips on rivers that we will take as part of the program. Through both, I am able to study and work to protect the beautiful rivers of our country."

VCU RSLC student Rachael Moffatt, also pursuing a bachelor's in Environmental Studies, commented,

"I love that the RMS program blends my curriculum with my job and passions. I love kayaking, canoeing, and rafting and this program offers a completely new depth to the activities I enjoy. In the short time that I have been part of this program, I have discovered new facets to the rivers I spend most of my free time on, and how I could potentially find ways to protect them and help others appreciate them as much as I do. I am incredibly excited to see where this program takes me and how it will continue to grow and adapt."

VCU RSLC student Neil Anderson, pursuing a master's degree in Biology, commented,

"I initially joined the RSLC program because I grew up on and around the James River. Now that I am in graduate school researching fish communities on the Lower James River, I see this program as an outlet for my research to reach a much broader audience and hopefully make connections back to the river community here in Richmond."

VCU Biology professor Dan Carr teaches a month-long field course *Footprints on the James - The human and natural history of the James River watershed*. Dan stated,

"What I appreciate most about the River Studies and Leadership Certificate Program is the collaboration with outside groups. Whether these are academics from other educational institutions, representatives of government agencies, or nonprofit advocates, this program offers our students opportunities to get out of the classroom and learn about rivers from a wide variety of professionals. This type of interdisciplinary collaboration enriches their educational experience by providing opportunities to observe and apply what they learn in the classroom to real-world situations."

Lynn Crump, LA, is an Environmental Programs Planner for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the administrator of the Virginia Scenic River Program. Lynn is currently working with the VCU Environmental Studies Program to develop a new course on scenic natural resource assessment and policy framed around

the Virginia Scenic Rivers program. Lynn commented,

"RMS is a great partner because they have the capacity to understand the relevance of rivers at all scales. RMS understands the uniqueness of the Virginia Rivers program and what efforts are necessary for its continued success. Having the 2020 RMS symposium in Virginia will allow attendees to learn about our river protection efforts and capabilities. RMS can also be a great resource for ideas and contacts on various river issues." ♦





2018 RMS Symposium Wild, Scenic, and Beyond! Vancouver, WA October 22-25, 2018

Registration is open

for the 2018 RMS Symposium. We received a broad suite of proposals for presentations allowing us to develop a stimulating program complimented with outstanding field trips. The Hilton Vancouver Washington Conference Center is the venue for our symposium, co-located with the 16th National Trails Conference. While the events are separate, there will be joint activities and opportunities for those attending to participate in both events for a minimal additional fee.

Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act will be front and center in the program in addition to rich program content applicable for all who work in river management from hydrologists to environmental educators, recreation specialists, fisheries biologists and others. This year's Symposium includes over a dozen trainings ranging from single 90-minute sessions on specific topics to full-day trainings with optional field trips. Training topics range from practical skills operating drones for data collection purposes to interpretation and implementation of regulatory standards. We have also included human resources training to help you make your river program fair and equitable for work and play. Trainings will include continuing

education credits where applicable. The symposium officially begins Monday afternoon with plenary panels. Monday evening there will be a joint reception with participants in the National Trails Conference and will include exhibits, silent auction, poster presentations, a River Studies and Leadership Student/Faculty mixer and games. Imagine Wild and Scenic ORVs painted on a giant Twister board! Surely an event you will not want to miss or document.

Symposium Program

Panelists and presentations throughout the week will include tracks focused on the themes honoring the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and other relevant topics:

Wild and Scenic Rivers – Presentations include Wild and Scenic Rivers 101; The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act at 50: Exploring the law itself, past, present and future; case studies, research results; Comprehensive River Management Plan development, updating, and implementation; and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) projects and case studies.

Training, Education and People – Topics include experiential education; digital media; the River Studies and Leadership Certificate Program (RSLC); a workshop for staff seeking to grow their equity programs - “Accelerating color in the outdoor space;” Navigating sexual harassment in your river program; and a debut of core competencies and training opportunities for river professionals.

Recreation, Inventory and Monitoring – Presentations include papers on technology for collecting river management data including the use of unmanned aerial systems (drones); training on the Visitor Use Management Framework; How to address visitor capacity/user capacities; and safety lessons/topics.

Partnerships Across the Globe – Speakers from universities in China will discuss river management/protection in China. Presentations from the U.S. include panels about the 30-year journey of partnerships on the Deschutes River and the John Day Wild and Scenic River Corridor. There are also papers on state scenic rivers programs in Oregon, Virginia, and Tennessee. A panel highlights partnerships and features of the National Rivers Project.

Biological and Physical Resources – Topics include Tamarisk Beetles; navigability; instream flow; channel restoration; aging dams and reservoirs; urban whitewater parks; strainers, logs and logjams; citizen scientists and invasives; managing recreation in bulk; campsite cooperation, and the lived experience of river runners.

Transportation Projects and Wild and Scenic Rivers – a full-day training covering topics including new guidance documents, “Section 7,” and case studies.

Field sessions will complement panelists and presentations and are intended to be part of the program. They are described in some detail in a separate article in this issue.

The Partnership for the National Trails System will hold the **16th National Trails Conference** at the same time and in the same venue, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the National Trails Act. For additional information see their website <http://pnts.org/new/welcome-2/>. We will have a few shared events and will co-host our exhibits and silent auctions. Remember that this year one half of the high bid for each silent auction item donated by a chapter will go to that chapter's funds.

Many RMS members have volunteered to serve on our planning committees and are busy working away. We can always use more help, especially onsite immediately before, during and after the symposium. We are looking for a few field session leads to keep the headcount, and hold onto key contact and logistics-related information; registration table volunteers; session moderators; and 1-2 tech-savvy people to help us keep track of borrowed AV equipment and presentations loaded that we can compile post-Symposium. If you can help for an hour or two during the week or have questions, please contact us.

