

The Wild and Scenic River Act

A National Wild and Scenic River System

The 90th Congress, S. 119 is responsible for Public Law 90-542, titled “The Wild and Scenic River Act.” The Act became law on October 2, 1968. (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 1) The nation, with Congress acting on its behalf, determined an effort to offset some of the dams on rivers should be made by restricting the constructions of dams on selected rivers within the nation. These selected rivers and their adjacent lands receive protection based on their value as remarkable scenic, geologic, fish and wildlife, recreation, historic, cultural, or some other distinctive characteristic (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p 1). The goal and purpose of the act is to create policy, which will set forth standards for the wild and scenic river system, and the method additional rivers are chosen for inclusion to the originally designated system and framework (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 1). The state of Oregon was involved from the creation of the river system and continues to be influential in the policy formation and subsequent changes to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The government’s policy of development had exploited rivers for years and such incidents as the fate of the Hetch Hetchy and Owens River Valley in California had left the nation with less than admiration for the government’s management policies. The 1950’s Echo Park controversy in Colorado, involving the Green and Yampa Rivers, began the nation’s river conservation movement (Bonham, 2000, p. 113).

Events and people involved in the passing of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

Preservation of the nation's rivers had an early start in the Soil Conservation Service small-dams project that reduced the number of dam and reservoir systems constructed. In the 1950's the Echo Park controversy in Colorado, which involved the Green and Yampa Rivers, began a national desire to protect the rivers of America. The proposed dam would have flooded the Dinosaur National Monument had conservationists, with public support, not prevented the construction of the dam. Rainbow Bridge, the world's tallest natural arch resides in a watery grave named Lake Powell after the construction of Glen Canyon Dam (Bonham, 2000, 114). This tremendous loss, as well as the narrow escape with Dinosaur National Monument, was the fuel conservationist need to bring the public together and stop the damming of Grand Canyon in the name of river preservation (Bonham, 2000, p. 114). One of the first moves toward the preservation of rivers came in 1962 when the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Committee encouraged the preservation of river systems. In 1964, Congress prevented the construction of a large dam in Missouri by passing the Ozark National Scenic Riverways area under the governance of the National Park Service (Tarlock and Tippy, 1970, p. 710). Later in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson urged Congress to "preserve free flowing stretches of our great scenic rivers (Hiser, 1988, p. 1049)." The Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior conducted a study in 1965 that recommended the protection of several rivers from dam construction in a bill submitted by Senator Frank Church of Idaho. This bill died in the House Interior Committee after passing the Senate in 1966. Prior to dying the bill added amendments protecting developed interest along the Rogue River in Oregon by denying the use of eminent domain by the government (Tarlock and Tippy, 1970, p. 710).

Senator Church reintroduced the bill when the Ninetieth Congress convened in 1967. Pennsylvania Representative Stanley Saylor also reintroduces the “National Scenic Rivers Act” which contained the three-part classification system. Interior Secretary Stewart Udall proposed the twofold classification of “wild” and “scenic” in a draft bill sent to congress in February of 1967 (Tarlock and Tippy, 1970, p. 711). Colorado Representative Wayne N. Aspinall, Chairman of the House Interior Committee, submitted another bill, which increased the criteria for induction and reduced the original number of streams in the system to four, to Congress. The final product, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, became law in October of 1968 (Tarlock and Tippy, 1970, p. 712).

The original rivers in the system

Eight River systems (some have multiple waterways) comprise the original components of the Wild and Scenic River Act (WSRA). Those rivers appear with the designated governing body below.

- (1) Clearwater, Middle Fork, Idaho: administered by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- (2) Eleven Point, Missouri: administered by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- (3) Feather, California: administered by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- (4) Rio Grande, New Mexico: administered by the Secretary of Interior.
- (5) Rogue, Oregon: to be administered by agencies of the Departments of Interior or Agriculture as agreed upon by the secretaries of said departments or as directed by the President.
- (6) Saint Croix, Minnesota and Wisconsin: administered by the Secretary of Interior.
- (7) Salmon, Middle Fork, Idaho: administered by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- (8) Wolf, Wisconsin: administered by the Secretary of Interior.

For the most part the designations are only for sections of the given river, each has a coverage statement, and Saint Croix has obligations regarding the Northern States Power Company that must be resolved before induction (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p 2).

