

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT

103F.301. Citation

Sections 103F.301 to 103F.345 may be cited as the "Minnesota wild and scenic rivers act."

103F.305. Scenic river protection policy

The legislature finds that certain of Minnesota's rivers and their adjacent lands possess outstanding scenic, recreational, natural, historical, scientific and similar values. It is in the interest of present and future generations to retain these values, and a policy of the state, and an authorized public purpose to preserve and protect these rivers.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 31.

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St. 1988, § 104.32.

Laws 1973, c. 271, § 2.

103F.31 1. Definitions

Subdivision 1. Applicability. The definitions in this section apply to sections 103F.311 to 103F.345.

Subd. 2. Commissioner. "Commissioner" means the commissioner of natural resources.

Subd. 3. Free-flowing. "Free-flowing" means existing in natural condition without significant artificial modification such as impoundment, diversion, or straightening. The existence, however, of low dams, diversion works or other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion does not automatically bar its inclusion as a wild, scenic, or recreational river.

Subd. 4. Recreational rivers. "Recreational rivers" are those rivers that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past and may have adjacent lands that are considerably developed, but that are still capable of being managed so as to further the purposes of sections 103F.301 to 103F.345.

Subd. 5. River. "River" means a flowing body of water such as a stream or a segment or tributary of a stream and may include lakes through which the river or stream flows.

Subd. 6. Scenic easement. "Scenic easement" means an interest in land, less than the fee title, that limits the use of the land to protect the scenic, recreational, or natural characteristics of a

wild, scenic, or recreational river area. Unless otherwise expressly and specifically provided by the parties, the easement must be:

- (1) perpetually held for the benefit of the people of the state;
- (2) specifically enforceable by its holder or any beneficiary;
- (3) binding upon the holder of the servient estate, and the holder's heirs, successors, and assigns; and
- (4) restricted so as not to give the holder or any beneficiary the right to enter on the land except for enforcement of the easement.

Subd. 7. Scenic rivers. "Scenic rivers" are those rivers that exist in a freeflowing state and with adjacent lands that are largely undeveloped.

Subd. 8. System. "System" means the state wild and scenic rivers system.

Subd. 9. Wild rivers. "Wild rivers" are those rivers that exist in a freeflowing state, with excellent water quality, and with adjacent lands that are essentially primitive.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 32.

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St.1988, §§ 104-33, 104.37, subd. 1.

Laws 1986, C. 444.

Laws 1980, c. 458, § 15.

Laws 1975, c. 353, § 22.

Laws 1973, c. 271, §§ 3, 7.

103F.315. Wild and scenic rivers system

Subdivision 1. Eligibility. An entire river or a segment of a river and adjacent lands in this state that possess outstanding scenic, recreational, natural, historical, scientific, or similar values are eligible for inclusion within the Minnesota wild and scenic rivers system.

Subd. 2. Classification. Rivers or segments of rivers included within the system shall be classified as wild, scenic, or recreational.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 33.

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St.1988, § 104.33.

Laws 1973, c. 271, § 3

103F.321. Administration and rules

Subdivision 1. Administration. The commissioner shall administer the wild and scenic rivers system. The commissioner shall conduct studies, develop criteria for classification and designation of rivers, designate rivers for inclusion within the system, manage the components of the system, and adopt rules to manage and administer the system.

Subd. 2. Shoreland rules. (a) The commissioner shall adopt statewide minimum standards and criteria for the preservation and protection of shorelands within the boundaries of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers.

(b) The standards and criteria may include:

- (1) the matters covered in the commissioner's standards and criteria for shoreland areas, as provided in sections 103F.201 to 103F.221, except that the distance limitations contained in sections 103F.201 to 103F.221 do not apply to standards and criteria for wild, scenic, and recreational rivers;
- (2) furtherance of the purposes of sections 103F.301 to 103F.345 and of the classifications of rivers; and
- (3) application to the local governments as specified in sections 103F.201 to 103F.221.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 34.

103F.325. Designation procedure

Subdivision 1. Management plan. (a) For each river proposed to be included in the wild and scenic rivers system, the commissioner shall prepare a management plan, without unreasonable restrictions upon compatible, economic uses of particular tracts of land, to preserve and enhance values that cause the river to be proposed for inclusion in the system.