Conference Co-chairs:
Louise “Weezie” Kling
louise.kling@aecom.com
Helen Clough
hcloughak@gmail.com

Pre-Symposium Sessions

Friday through Sunday, October 19-21, 2018

River Rescue Certification - Professional (RRC-Pro) – Participants will receive internationally recognized certification through Sierra Rescue International. The class will be held at Wet Planet Headquarters on the White Salmon River. Participants can register for the full 24-hour course or an 8-hour recertification refresher. Discounted lodging and meals have also been arranged for participants. For information, see: <http://www.river-management.org/2018-pre-symposium-river-rescue-professional-course>.

Monday, October 22, 2018 - morning



Leave No Trace Training – Learn the latest “leave no trace” techniques for rivers and trails offered by LNT, Inc.

Train the Trainer Session – This training is the first River Training Center offering for those interested in serving as instructors on river management subject areas. This course will focus on instruction techniques and materials for Wild and Scenic River management.

Formal training topics within the program include:

- ❖ The Nuts and Bolts of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
- ❖ Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive River Management Plan Development, Updating, and Implementation
- ❖ Monitoring River Values
- ❖ Transportation and Infrastructure along Wild and Scenic Rivers
- ❖ Protecting WSR Values in FERC Licensing Process
- ❖ The Art of Identifying Instream Flows on Wild and Scenic Rivers
- ❖ Interagency Visitor Use Management Framework
- ❖ Collaboration and Engagement
- ❖ Navigating Sexual Harassment in your River Program
- ❖ Core Competencies and Professional Training
- ❖ New Technology for Conducting User Counts
- ❖ River Rescue Certification (offered weekend before Symposium)
- ❖ Leave No Trace Training (offered Monday morning)
- ❖ Wild and Scenic Rivers (and other River Management)
Train the Trainer (offered Monday morning)



Wild, Scenic and Beyond! Field Sessions Wednesday, October 24th

There are many stellar choices to complement your classroom learning time as a *Wild, Scenic and Beyond!* participant. Field sessions are described in the following paragraphs.

Mount St. Helens – Johnson Ridge Visitor Center (Full Day)

Pacific Northwest natives variously called it “Louwala-Clough,” or “smoking mountain.” Captain George Vancouver of the British Royal Navy established its modern name in 1792 when he named other volcanoes in the Cascades for British naval officers — Mounts Baker, Hood, and Rainier. For the majority of the 20th Century visitors came to enjoy the serene, beautiful mountain playground teeming with wildlife. At the base of the volcano’s northern flank, Spirit Lake was especially popular as a recreational area for hiking, camping, fishing, swimming, and boating. The tranquility of the Mount St. Helens region was shattered in the spring of 1980, however, when the volcano exploded back to life. Local people rediscovered that they had an active volcano in their midst, and we were reminded that the active and potentially dangerous volcanoes of the United States are not restricted to Alaska and Hawaii. The Visitor Center provides firsthand accounts of the earthquakes and eruption that took place over the course of several months and offers a spectacular view of the mountain, wildlife, and replanted forests.

Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge - Refuge Tour and Lake River Paddle (Full Day)

The banks of the lower Columbia River have been alive with activity for thousands of years. Ancient human civilizations thrived here and shared the land with an abundance of animal and plant life. Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge’s wetlands,

grasslands, riparian corridors, and forest provide an ideal environment for migrating birds and wintering waterfowl. Each fall the Refuge comes alive with thousands of ducks, geese, and swans. The Chinookan village of Cathlapotle, located on the refuge, was visited by Lewis and Clark in 1805 on their way to the Pacific. A full-scale cedar plankhouse, built on the refuge in partnership with the Chinook Indian Nation, Portland State University, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and numerous other partners, hosts Refuge environmental education and interpretive programs and special cultural and historic events. Our morning visit to the refuge and Cathlapotle Plankhouse led by Refuge staff will be followed by an afternoon kayaking adjacent to the Refuge on the Lake River, guided by Alder Creek outfitters.

Clackamas: Hydropower License Enhancement and Decision-Making Processes for Recreation (Full Day)

The Wild and Scenic Clackamas River was designated in 1988 with outstandingly remarkable values that include botanic and ecologic, cultural and historic, fisheries, recreational, and wildlife. In the years since, the Clackamas has grown to be one of the most exceptional whitewater resources in the greater Portland Area. The river is managed by the Forest Service. In 2010, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued a new license for the hydroelectric project on the Clackamas River that is operated by Portland General Electric. On this trip you will have an opportunity to learn about the enhancement measures and decision-making processes for recreation. We will visit



Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Credit: USFWS

new river access sites located within the Wild and Scenic River corridor that were developed as part of the license conditions and discuss the process for evaluating sites identified for river access improvements. This project was key to informing the development of a River Access Planning Framework methodology. This Framework is being applied to other projects in the region to serve as a model for evaluating appropriate levels of facilities to improve the visitor experience, protecting resource values while providing access to waterways. We will conclude with a river trip (levels permitting) outfitted by Blue Sky.

Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge Restoration Initiatives (Half Day)

Teeming with wildlife at the eastern edge of the communities of Camas and Washougas, Washington, the Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge provides excellent opportunities for bird watching and wildlife observation. The Refuge is involved in significant habitat restoration efforts. Over two miles of dike will be removed to reconnect floodplain to the lower Columbia River, benefiting fish and wildlife, particularly juvenile salmon. This collaborative project involves the Bonneville Power

Administration, Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership, Friends of the Columbia George, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and others. Almost 1,000 acres of the historic Columbia River floodplain will be reconnected to the river. Participants will learn about this major restoration project and the partners involved.

Skappoose Bay - Portland’s Protected Waterway Rich in History, Wildlife, and Marine Study (Full Day)

Fed by several streams and confluence with the Columbia, Multnomah Channel eventually spills into the low, tidal estuary of Skappoose Bay, a perfect location for bird and wildlife watching. The City of Skappoose, whose name is derived from Skáppus (also sqápus), began as a Chinookan village on the west side of the Multnomah Channel. Its history includes having been an early Native trading site; a destination for mid-nineteenth century EuroAmerican resettlers for its rich alluvial soil, access to deep water, and plentiful fish and game; and, an important access point for rail and steamship trade moving timber and agricultural products. We’ll explore the Bay’s many back channels as the water levels allow, and visit the remains of an old wooden ship. We thank REI for providing leadership and support for this trip.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Workshop:
How to Use Them for River Management (Half Day)

This workshop will complement the classroom workshop that provides users with knowledge of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) technology and the policy framework for utilizing this category of aircraft. We will provide a flight demonstration of Department of the Interior UAS to show how they can be used for various river management uses.