In addition to the original components of the system, twenty-seven other rivers and segments of rivers are proposed as potential additions to the system. This twenty-seven included the entire Illinois River in Oregon (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 5). Congress, realizing it was not adequately equipped to designate rivers, created the categories of “instant rivers” and “study rivers,” the latter being the twenty-seven proposed components. (Hiser, 1988, p. 1049) While under study the rivers have five years of protection, or until one of the Secretaries determines a river has less than sufficient merit to be included as a wild and scenic river. If the river is worthy of addition to the system, an additional three years of protection may be granted while Congress evaluates the recommendation (Tarlock and Tippy, 1970, p. 714).

Eligibility as a Wild and Scenic River

All wild, scenic, or recreational rivers are eligible for protection under the Wild and Scenic River Act if the river is in a free-flowing state or once restoration to this state has taken place. Each river that meets the eligibility requirements is classified, designated, and administered as one of three classifications. (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 2)

(1) Wild river areas—Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds and shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.

(2) Scenic river areas—Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.

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

Proposals for change to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The design of the Act allows for the addition of rivers to the system periodically, and four avenues are available (Tarlock and Tippy, 1970, p. 713).

- (1) A later act of Congress in response to a study of a river as directed by section 5 of the Act.
- (2) A later act of Congress in response to a study subsequently requested by Congress.
- (3) A later act of Congress in response to recommendations contained in a multiple-purpose river basin study.
- (4) The Secretary of the Interior's approval of a governor's request to designate a state-administered river corridor as a unit of the national system.

Item 4 is conditional and requires "the State(s) must agree the river will be permanently administered as a wild and scenic river without expense to the United States (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p 16)." Two state administered rivers in the original act are the Allagash in Maine and the Wolf in Wisconsin.

The guidelines for the future

One of the factors for consideration is Section 5(d) that requires "all federal agencies to consider the wild, scenic, and recreational river potential of all river areas for which they are making water use and development plans (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 18)." Section 6(d) authorizes the Secretary involved to acquire land along the boundary of the river. The exchange of federally owned lands for non-federally owned lands is allowable in the efforts to accomplish the acquisition of land. Section 6(a) gives the Secretary the right to condemn land adjacent to the river as needed to administer successfully the river of interest. Section 6(c) prevents the Secretary involved from using condemnation to acquire land from any municipality that is maintaining the property in accordance to the standards of the Act (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 19).

Section 7 of the Act may very well be the most important component for the protections of rivers. Section 7 prohibits the federal power commission from licensing any project, which may affect indirectly or directly a component of the river system. Additionally, prohibitions on other federal agencies prevent the agencies from funding or licensing any water project that may reduce the value that allows the river to be part of the system (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 20). Section 10 of the Act grants the Secretaries the power to administer the river system as directed by the Act. Section 10 also emphasizes the primary focus of the Act is “protecting and enhancing the esthetic, scenic, historic, archeological, and scientific features of the river (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 22).”

Amendments to the Act

Since becoming law in 1968, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act has been amended countless times. Many of these amendments made minor changes to the original language to remove ambiguities. Other amendments have merely added a river or a section of a river to the system. Some but not all of the amendments, and the details of those amendments, will be mentioned primarily based on significance or if the amendment related to Oregon in some way.

The “Lower Saint Croix River Act of 1972” amended the Wild and Scenic River Act to add a portion of the Saint Croix River in Wisconsin and Minnesota as the ninth component of the system. Congress set a maximum of \$7,275,000 (1972 dollars) in the appropriation for the project in the Act approved in October of 1972 (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 26). In contrast, Congress appropriated \$17,000,000 (1968 dollars) in the original Wild and Scenic Rivers Act that encompassed eight separate river systems (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 24).

In May of 1974, Congress approved the addition of the Chattooga River in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. This amendment also appropriated funding for the eight original rivers in the system (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 27). This funding included \$12,447,200 (1974 dollars) to purchase land along the Rogue River in Oregon (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 29).

