

Updating A Plan For The Wild
And Scenic Rivers Act At Its
50th Anniversary

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Overview



30th anniversary forum review

Emergent themes identified from 50th follow up

Comparing the 30th & 50th barriers and actions

Focus groups: Actions for the future

Concluding remarks

30TH Anniversary Forum

National Conservation Training Center



Participants

Agency/Organization	Number
BLM	4
FS	5
NPS	6
USFWS	2
NGO/Partner	11
State	5
Congress	2
Other (academia, outfitter, etc.)	5
Total	40

30TH ANNIVERSARY FORUM

1998 forum was called by the IWSRCC and the River Management Society

Create a forward-looking agenda for the Wild and Scenic Rivers System on the 30th anniversary

Key Output:

“Moving to Action” report

Identified and ranked barriers and actions to promote river conservation



Wild and Scenic Rivers Act 30th Anniversary Forum -- Moving to Action

FINAL MEETING REPORT

USFWS National Conservation Training Center
Shepherdstown, West Virginia
November 5th & 6th, 1998

Sponsored by:

**The Interagency Wild & Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council
and the
River Management Society**

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50th Anniversary Research to Develop Emergent Themes

- Sampled 66 people and groups involved in river conservation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
- Sent 30th Plan and conducted 66 telephone interviews
- Completed rankings from 30th forum

Transcripts analyzed to identify:

- Key themes of Barriers
- Key themes of Actions

50th Anniversary Emergent Themes

The public lacks understanding about the **WSR Act**

Agencies are losing institutional knowledge for management of **WSRs**

Partnerships are important to **WSRs success--they build trust**

A general lack of resources is detrimental to management of **WSRs (prevalent in all themes)**

Interviews

Agency/Organization	Number
BLM	9
USFS	24
NPS	16
NGO/Partner	13
State	1
USFWS	3
Total	66



The Public Lacks Adequate Understanding About the WSR Act



Members of the public can misinterpret what the WSR Act does

The public often doesn't see the value of designating WSRs

Members of the public cannot distinguish between different types of protected areas

Leads to lack of public support and subsequent lack of political support

The Public Lacks Adequate Understanding About the WSR Act

“...most people have very little awareness of laws and they don't know which ones are specific to agencies, you know lots of folks don't know who the BLM is let alone the difference between a local law and a national law”

“...and I really think there's a higher than usual fear about it, about the act and how it will affect their development around rivers or their subsistence around the rivers.”

“I think sometimes the biggest hurdles we have is letting folks know you're on a wild and scenic river and here's why it's different, or this could become a wild and scenic river and this is what that means”



Agencies are Losing Institutional Knowledge for Management of WSRs

WSRs versus other Protected Area Management

Original WSR managers are retiring, positions are not being refilled or duties are given to other positions

Perception of limited access to trainings (most knowledge is self-taught)

Lack of frameworks for measuring ORVs



Agencies are Losing Institutional Knowledge for Management of WSRs

“One of my big concerns is that over time, over the last 50 years we’ve lost a lot of wild and scenic culture in the agencies, so people that were around when the act was passed and built the first river management plans, those folks were solely committed to wild and scenic. Over the years it seems like that commitment has slipped ...”

“Outstandingly remarkable values is this real fuzzy concept, it’s really hard to translate for folks and it is so value laden, that idea of ranking how valuable something is relative to like a broader geographic area is really difficult for people, particularly for scientists”

“So I think an inherent barrier is that that we all don't have wild and scenic rivers on every forest, or certainly not every district, whereas when I compare it to wilderness again, those designations are more prevalent across the agency”

Partnerships are Important to WSR Success -- They Build Trust



Perceived longstanding distrust of federal government is a barrier to suitability studies or support for ongoing management

WSR management is place-based, which can be a barrier or a positive aspect

We need to interact with larger scope of stakeholders including state & federal agencies

IWSRCC is an important resource for managers & partners & provides accessible information

Partnerships are Important to WSR Success -- They Build Trust

“Nobody wants to see the river run dry here, but at the same time they don’t want feds controlling it, they want local control.”

“But I think as agency employees we’re always looking for that perfect opportunity where the goals of a partner align with the goals of the agency and we can sit down and work on those together.”