Sandy River - Exploration of a Wild and Scenic River (Full Day)

Explore the new wild refuge along the free-flowing Sandy River, a magnificent glacier-fed river only 25 miles from downtown Portland. The project, a partnership of Western Rivers Conservancy and the Bureau of Land Management, includes 5,000 acres that link together three Wild and Scenic River corridors. The tour will highlight dam removal, land conservation, and habitat restoration, as well as recreational and educational development. There will be one mile of hiking through old growth, riverside forests.

White Salmon River: Dam Removal Site Tour
and River Trip (Full Day)

The Wild and Scenic White Salmon was designated in 1986, shortly after a proposal to construct a series of seven dams on the river was defeated by local advocates. In the years since, the White Salmon has grown to be one of the most exceptional whitewater resources in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The river is managed by the Forest Service. In 2011, Condit Dam was breached and removed by PacifiCorp, fully restoring the White Salmon as a free-flowing river. On this trip you will have an opportunity to visit the former dam site, view restoration activities, learn about current management of river recreation, and enjoy a trip down the river (levels permitting) outfitted by Wet Planet Rafting and Kayaking.

Willamette River - Oregon's National Water Trail (Half Day)

The Willamette River Water Trail is an assemblage of properties that provides access for paddlers, affording opportunities to camp along the river with either short or multi-day trip options. The Trail covers 187 miles of the mainstem Willamette, and several miles on the Coast Fork Willamette, Middle Fork Willamette, and the McKenzie River. Thanks to a variety of adjacent parks and natural areas such as the Willamette Greenway Sites administered by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, the Water Trail maintains a host of opportunities to access the Willamette. Our trip, led by the Willamette Riverkeeper, will launch from the Portland Boathouse, built by the Portland Development Commission as part of the redevelopment of an old warehouse, providing better public access to the river. ♦

Remember!

Half of the proceeds from each silent auction item donated on behalf of an RMS chapter will be deposited into that chapter's account for events and activities! Please donate your most excellent silent auction items to help raise funds for the national organization and your chapter. RMS has already received awesome auction items courtesy of REI, Osprey and others.

Do you have a dividend or gift card from your favorite gear store? Consider using it to buy some great gear for the auction – it won't cost you anything and it is a good way to support RMS at Wild, Scenic and Beyond!

For information on shipping items in advance, please contact:
Helen Clough
hcloughak@gmail.com

Check the RMS website for the most current information at <http://www.river-management.org/symposium>.

Sign up early as there are substantial savings for early registration. While the program is set, there are always last minute changes, so check the website for the latest version.

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Summer 2018

(Executive Director, from page 2)

The organization crafted a response to make it clear that the comments had been heard.

My reaction to the incident was mixed. Yes, in this age of increasing diversity the conference openers could have represented more diverse constituents. I also recalled that the valiant leaders of this landmark legislation were white guys. I wasn't sure if I should sympathize with the organizers and feel bad for the speakers who were asked to speak on the topic that in part has defined them.

My perspective changed when speaking to Melissa Martinez, USDA Forest Service fellow working in DC on WSR50 outreach initiatives. Melissa reminded me that the discussion put some people into an uncomfortable space and that even the lack of non-white males at the iconic signing ceremony should cause us to discuss their homogeneous profile. Challenging the makeup of the legislators who created the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1968 seems unfair to those visionary leaders, as well as Tim and Chris for speaking to us about Wild and Scenic Rivers success.

Embracing individuals and groups who love and value rivers is another component of the celebration. Let's learn from those whose work informs and inspires a new generation whose diversity defines a new 'us' and move forward to study, protect and manage our rivers wisely. ♦

Risa Shimoda
Executive Director

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Artist Lew Wilson Donates Painting of the Eleven Point *Wild & Scenic* River to RMS

Lew Wilson is inspired by the natural splendor and the beauty of America's waterways, and he wants to share his passion and talent with the world.

The result is "Two Rivers - Two Lands: An American Passage," a series of fine art photography and painting pieces that focuses on the nation's river systems and what they reveal about the environment and we who inhabit it. The artist's reverence for rivers, lakes and oceans is obvious, and he believes that the arts can raise the collective awareness about better stewardship of the earth.

In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Lew donated his recent hand-painted photograph, "By Canoe, 11 Point River" in Missouri as an artist's gift to support the Wild and Scenic River System.

Lew has journeyed across the United States, from the Hudson to the Mississippi to the Pacific coast in this epic quest. Wilson's art career started in the early 1970's when he was a fine arts major in college. Lew was inspired to pursue this adventure during a road trip from Florida to Big Bend National Park south of Alpine, Texas.

Lew served in the United States Coast Guard during the Vietnam War era. Surviving a near-fatal accident in the Colorado Rockies shortly after the 9/11 attacks strengthened his Christian faith as well as his belief in the power of art to connect Americans to the wonders of nature. Lew believes that passionate public appreciation also fosters an unending guardianship of our nation's ecological legacy, the cornerstone of our American identity and heritage. Lew is inspired by the art and example of the early plein-aire Hudson River Artist who gave birth to our nation's first major art movement, among them Asher Brown Durand and Thomas Cole.

Lew's artworks are owned by numerous national and international museums, as well as by corporate and private collections. They include The Denver Art Museum; The Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas, Austin; The Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida; The Museum of Modern Art Bozano-Simonsen for the First World "Eco-Art" Summit Exhibition, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; The Tampa Museum of Art, Florida; The Wyoming State Museum in Cheyenne (during early 2017); and The John Wesley Powell River History Museum in Green River, Utah. He has donated many pieces to American Rivers to aid in their mission to protect rivers.