Congress again amended the Wild and Scenic River Act in January of 1975 to add an additional twenty-eight rivers to the study list, including the John Day River in Oregon. The amendment included a clause directing the studies completion by 1979, with the exception of the Delores in Colorado with a completion date of January 3, 1976. This amendment also increased the appropriation for the Saint Croix from \$7,275,000 to \$19,000,000 (1975 dollars) (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 32).

On December 31, 1975, Congress created the Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area adding the Snake River with segments in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. In addition, the amendment added the Rapid River in Idaho to the Wild and Scenic River system (Utter and Schultz, 1976, p. 34).

The surface mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, which passed Congress on August 3, 1977 as Public Law 95-87 prevents or restricts coal production and requires abandoned mine rehabilitation to minimize the negative effects. This prohibition of surface mining is applicable in study areas as well as areas previously designated as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System (Thomas, 2014, p. 31).

Public Law 95-625 National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 enacted on November 10, 1978 changed the original stance of “without expense to the United States” to allow aid to states administering federally designated rivers with federal land within the system. The legislation, initiated by Representative Philip Burton of California, had the intent of encouraging more states to join the program by reducing the state obligation (Thomas, 2014, p. 3).

The boundary issues caused by a lack of designation as to where the boundaries of the rivers would commence found resolution in Public Law 99-590 passed October of 1986. The amendment added, “measured from the ordinary high water mark” to the 320-acre-per-river-mile limitation of the original Act. The confusion had been whether the bed and banks of the river are actually part of the 320-acre-per-river-mile calculation (Thomas, 2014, p. 7). The amendment inadvertently removed all of the boundary language and the correct language was entered by Public Law 100-534 in October of 1988 (Thomas, 2014, p. 7). The amendment also changed the “plan of development” to “comprehensive planning within 3 years” for clarification (Thomas 2014, p. 8).

October of 1988, Congress passed the Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988, Public Law 100-557. This amendment added segments of 40 Oregon rivers as components of the National System. The amendment also authorized the study of seven other rivers including the Upper Klamath River (Thomas, 2014, p. 20). The Klamath River had become a controversial project in the state of Oregon due to the Salt Caves Hydropower Project which the city of Klamath Falls had invested a considerable amount of time, money, and effort. The city felt it should continue the licensing process for the project even if the river was under

evaluation for inclusion to the National System. Other residents of Oregon believed the river deserved protection from the dam project. The Act of 1988, promoted by Senator Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon, intended to relieve some of the tension between the competing sides. The river was designated a wild and scenic river in 1994 and the Salt Caves Hydropower Project was terminated (Thomas, 2014, p. 21).

The Impact of Oregon on the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988 changed the standing and perception of the 1968 Act. The addition of 40 rivers gave Oregon the most protected rivers at 44 and additionally gave the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act credibility with the protection of five times as many rivers as the original Act had designated for protection in 1968 (Root, 1989, p. 1). Previously the Act had received much opposition from existing use of the river for hydroelectric, irrigation and other user of the corridor including mining and timber harvesting. Moreover, the condemnation clauses in the original Act were of great concern to land owners along the effected corridors (Root, 1989, p. 84). All parties public, environmental, and even the managing entities had been reluctant to accept the Act as viable hindering implementation in Oregon (Root, 1989, p. 93). Landowner rights, which are deeply imbedded, remain in conflict with the greater good of the public as a whole, even after the gradual acceptance of the Act by the other stakeholders. On the Owyhee and Rogue rivers, scenic easements have allowed the protection of the river and the protection of the owner's rights (Root, 1989, p. 87). Easements are also of some concern to land owners as they restrict any future development on the property, but compensation for the easement reduces this somewhat. Zoning is one method utilized to protect the Illinois without transferring land to federal ownership (Root 1989, p. 85).

The Omnibus Bill had the support of three groups that aided in the lobbying efforts in Washington. The groups were recognized by Senator Hatfield when the bill was introduced in the Senate. Hatfield praised Bob Doppelt of the Oregon Rivers Council, Rick George of the Oregon Natural Resources Council, and Liz Frenkel of the Sierra Club for helping bring the bill and its goals to fruition (Root, 1989, p. 114). Senator Hatfield's power in Washington, including being the ranking Republican on the appropriations committee as well as a position on the Public Lands, National Parks and Forest subcommittees of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, was influential in the passing of the legislation (Root, 1989, p. 116).