“They’ve really been coordinating activities on the 50th anniversary and as a result people have learned that, hey, the Park Service has these funny things called Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers that aren’t on federal land and aren’t federal units, they need to have a seat at the table”



A General Lack of Resources is Detrimental to Management of WSRs (Prevalent in All Themes)

CRMPs do not exist or are outdated, leaving no guiding management or baselines

WSRs often placed into recreation budget, although rivers are multi-resource, interdisciplinary or ORVs may not include recreation

There are not enough resources to manage increased use and recreation



A General Lack of Resources is Detrimental to Management of WSRs (Prevalent in All Themes)

“... it's hard to get comprehensive river management plans done with the current baseline budget that we have and without the CRMPs it's hard to create a constituency that's a catalyst for those sorts of things, it's a catalyst for educating people”

“I think that although we have our positions and the emphasis, without the resources needed to do the work that we're supposed to do, and that can mean funding or it can mean just the support from other ways, it makes it hard for us to fulfill our obligations in managing wild and scenic rivers.”

“I think that there is the misconception that wild and scenic rivers are kind of for recreation... they fall under the umbrella of recreation when really they are an interdisciplinary endeavor.”



Comparing rankings of BARRIERS

30th Anniversary vs 50th Anniversary

- Lack of political support and lack of public support
- Mistrust, misinformation and paranoia
- Private property issues
- Lack of dollars and staff after a river is designated
- Lack of information and knowledge about WSRs
- Lack of regulations (change guidelines to regulations)
- Lack of coordination among agencies, unclear interpretation
- Locals see selves as bearing costs, outsiders benefit
- Lack of national strategy for WSRs among NGOs
- Agencies are not protecting the values



- How much did the rankings change?

- +3 • Lack of dollars and staff after a river is designated
- 1 • Lack of political support and lack of public support
- +2 • Lack of information and knowledge about WSRs
- +6 • Agencies are not protecting the values
- 3 • Mistrust, misinformation and paranoia
- 3 • Private property issues
- 0 • Lack of coordination among agencies, unclear interpretation
- 2 • Lack of regulations (change guidelines to regulations)
- 1 • Locals see selves as bearing costs, outsiders benefit
- 1 • Lack of national strategy for WSRs among NGOs

Comparing rankings of ACTIONS

30th Anniversary vs 50th Anniversary

30th

- Educate public to broaden demographic of support
- Increase funding for land acquisition through the LWCF
- Address in-stream flow, water rights
- National NGOs coordinate WSR strategies with locals
- Develop interagency regulations for WSRs
- Increase funding for community based management
- Develop group of planners to work with locals & states
- Obtain a line item budget in each agency
- Educate politicians
- Increase funds for federal agencies to finish CRMPs

Actions

50th



- How much did the rankings change?

- 0 • Educate public to broaden demographic of support
- +6 • Obtain a line item budget in each agency
- +2 • Increase funds for federal agencies to finish CRMPs
- 1 • Address in-stream flow, water rights
- 3 • Increase funding for land acquisition through the LWCF
- 2 • National NGOs coordinate WSR strategies with locals
- 0 • Develop group of planners to work with locals & states
- 3 • Develop interagency regulations for WSRs
- 3 • Increase funding for community based management
- 1 • Educate politicians

Changes During 20 Years

Barriers

- “Agencies not protecting the values” and “Lack of dollars and staff after a river is designated” increased in importance
- “Mistrust, misinformation and paranoia” and “Private property issues” decreased the most in importance

Actions

- Educate public to broaden demographic of support remained the number one priority
- “Obtain a line item budget in each agency” and “Increase funds for federal agencies to finish CRMPs” increased the most
- “Develop interagency regulations for WSRs” and “Increase funding for community based management” decreased the most in importance

50th Anniversary Emergent Themes

The public lacks understanding about the WSR Act

Agencies are losing institutional knowledge for management of WSRs

Partnerships are important to WSRs success--they build trust

A general lack of resources is detrimental to management of WSRs (prevalent in all themes)

- Educate public to broaden demographic of support
- Obtain a line item budget in each agency
- Increase funds for federal agencies to finish CRMPs
- Address in-stream flow, water rights
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- Increase funding for community based management
- Educate politicians

Focus groups to identify future actions to enhance WSR programs

- 45-60 minutes
- Groups of 5-10 (depending on size of group)

Resources:
White Paper = Major Themes and
New Actions Worksheet

Directions:
Utilizing the resources from your facilitator, break into small groups to discuss actions to address emerging themes



THANK YOU

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