Lew's epic journey to document the story of our American rivers is told, especially, through his masterful amalgamation of hand-painted black and white photographs. As a committed environmentalist, he understands that the greatest challenge for conservation is to integrate positively the presence and collaboration of human residence, industry, and commerce in the natural world.

The River Management Society is collaborating with the Friends of the 11 Point River to ensure that the painting has a

suitable permanent home near the river. The artist said in an email that the picture "comes with a storyline about the men going down river . . . all movers and shakers in the secular business world and this is how they told me what they do to reconnect with being better CEO's, parents, and might as well say stewards of the overall Good Earth."

Lew is always looking for volunteer opportunities with housing. He can be contacted at tworiverstwolands@gmail.com. RMS Executive Director Risa Shimoda and Northwest Chapter President Weezie Kling have been honored to be custodians of the painting and both say that the photograph just does not do justice. Risa described it as "absolutely stunning." Participants of the *Wild, Scenic and Beyond!* symposium will be able to view this generous donation to support river management. ♦



Lew Wilson at his basecamp while painting the Wild and Scenic Rio Grande River, March 2018. Photo: Dr. David and Phyllis Hardy

Artist's Note: "I would like to credit Mr. & Mrs. Charles and Cindy Stinson for getting me to the bank of the Rio Grande River. Charles and Cyndy asked for nothing but to help me get to the place for photographing the Rio Grande. They raised their children going tent camping along the rivers of Texas, and they have a special appreciation for the river. This can also be said for Dr. Hardy and wife...all natives of Texas."



Congressional Politics and the *Wild & Scenic* Rivers Act

by Molly MacGregor

In 1968, Fred Madison, now an emeritus professor of soils at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, was a legislative assistant to Senator Gaylord Nelson. Madison's responsibility was conservation legislation, and that summer Nelson asked him to help shepherd the National Wild Rivers bill into law. The bill protected free-flowing rivers, but passing it meant navigating complex congressional politics with dam-builders on one side and conservationists on the other. Madison rode the currents of the political gamesmanship to help guide the nation's premier river protection bill into law.

His work was inspired by a deep appreciation for wilderness and rivers, and a growing awareness of the need to protect the nation's free-flowing rivers for recreation and ecology. In addition he believed the cost of dams and reservoirs outweighed their benefits. Madison's work was inspired by his experiences paddling and camping in northern Minnesota in what is now the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, and by Gaylord Nelson, a hero of the nation's conservation history.

"I'd been paddling in the Boundary Waters of northern Minnesota for 20 years by then," Madison recalled in a recent interview. "My first trip to the Boundary Waters was in 1948. In those years, you took the train up with your canoe; you told the conductor where to let you off and where to pick you up next week," he remembered.

Nelson brought his commitment for river protection with him from Wisconsin where he had set up a wild and scenic rivers



Fred Madison speaks during the RMS Midwest Chapter's 2017 paddle on the Lower Wisconsin River. Photo: Randy Thoreson

system, Madison explained.

Wisconsin's Wild Rivers Act "contemplated a cooperative program between the state conservation commission, local government bodies, the United States Forest Service, and private landowners."¹

"The Wisconsin Act stated: The Pike River in Marinette County, and the Pine River and its tributary Popple River in Florence and Forest Counties are designated as wild rivers and shall receive special management to assure their preservation, protection and enhancement of their natural beauty, unique recreational and other inherent values in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this section."

(Tarlock)

Protecting free-flowing rivers wasn't a new idea. In 1906, the US Congress had directed the Secretary of the Army to manage the Niagara River to protect the flow of Niagara Falls. In 1915, the Oregon legislature withdrew certain waterfalls and streams in the Columbia River basin from appropriation to preserve their scenic value, including the Rogue River, which became one of the eight rivers included in the 1968 law. In 1964, opposition to a proposal to build a dam in Missouri led to

the establishment of the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, to be managed by the National Park Service.

Gaylord Nelson began his political career in Wisconsin's state legislature in 1948, and was elected governor in 1958. Elected to the US Senate in 1962, he brought devotion to the environment, to civil rights and civil liberties, and opposition to the Vietnam War to Washington, D.C.

One of his first efforts was to persuade President John F. Kennedy to launch a campaign for the health of the nation's natural resources. Preservation of natural resources was a matter of domestic security, Nelson wrote to Kennedy. Nelson proposed a nation-wide tour intended to "shake people, organizations and legislators hard enough to gain strong support for a comprehensive national, state and local long range plan for our resources."²

"In the very first speech of your tour I think it is important to dramatize the whole issue by stating that you are leaving the Capital to make a nation-wide appeal for the preservation of our vital resources because this is America's last chance. That the next decade or so is in fact our last chance can be documented with a mass of bone chilling statistics—these statistics and what they mean will paint a picture with a compelling force understandable to everyone. Rachel Carson's book on pesticides is a perfect example of the kind of impact that can be made with specifics. The situation is even worse in this country respecting water pollution, soil erosion, wildlife habitat destruction, vanishing open spaces, shortage of parks, etc.

That there is no domestic issue more important to America in

the long run than the conservation and proper use of our natural resources, including fresh water, clean air, tillable soil, forests, wilderness, habitat for wildlife, minerals and recreational assets.

That, in fact, our destruction of the landscape, the pollution of our air and waters, the overuse and abuse of our outdoor resources has proceeded at a pace in excess of any other culture in history.

That we need only look to the Middle East, China and India to see what happens to a culture and economy when it destroys its resources.

*That the urgency of the issue right now is that the pace of our destruction has accelerated in the past 20 years, and we have only another 10 or 15 years in which to take steps to conserve what is left."*³

Kennedy did the tour in September that year, but found the crowds weren't interested in hearing about wilderness and natural resources. In Montana, Kennedy went off script and thanked Senator Mike Mansfield for his leadership on control of nuclear arms, and the crowd cheered wildly. After that, Kennedy's remarks focused on arms control not natural resources. The American public wasn't ready for political leadership on

Fred Madison shaking LBJ's hand, and Stewart Brandborg, The Wilderness Society, shaking Lady Bird's hand, at the reception following the signing of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, October 2, 1968. Photo courtesy of Tracy and Fred Madison. Credit: Yoichi Okamoto, LBJ Presidential Library



natural resources, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend⁴ wrote recently. Undeterred, Nelson made it his life’s work to build that political leadership.

