

# Wild & Scenic Rivers Act

An Act<sup>1</sup>

To provide for a National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that*

## SECTION 1.

**(a)** This Act may be cited as the “Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.”

**(b)** It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dam and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes.

**(c)** The purpose of this Act is to implement this policy by instituting a national wild and scenic rivers system, by designating the initial components of that system, and by prescribing the methods by which and standards according to which additional components may be added to the system from time to time.

## SECTION 13.

**(a)** Nothing in this Act shall affect the jurisdiction or responsibilities of the States with respect to fish and wildlife. Hunting and fishing shall be permitted on lands and waters administered as parts of the system under applicable State and Federal laws and regulations unless, in the case of hunting, those lands or waters are within a national park or monument. The administering Secretary may, however, designate zones where, and establish periods when, no hunting is permitted for reasons of public safety, administration, or public use and enjoyment and shall issue appropriate regulations after consultation with the wildlife agency of the State or States affected.

**(b)** The jurisdiction of the States and the United States over waters of any stream included in the national wild, scenic or recreational river area shall be determined by established principles of law. Under the provisions of this Act, any taking by the United States of a water right which is vested under either State or Federal law at the time such

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<sup>1</sup> The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271-1287) as set forth herein consists of Public Law 90-542 (October 2, 1968) and amendments thereto.

river is included in the national wild and scenic rivers system shall entitle the owner thereof to just compensation. Nothing in this Act shall constitute an express or implied claim or denial on the part of the Federal Government as to exemption from State water laws.

**(c)** Designation of any stream or portion thereof as a national wild, scenic or recreational river area shall not be construed as a reservation of the waters of such streams for purposes other than those specified in this Act, or in quantities greater than necessary to accomplish these purposes.

**(d)** The jurisdiction of the States over waters of any stream included in a national wild, scenic or recreational river area shall be unaffected by this Act to the extent that such jurisdiction may be exercised without impairing the purposes of this Act or its administration.

**(e)** Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to alter, amend, repeal, interpret, modify, or be in conflict with any interstate compact made by any States which contain any portion of the national wild and scenic rivers system.

**(f)** Nothing in this Act shall affect existing rights of any State, including the right of access, with respect to the beds of navigable streams, tributaries, or rivers (or segments thereof) located in a national wild, scenic or recreational river area.

**(g)** The Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as the case may be, may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or through any component of the national wild and scenic rivers system in accordance with the laws applicable to the national park system and the national forest system, respectively: *Provided*, That any conditions precedent to granting such easements and rights-of-way shall be related to the policy and purpose of this Act.