Opposition to the inclusion of the Alsea River to the Omnibus

The Omnibus did not pass without difficulty, primarily citizen groups and local river groups opposed designation of some of the rivers the Omnibus intended to protect. The Alsea River caused considerable difficulty and eventually had to be removed from the legislation. The Siuslaw National Forest recommended the river for addition to the National River System in 1986. The river was included in the Omnibus and fear of the government's ability to condemn land once the designation was made caused the local groups to organize against inclusion of the Alsea (Root, 1989, p. 118). The Oregon River Council attempted to calm the opposition by holding meetings to inform the public of the actual intent of the Act and to answer questions. The organization had professional mediators and assistants to Senator Hatfield present to explain the condemnation and easement aspects of the Act. Later, Senator Hatfield had the possibility of land condemnation removed from the Omnibus, but the groups still opposed the bill, citing government management of private lands as the remaining driver of the opposition (Root, 1989, p. 118).

Residents of the Alsea area felt the current protection they afforded the river to be sufficient. The intended classification of the Alsea was as a recreational river which allowed the most present and future development. The Alsea residents felt the designation at that class would greatly increase use of the river from outsiders who might pollute the area or damage property if the residents were forced to supply river access to the public. The Alsea residents and the Alsea River Alliance eventually triumphed in removing the river from the Omnibus along with the other controversial rivers including the John Day, Wallowa, and Grande Ronde (Root 1989, p. 120). After the Alsea's removal from the Omnibus, the group allied with the Oregon Conservation Council to continue fighting the Omnibus (Root 1989, p. 123).

Opposition to the Omnibus in the Oregon Legislature

Senator Mark Hatfield and co-sponsor Robert Packwood originally introduced the Omnibus to Congress on March 4, 1988. On March 16, Oregon Democrats Peter DeFazio, Les AuCoin, and Ron Wyden (Root, 1989, p. 96-97) entered a similar omnibus into the House of Representatives. This omnibus contained the Klamath River, which was not in Hatfield's Omnibus. Republican Representative Denny Smith proposed a bill identical to Hatfield's on March 24. Robert Smith, a republican, represented the district in which the majority of the rivers being proposed for designation to the National System were contained (Root, 1989, p. 97). Senator Hatfield revised the Omnibus in September of 1988 to contain 43 rivers for instant designation, an additional 10 rivers for study, and "development of citizen management plans for 6 privately controlled rivers (Root 1989, p 97)." The timber industry also opposed the bill and requested more time to study the potential impact through the Oregon Governor Neil Goldschmidt's office. Denny Smith opposed the inclusion of Opal Creek, a tributary of the North

Santiam River, on behalf of the timber industry who would be prevented from completing a logging project in the area (Root, 1989, p. 99). Removal of Opal Creek and several other rivers was an attempt to gain support from Denny Smith and to reduce opposition in other areas. Removal of the rivers insured all rivers in the proposal were greater than 50 percent publicly owned, nullifying the government's right to fee condemnation (Root, 1989, p. 100).

One of the rivers under recommendation was the Sandy, whose tributary, Bull Run, is the main drinking water supply for Portland. Language in the proposal, at Wyden's request, allowed the generation of hydropower on Bull Run. This language was later removed but the city of Portland retained the right to use water from Bull Run for drinking water supplies (Root, 1989, p. 99).

Not having Bob Smith's endorsement, when his district contained over 80 percent of the proposed rivers, was an incredible hurdle for Hatfield and the Omnibus bill. Smith's biggest opposition to the bill was the property rights of his constituents. The Salt Caves Dam project was another concern of Smith's because of constituents in the Klamath Falls area (Root, 1989, p. 100). Smith's insistence on hearings in the House Agriculture Committee was an effort to stale the bill until Congress adjourned session. Smith attached amendments to the bill to slow the process further. Blocking of this strategy came when the amendment was rejected due to a technicality. The bill was set for voting under "suspension of rules" that would prevent further amendments and delays. To prevent any more opposition from Bob Smith, Les AuCoin substituted a senate bill that had the Umatilla Basin Project, an irrigation project Smith desperately needed to pass for his district. This action was a method of forcing Smith to allow

the passing of the river protection to secure the irrigation project. The bill passed congress on October 12 and President Ronald Reagan signed the Omnibus on October 28, 1988 designating 40 Oregon rivers as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System and requesting studies on seven more rivers (Root, 1989, p. 102).