Passage of the National Wild Rivers Bill in the Senate was a first step. By spring 1968, the concept had been drafted into interagency reports, presidential messages, and several bills, which had passed almost unanimously but didn’t move.

President Lyndon Baines Johnson led the challenge when he made passage of a national rivers bill a priority in his 1965 State of the Union address. He declared, “The time has come to identify and preserve free-flowing stretches of our great rivers



Minnesota Senator Walter Mondale shaking hands with President Lyndon Baines Johnson at the signing of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, October 2, 1968. Johnson presented Mondale with a pen used in signing, which Mondale later gave to the St. Croix River Association, the nonprofit group protecting the St. Croix River, which forms the border between Minnesota and Wisconsin. Credit: Yoichi Okamoto, LBJ Presidential Library

before growth and development have made the beauty of the unspoiled waterway a memory.”

In his special message to the Congress on Conservation and Restoration of Natural Beauty later that winter, Johnson described the value of conservation in the broadest possible terms:

“Our conservation must be not just the classic conservation of protection and development, but a creative conservation of restoration and innovation. Its concern is not with nature alone, but with the total relation between man and the world around him. Its object is not just man’s welfare but the dignity of man’s spirit.”

Johnson’s proposal led to river legislation introduced in 1965 and 1966. The Senate passed S119 in 1967, incorporating features from the previous bills. S119 designated seven river segments as wild rivers and five river segments as scenic rivers, and

designated 27 other rivers or river segments for future inclusion. The bill passed the Senate 84-0, but the House took no action that year.

In 1968, the House had four rivers’ bills to consider: the bill passed by the Senate, a House version of the administration’s bill, and two bills from the chairman and ranking minority member of the House Interior and Insular Affairs committee—Congressmen Wayne Aspinall, Democrat from Colorado, and John Saylor, Republican from Pennsylvania.

Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, had introduced the first bill in the Senate in 1964, but included only rivers in the West. S119 had both wild and scenic rivers, but mostly western rivers. Saylor’s bill proposed additions of scenic and recreation rivers, following the system of river classification developed by Frank and John Craighead, wildlife biologists who grew up in Washington, D.C., but who had made Montana their home.

What was needed were rivers east of the Mississippi. “So Gaylord joined the battle,” Madison said.

Madison elaborated, “Gaylord called me in and said he had had a cup of coffee with Wayne Aspinall. Aspinall told Nelson there are no wild rivers east of the Mississippi River. That was the kiss of death for the bill. He might give the administration a river bill, but it wasn’t going to be called the National Wild River System. Gaylord was upset, but Aspinall was a powerful guy. Gaylord asked, “what can we do about this?” To me, it was the answer to the problem posed to me when Gaylord told me ‘to see what I could do’. “We had the presidential endorsement, the support of Stewart Udall, Secretary of Interior.”

Wayne Aspinall was a Colorado congressman who had chaired the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee for 10 years. His career was devoted to protecting the water resources of Colorado’s Western Slope. In 1968 he was embroiled in a battle to pass the Colorado River Basin Project, which could result in

five new dams, and possibly augmentation of the Colorado River from the Pacific Northwest. This bill conflicted with the Central Arizona Project, being advanced by the Department of the Interior, led by Stewart Udall.

Tim Palmer, river advocate and nationally recognized conservation author and photographer, writes that Udall “would grow to stand uniquely as a river developer and a river saver both, bearing the complications and compromises inherent in holding two opposite views at once.”⁵ It was Udall who had asked the young biologist Frank Craighead to develop a policy paper on river classification for the US Forest Service. That first paper had four classes – wild, semi-wilderness, semi-harnessed or harnessed. “Rivers and their watersheds are inseparable and to maintain wild areas we must preserve the rivers that drain them,” his twin brother John Craighead wrote in the 1957 edition of Montana Naturalist. And it was Udall who voted to build the Glen Canyon Dam and fought with Aspinall for the Central Arizona Project that appropriated water from the upper Colorado basin.

Aspinall worked out a deal to support the Arizona project for some of the dams on the Colorado with Udall and a 10-year moratorium on the study of appropriation of water from the Pacific Northwest with Senator Henry (Scoop) Jackson, Democrat of Washington. The Colorado River Basin Project passed September 30, 1968. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers bill passed on October 2. Aspinall, the dam builder, included the National Wild and Scenic Rivers bill as one of his political accomplishments engraved on his tombstone in Grand Junction, CO. The seven-foot long tombstone included:

- Architect of:
- Colorado River Storage Act
- Colorado River Basin Act
- Wilderness Act of 1964
- Wild, Scenic and Recreation Rivers Act

“Aspinall’s claim to be the architect of both the Wilderness Act and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would undoubtedly both amuse and horrify the environmentalists who fought for years to secure passage of these bills over his objections,”⁶ wrote one historian in his analysis of Western water law. “The inclusion of these measures was the closest Aspinall ever came to acknowledging that on some issues, the environmentalists were right.”

Madison helped to align the rivers and the senators so the bill could be passed. “The original bill was still around so we had to settle this issue. We needed the classification system since conditions were different east of the Mississippi than west of the Mississippi,” Madison said.

“We added the St Croix, although Gaylord noted it wasn’t very far east of the Mississippi (it flows into the Mississippi on the Minnesota – Wisconsin border). I met with Gaylord and Frank and they agreed; we got it to subcommittee where it was quickly approved and moved to the Senate floor,” Madison recalled.

The passage of the bill drew celebrations at home. “Gaylord Nelson was up for election that fall. I went to the signing because Nelson was campaigning. I flew with Udall and we rafted the Wolf River; Nelson met us. The last stop was in Hudson, Wisconsin, where there was a dinner for Nelson. Mondale showed up and gave a great speech about Nelson and his work and his commitment to the environment. He gave Gaylord a pen from the signing that LBJ had asked Mondale to give to Gaylord. There wasn’t a dry eye in the house as he just piled it on and I knew I was witnessing one of the magic moments in politics.”