The trilogy, Oregon court cases create change

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) requires the “outstanding and remarkable values” of designated rivers be protected and enhanced. Environmentalist found inconsistency with the intent of the Act and the Bureau of Land Management’s grazing practice on designated rivers (Bonham, 2000, p. 111). Again, Oregon became the center for change in the Wild and Scenic River Act when the United States District Court for the District of Oregon ruled in favor of the environmentalist in cases of the late 1990’s. The cases are *Oregon Natural Desert Association v. Green*, *National Wildlife Federation v. Cosgriffe*, and *Oregon Natural Desert Association v. Singleton*. Each of the cases is examined separately below (Bonham, 2000, p. 111).

Grazing and the impact it has on riparian zones has been a concern of environmentalist groups for many decades. The BLM management practices that allow cattle to graze near rivers introduce contaminants and degrades fish habitat (Bonham, 2000, p. 114). The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act gave environmentalist a tool with which to contest the BLM grazing practices.

Oregon Natural Desert Association v. Green

The Donner and Blitzen River was designated Wild and Scenic in 1988 and a 1991 scientific study determined the flora of the river system remarkable and recommended grazing in the river corridor be prohibited. The BLM, believing it was powerless to stop the grazing, did

not act on the recommendation. The Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) petitioned the district court in 1997 to find the BLM in violation of the WSRA by not protecting the “outstanding and remarkable values,” the vegetation along the river corridor, by allowing grazing (Bonham, 2000, p. 127). The court concluded the BLM plan of management was not in keeping with the intent of the WSRA due to the BLM’s improving conditions in an upward trend did not “protect and enhance the rivers outstanding and remarkable value” (Bonham, 2000, p. 129). The failure was in not evaluating the possibility of excluding cattle grazing from the corridor. The evidence indicated the cattle grazing had a negative effect on the riparian area and the court ruled that the WSRA was not being upheld and ordered the parties to draft terms for a permanent injunction. The BLM agreed to fence the protected areas of the river corridor to prevent cattle grazing (Bonham, 2000, p. 129). *Green* established the Act’s ability to change practices inconsistent with the intent of the Act and enforce the “protect and enhance” directive.

National Wildlife Federation v. Cosgriffe

Less than two years later, the BLM management practices were under scrutiny on the John Day River. The John Day designation in 1988 added nearly 200 miles of the river to the recreational rivers of the wild and scenic system. The BLM did not complete a management plan or establish boundaries by 1993 (5 years) as the designating Act required. The Act states the BLM was to set boundaries within one year and complete a plan within three years of inclusion (Bonham, 2000, p 130). The suit by the National Wildlife Federation sought to have the BLM comply with the boundary and plan directive and to also remove cattle from the river corridor. The John Day has outstanding and remarkable values (ORVs) including scenic,

fisheries, geologic, archeologic, and paleontological, recreation, and vegetative. The *Cosgriffe* case similar to *Green*, examined the BLM's requirement of "protecting and enhancing" the state of the river and corridor, which includes the remarkable vegetation in the riparian zone (Bonham, 2000, p. 130).

Although the plaintiffs did not present evidence to prove the damage to the vegetation was due the present grazing practices, the court did recognize the BLM's inability to monitor grazing without a management plan and boundaries for the river corridor. The court recognized the BLM failure in the "protect and enhance" aspect of the ACT but chose to request a WSRA plan by November 1, of 1999, which the BLM failed to complete on time. The determination the past degradation was not necessarily the current practice, gave the BLM an opportunity to improve. The BLM's obligation to "protect and enhance" the ORVs of the river system under the WSRA directive had again been stated by the court, even if it had not taken formal action against grazing (Bonham, 2000, p. 131).

Oregon Natural Desert Association v. Singleton

The Owyhee River, including its forks, has a wild river designation in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The rivers ORVs include scenic, geologic, recreation, wildlife, and cultural of the main and West Little Fork and scenic, recreation, fish, and wildlife on the North Fork (Bonham, 2000, p. 132). The BLMs plan for the Owyhee indicated grazing would be allowed as before even though the BLMs own findings indicated it was harmful to the riparian zone (Bonham, 2000, p. 132).