Nelson and Mondale first asked for protection of the St Croix-Namekagon rivers system as a National Riverway following the Ozark model. As a result of Madison’s work, these streams were designated as Wild and Scenic in the 1968 Act. Speaking for the original proposal, Mondale said (and perhaps repeated at that campaign dinner in Hudson):

“We used to fight our battles against floods, destruction of topsoil, and decimation of forests. We still face these threats. Our new challenges are even more serious, involving possible loss of those common resources that are irreplaceable heritage of tomorrow’s America—the air, the water and the land itself.

It is up to each of us to do our part—because only together can we prevent this from happening in Minnesota and in the St. Croix Valley...But, as every person insists upon his economic right to waste a tiny portion of our resources, and cries for conservation elsewhere, the American people are discarding their birthright—committing collective murder of our natural wealth and beauty.”⁷

The successful passage of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers bill restored the nation’s birthright of free-flowing rivers. It happened by the pulling and prodding by conservation visionaries, such as Gaylord Nelson, by engaged public servants such as Stewart Udall and John Saylor, and even by deal makers, such as Wayne Aspinall who saw the tide turning. For Madison, it was a life-defining event.

“Marshalling support for the bill was easy. I am not bragging. Those guys were special. They were really committed. I got to play politics in the big time with some really good guys,” he said. ♦

Footnotes

- ¹ “Preservation of Scenic Rivers,” A. Dan Tarlock, 1967, Kentucky Law Journal, Vol. 55, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, pp. 762-763
- ² Correspondence, Senator Gaylord Nelson and President John F. Kennedy, May 16 - August 29, 1963, accessed on-line, www.nelsonearthday.net/correspondence/collection/conservation_tour.php
- ³ Ibid
- ⁴ JFK and the Paradox of Leadership, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Washington Monthly, April 6, 2018, accessed on-line
- ⁵ Pp. 16-17, Palmer, Tim. Wild and Scenic Rivers: an American Legacy. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press: 2017
- ⁶ P. 151, Sturgeon, Stephen. The Politics of Western Water Law: The Congressional Career of Wayne Aspinall. Tucson: University of Arizona Press: 2002
- ⁷ September 8, 1965, Congressional Record, p. 23046



President Lyndon Baines Johnson signing the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act October 2, 1968. Credit: Yoichi Okamoto, LBJ Presidential Library

The American Presidency Project

Lyndon B. Johnson, U.S. President (1963-1969)
Remarks Upon Signing Four Bills Relating to Conservation and Outdoor Recreation (October 2, 1968)

Mr. Chief Justice, Secretary Udall, Senator Mansfield, Senator Kuchel, Senator Anderson, Congressman Saylor, distinguished Members of Congress, ladies and gentlemen:

This is the fourth time this week that we have met here in the White House to further the cause of conservation.

I believe that all of us who have served in the Government, and particularly in the Congress, during this decade of the sixties will always be proud of this great treasure that together we have conserved.

There are now 24 million acres in our National Park System. Out of 24 million acres, 2,400,000 acres--or at least 10 percent of the total acreage that the Nation has--has been put into that park system since 1961. That compares with fewer than 30,000 acres that were acquired in the entire previous decade.

The 1960's, therefore, have been truly an era of conservation in this country. But no achievement of these past 8 years can surpass what we are about to achieve this afternoon. I speak of saving the great redwoods of California.

Half a century ago, a great conservationist said, "The forests

of America, however slighted by man, must have been a great delight to God, for they were the best that He ever planted."

In the past 50 years, we have learned--all too slowly, I think--to prize and to protect God's precious gifts. Because we have, our own children and grandchildren will come to know and come to love the great forests and the wild rivers that we have protected and left to them.

I believe this act establishing the Redwood National Park in California will stand for all time as a monument to the wisdom of our generation. It will surely be remembered, I think, as one of the great conservation achievements of the 90th Congress.

It is a great victory for every American in every State, because we have rescued a magnificent and a meaningful treasure from the chain saw. For once we have spared what is enduring and ennobling from the hungry and hasty and selfish act of destruction.

The redwoods will stand because the men and women of vision and courage made their stand--refusing to suffer any further exploitation of our national wealth, any greater damage to our environment, or any larger debasement of that quality and beauty without which life itself is quite barren.

Yes, the redwoods will stand. So long as they do, they will give delight. They will give instruction of God's work as well as

nature's miracles. They will declare for all to hear, when other great conservation battles are being fought: "We stand because a nation found its greatest profit in preserving for its heritage its greatest resource, and that is the beauty and the splendor of its land."

The Redwood National Park will contain some 58,000 acres. Its boundaries will surround three State parks. With the approval of the California Legislature, these may some day become part of this great National Park System.

So today we are also approving an act of Congress that sets aside another 1,200,000 acres for parks and recreation in the State of Washington. The North Cascades National Park and its adjoining acres in what have been called the "American Alps" is next door to the Pacific Northwest's most populous communities.

We are preserving for the pleasure of these people one of the most beautiful regions on God's earth. I also have before me the first Federal legislation 'providing a national system of both urban and rural trails.

The simplest pleasures--and healthful exercise--of walking in an outdoor setting have been almost impossible for the millions of Americans who live in the cities. And where natural areas exist within the cities, they are usually not connected by walkways. In many cities, there are simply just no footpaths that lead out of the city into the countryside.

Our history of wise management of America's national forests has assisted us in designating the initial elements of the National Trails System. Two National Scenic Trails, one in the East and one in the West, are being set aside as the first components of the Trails System: the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail.

The legislation also calls for study of 14 additional routes for possible inclusion in the Trails System.

A few summers ago, after Secretary Udall took his lovely family on a float trip of high adventure down the turbulent Colorado River, he returned to Washington and said that every individual and every family should get to know at least one river.

So today we are initiating a new national policy which will enable more Americans to get to know more rivers. I have been informed as recently as this morning that I am going to have the rather novel experience of getting to know the Pedernales a good deal better after January. I played on it as a child. I roamed it as a college student and I visited it frequently as President. But my wife has some more specific plans for me to go back and walk it with her--both sides, I think.

I am signing an act today which preserves sections of selected rivers that possess outstanding conservation values.

An unspoiled river is a very rare thing in this Nation today. Their flow and vitality have been harnessed by dams and too often they have been turned into open sewers by communities and by industries. It makes us all very fearful that all rivers will

go this way unless somebody acts now to try to balance our river development.

So we are establishing a National Wild and Scenic Rivers System which will complement our river development with a policy to preserve sections of selected rivers in their free-flowing conditions and to protect their water quality and other vital conservation values.

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System Act will give immediate protection to portions of eight rivers and a ribbon of land along each river bank.

Five of the eight wild and scenic rivers are located in the National Forest System. Our opportunity to designate these scenic streams depends in large measure on the bold efforts of Secretary Freeman and his Forest Service in preserving their very special qualities.

The act further names 27 rivers as potential additions to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System sometime in the future.

I wish we could find the time--or, if we need to--the courage, to tell our American people more about some of these things than what they are having to listen to.

So, today I want to pay a very special tribute to the leaders in Congress who have made some of these things possible--these men who were all fearless and who were skilled and forceful and whose vitality has given us these magnificent options for conservation. I want to thank Congressman Aspinall, Congressman Saylor, Congressman Taylor, Senator Jackson, and Senator Anderson. This must be a proud day for our beloved friend Senator Kuchel and Senator Bible, who is not with us.

Above all, I want to pay my very special thanks to our beloved Chief Justice who stands for all that is good in this country, and to Mr. Grosvenor of the National Geographic, who has given me inspiration when I needed it most and has given me courage when I thought I needed some more.

Finally, to Mrs. Johnson, who has been an ardent, enthusiastic, pertinacious advocate--long before she ever dreamed that she would be in this house, but every minute that she has been in it--for the complete cause of conservation.

I hope that I may be able to visit some of the locations that you all have helped us to preserve for the American people.

To the business people, to the labor people, to all of you, we say thank you. We are very grateful. The American people should say to you, "Well done." This is really a monument to you, Secretary Udall. Our children will remember your great adventures and pioneering.

Now it gives me great pleasure to approve these bills which I think will add still more to the scenic wealth of our country which I think is going to mean so much to my little grandson and all the others like him who will live in a beautiful America during their lives.

Thank you. ♦



It's not too late to #makeyoursplash!

by Lisa Ronald

As we approach the middle of 2018—the year during which we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act—it's time to begin tallying our successes as inspiration for the home stretch. In our changing political and environmental climate, this year's successes will have direct bearing on the river stewardship and advocacy landscapes in future years. Have you made your splash yet? If not, there's still time.

The national 50th anniversary is being planned through a coalition of eight partners: American Rivers, American Whitewater, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, National Park Service, River Management Society, and River Network. This coordinated effort has produced resources, films, social media, and press coverage as a national overlay to local community-initiated momentum.

Rivers Media

To date, Google News catalogues 948 articles that include information about Wild and Scenic rivers and the 50th anniversary. Although most of these are local publications, a few more notable outlets covering the anniversary include USA Today, National Geographic Magazine, Outdoor Retailer, and National Parks Traveler. Nick Paumgarten's recent New Yorker article chronicles his voyage along the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River with a cast of characters including current and former politicians and 61-year-old Stanford professor and former Google climate and energy initiative leader Dan Reicher, who completed the first source-to-sea descent of the Rio Grande in 1977.

What articles don't tell, videos show. In total, ten professional films have been produced for the anniversary and shown at film festivals including the Wild & Scenic Film Festival in California and the D.C. Environmental Film Festival. New Mexico's Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River was featured in a PBS television episode of *Travels with Darley*. Idaho's Salmon Wild and Scenic River was featured in the Department of Interior's popular annual Valentine's Day *Love on Public Lands* video in February.

eight different retail companies offer rivers logo merchandise for wholesale and individual sale including pins, patches, stickers, temporary tattoos, magnets, paddle medallions, beverage cozies, cups, water bottles, shirts, hats, socks, safety whistles, and cell phone dry bags. One company, Eagle River Designs, has sold more than \$20,000 in merchandise and has donated just over \$2,000 to support the anniversary.

Online, the rivers.gov anniversary toolkit has had more than 3000 visitors so far in 2018, and visitation on rivers.gov overall is up by 20%. The toolkit, designed for agency offices, partners, and the media, includes general river information, event planning guidance, maps, press-ready materials, videos, webinars, engagement techniques, and access to promotional products. The rivers 50th anniversary logo is available for free use at events and in outreach. Agreements with



The anniversary logo makes a splash on everything from river permits to pint cups. Courtesy of Devon Barker-Hicks (top) and South Yuba River Citizens League (above).

Celebrating Rivers through Events

One of the key facets of the rivers anniversary is for communities to celebrate their local rivers. Feel-good anniversary activities during a time of environmental negativity have the power to galvanize and initiate public and organizational engagement on rivers as a gateway to building grassroots support for future river issues. So far in 2018, more than 100 local events are scheduled in 26 states that will serve an estimated 52,000 people. Events will continue to come online throughout the year.

Instead of creating new events, many local organizers are finding creative ways to incorporate the rivers anniversary into existing annual events like river festivals and river trips. Lochsa Madness, hosted every Memorial Day Weekend on the Clearwater Wild and Scenic River, draws both boaters and spectators to Lochsa Falls rapid. In 2018, kid-friendly river education activities, speakers, and river safety games provided outreach on the values of the Lochsa to families. Sponsored athletes Susan and Adam Elliott from Wild River Life joined Lochsa Madness, as they have done in other communities, during their cross-country quest to paddle 50 Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Each spring the Sierra Club's Military Outdoor program takes veterans on river trips on the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River. This robust program engages veterans and their families, this year, through Wild and Scenic Rivers education and healing through nature. River Management Society's Southeast Chapter Chattooga Wild and Scenic River trip offered a unique professional networking opportunity, as the kayaking and rafting participants included staff from American Whitewater, American Rivers, Mountain True and the Riverkeeper Alliance, the City of Hendersonville, NC, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and Wildwater, Ltd.