The wild classification of the river, the sensitive vegetation, and the redband trout that was being petitioned for listing as an endanger species came to the attention of the courts

during the proceedings. The Act designates each river is to be managed in a manner that “protects and enhances” the ORVs of the river. The *Singleton I* court gave the BLM time to perform another environmental review seeking alternatives to the business as usual cattle grazing (Bonham, 2000, p. 133). On November 18, 1999, the *Singleton II* conducted a balancing test to see if injunctive relief is in the public interest. The courts determined the damage to the ORVs on Owyhee River greater than losses of income by the ranchers and granted injunctive relief (Bonham, 2000, p. 133). The court directed the BLM to eliminate grazing permits, not shift the permits to less degraded areas. The decision firmly established the WSRA’s ability to enforce the “protect and enhance” directive when the courts ordered the BLM to remove cattle grazing from the corridor to be compliant with the Act.

Oregon again effected the federal legislation it had previously been so instrumental in forming and altering. The results of the court proceedings require federal agencies to uphold the “protect and enhance” ORVs directive of the Act. The cases also establish that all actions within the protected corridor must be evaluated against the impact on the ORVs (Bonham, 2000, p. 134). The Oregon Trilogy proves the possibility of injunctive relief in environmental issues against the agencies responsible for managing the National Wild and Scenic River System (Bonham, 2000, p. 141).

Present status of the act

The Wild and Scenic River System now protects a total of 12,708.8 miles of river system containing 208 river segments as of January 2015 (NWSRS, 2015). This is slightly more than one quarter of one percent of the total river mileage. In contrast, the 75,000 dams in the nation, have altered seventeen percent of American rivers, about 600,000 river miles (NWSRS, 2015).

The system continues to add rivers for study and rivers are instantly designated through legislation from the various states. Thirty-nine states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico now have rivers protected under the Wild and Scenic River System (NWSRS, 2015). Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act system of rivers had slow growth in the early years, it has had success. Presently, several states have rivers under study and rivers are added instantly through amendments each year. The WSRA has been successful in creating a national wild and scenic river system that allows additional rivers to be added as warranted. The total river miles currently under protection are a small percentage of the total miles but are a worthy effort in river preservation.

Oregon continues to lead the nation in the protection of rivers

Oregon currently has the most rivers, though not the most river miles, under protection of the Wild and Scenic River Act with 59 river segments under protection. The total river mileage under protection is 1,916.7 or two percent of the state's 110,994 miles of river (NWSRS, 2015). A recent addition is H.R. 2640, the Crooked River Collaborative Water Security and Jobs Act of 2014. This bill adjusted the Crooked River boundaries and established a minimum flow release for fisheries (govtrack).

Oregon presently has several bills that will affect the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act if enacted. The Southwestern Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act of 2015, H. R. 682 and S. 346, will add portions of the Chetco River to the national system if enacted. The Molalla River Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, H.R. 1052, as the name implies will add segments of the Molalla River to the system. The Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2015, S. 132, will also make changes to the system if made law (govtrack). Senator Ron Wyden introduced S. 1448 the

Frank Moore Wild Steelhead Sanctuary Designation Act, legislation that would also affect the WSRA if enacted (govtrack).

Closing thoughts on the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act came into existence because of a need to offset the effects of dam building that has caused the loss of many natural wonders. The state of Oregon created change in the Act from the conception and continues to be a leader in river preservation. Oregon legislators on multiple occasions worked to protect the interest of the citizens by championing landowner rights in policy creation relating to the WSRA. The success of the WSRA was minimal in the early years but Oregon's Omnibus is a major advancement of the Act that blazed the way for other states to preserve multiple waterways within a single amendment to the Act. The court cases that originated in Oregon and decided the precedence for "protects and enhances" as it relates to the corridor and the river were a major step in assigning accountability to the federal agencies that manage the river system.

Oregon has taken steps to affect changes to the national river system during and after the inception of the Act. Although not explicitly stated, the studies and findings that generate change are performed by individuals trained in multiple disciplines of science who work for the various entities creating change. The Wild and Scenic River Act, and the legislation to amend and improve the Act, are examples of scientist working with various entities including government, non-government, and citizen groups to form policy.

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