Outfitters are dedicating extra effort this year to educating customers about rivers. As key river interpreters, working with outfitters during the anniversary can lead to productive public

education partnerships. Sheri Griffith Adventures partnered with River Management Society to host a May Yampa River trip that educated clients about Wild and Scenic Rivers through evening discussions including why some iconic rivers like the Yampa are not federally protected.



Ben Schmidt, RMS Northwest Chapter member, helps kids learn about throwbags and river safety at Lochsa Madness. Courtesy of Jenna Becar, Forest Service (above) and Jimmy Gaudry (below).





Veterans team up to guide a raft down the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River. Courtesy of the Sierra Club.

Annual and bi-annual conferences such as the U.S. Travel Association’s IPW tourism tradeshow, Outdoor Retailer outdoor gear tradeshow, and River Management Society symposium, as well as keystone public lands holidays, such as Great Outdoors Month, Latino Conservation Week, and National Public Lands Day, all feature river themes in 2018. National Fishing and Boating Week, June 2-9, marked the release of the new Junior Ranger “Let’s Go Fishing!” Activity Booklet, available online or in print at a growing number of National Parks over the summer. A “50 for 50” volunteer certificate program challenges volunteers during events this summer and fall to donate 50 hours for 50 years.

Some communities are planning new events with different



The Yampa River, a proposed Wild and Scenic River, provides the backdrop for client education through Sheri Griffith Adventures. Courtesy of Jack Henderson.

or expanded partner groups. The Phipps Center for the Arts in partnership with the St. Croix River Association launched a multi-media art exhibition called Heart of the River that features artwork inspired by the St. Croix Wild and Scenic River, which runs along the Minnesota/Wisconsin border. Speakers, like renowned river historian, author, and photographer Tim Palmer, are speaking at universities, community centers, film festivals, and breweries.

In Oregon, Cascade Lakes Brewing Company and Ochoco Brewing join a growing list of craft breweries offering special beers for the anniversary. Craft brewers in Colorado are soon to follow suit. “Having the state’s only nationally designated Wild & Scenic River in Fort Collins’ backyard means we have

access to exceptional recreational opportunities, pristine waters for wildlife, and pure downstream water that contributes to our world-renowned beer culture,” said Katy Schneider, director of marketing for Visit Fort Collins, in a recent 5280 Denver’s Mile High Magazine article.

continuing to build, and we can draw much inspiration from plans laid thus far. However, a truly successful campaign maps a path well beyond the present and near future. In early May at River Rally, an annual gathering of river, watershed, and waterkeeper organizations, members of the non-profit community committed to joint advocacy and capacity building. Although this collective path forward is still obscured in early-morning river fog, so to speak, more detail will be revealed during October’s River Management Society symposium in Vancouver, WA. ♦

Lisa Ronald is the 50th Anniversary WSR Anniversary Coordinator. She is an avid kayaker based out of Missoula, Montana.

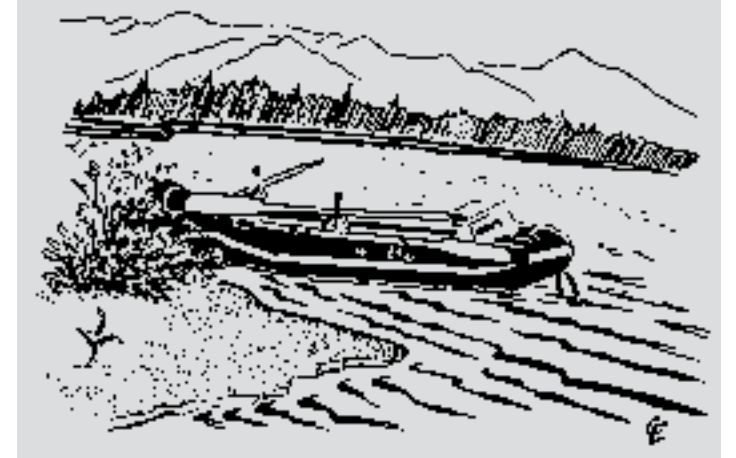
#theriverismyoffice

...features selfie videos, including:

Kathy Zerkle, New River Ranger, who asks visitors to use refillable water bottles to keep unnecessary plastic off the river in ‘her’ National Recreation Area.

Troy Schnurr, Colorado River Ranger, tells his story that chronicles five years of onerous Tamarisk removed, the emergence of intensive crowding, and the ultimate creation of a permit system that both protects the river experience for visitors and pays for staff and supplies.

Other video selfies are in the editing room, and your stories will dimensionalize the challenging, gratifying work that preserves our rivers.



Author and photographer Tim Palmer speaking at the Wild and Scenic Film Festival. Photo: Kial James

Sharing Your River Story

Several campaigns encourage river lovers to share their stories of river memories and experiences through personal accounts, photographs, or videos to illustrate beliefs and values about rivers. Rafting Magazine’s amateur video story winners will debut at the Feather River Festival. The River Management Society’s #theriverismyoffice stories seek to shine a light on the notion that rivers are able to flow, thrive and host visitors pleasantly and safely due largely to those who work on and for river health and wise management. American Rivers and American Whitewater’s 5000 Miles of Wild—both a designation and a story-sharing campaign—has thus far collected more than 1000 stories toward their goal of 5000.

Beyond Celebration

As illustrated by the past Wilderness Act 50th anniversary and National Parks Centennial, a successful commemorative movement has both broad-reaching national support as well as grassroots commitment and leadership—top down and bottom up. Momentum around the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is

Welcome New RMS Members



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Golden, CO
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Fort Collins, CO
National Park Service

Melissa Shelley, Environmental Coordinator
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National Park Service

Rod Bonacker, Wild and Scenic Rivers Instructor
Sisters, OR
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