(b) The plan shall:

- (1) give primary emphasis to the area's scenic, recreational, natural, historical, scientific and similar values;
- (2) state the proposed classification of the river and segments of the river
- (3) designate the boundaries of the area along the river to be included with the system, which may not include more than 320 acres per mile on both sides of the river; and
- (4) include proposed rules governing the use of public lands and water within the area, which may differ from statewide rules to the extent necessary to take account of the particular attributes of the area.

(c) The plan may include proposed standards and criteria adopted under section 103F.321 for local land use controls that differ from statewide standards and criteria to the extent necessary to take account of the particular attributes of the area.

Subd. 2. Review and hearing. (a) The commissioner shall make the proposed management plan available to affected local governmental bodies, shoreland owners, conservation and outdoor recreation groups, the commissioner of trade and economic development, the commissioner of public service, the governor, and the general public. The commissioners of trade and economic

development and of public service and the governor shall review the proposed management plan in accordance with the criteria in section 86A.09, subdivision 3, and submit any written comments to the commissioner within 60 days after receipt of the proposed management plan.

(b) By 60 days after making the information available, the commissioner shall conduct a public hearing on the proposed management plan in the county seat of each county that contains a portion of the designated system area, in the manner provided in chapter 14.

Subd. 3. Post hearing review. Upon receipt of the administrative law judge's report, the commissioner shall immediately forward the proposed management plan and the administrative law judge's report to the commissioners of trade and economic development and of public service for review under section 86A.09, subdivision 3, except that the review by the commissioners must be completed or be deemed completed within 30 days after receiving the administrative law judge's report, and the review by the governor must be completed or be deemed completed within 15 days after receipt.

Subd. 4. Designation of river as part of system. Within 60 days after receipt of the administrative law judge's report, the commissioner shall decide whether to designate by order the river or a segment of the river as a wild, scenic, or recreational river and, if so designated, shall adopt a management plan to govern the area. The commissioner shall notify and inform public agencies and private landowners of the plan and its purposes to encourage their cooperation in the management and use of their land in a manner consistent with the plan and its purposes.

Subd. 5. Reservation of legislative authority. The legislature may at any time designate additional rivers to be included within the system, exclude rivers previously included in the system, or change the classification of rivers classified by the commissioner.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 35. Amended by Laws 1987, c. 186, § 15,

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St. 1988, § 104.35.
Laws 1987, c. 312, art. 1, §§ 3, 4.
Laws 1985, c. 248, § 70.
Laws 1984, c. 640, § 32.
Laws 1983, c. 289, § 115, subd. 1.
Laws 1982, c. 424, § 130,
Laws 1981, c. 356, §§ 14, 115.
Laws 1978, c. 535, §§ 1, 2.
Laws 1975, c. 353, § 21.
Laws 1973, c. 271, § 5.

Laws 1987, c. 186, § 15, instructed the revisor of statutes to substitute "commissioner" for "director" when used to refer to the head of certain named agencies.

Administrative Code References

Management plans, wild, scenic and recreational rivers, see Minn. Rules 6105.0600 et seq.

103F.33 1. Acquisition and development of system

Subdivision 1. Acquisition authority. To implement the system, the commissioner may acquire the title, scenic easements, or other interests in land, by purchase, grant, gift, devise, exchange, lease, or other lawful means.

Subd. 2. Development of public areas. The commissioner may designate and develop appropriate areas of public land along wild, scenic, and recreational rivers as water waysides for facilities compatible with the class of river, including, as appropriate, primitive campsites, picnic sites, portages, water access sites, sanitation facilities, and interpretive display.

Subd. 3. Canoe and boating routes. (a) The commissioner may mark canoe and boating routes along a wild, scenic, or recreational river, consistent with the classification and characteristics of the river, including points of interest, portages, campsites, dams, rapids, waterfalls, whirlpools, and other hazards to navigation.

(b) Canoe routes, boating routes, campsites, and portages marked under this subdivision are not subject to the provisions of section 160.06.

Subd. 4. Additional designation as trout stream. The commissioner may designate all or a portion of a state wild, scenic, or recreational river that possesses the necessary qualifications as a state trout stream, and make habitat improvement as may be necessary, desirable, and consistent with the classification of the river.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 36.

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St. 1988, § 104.37.

Laws 1986, c. 444.

Laws 1980, c. 458, § 15.

Laws 1975, c. 353, § 22.

Laws 1973, c. 27 1, § 7.

Library References

States 85.

WESTLAW Topic No. 360.

C.J.S. States § 145.

103F.335. Local government compliance

Subdivision 1. Compliance of ordinances with system. (a) Within six months after establishment of a wild, scenic, or recreational river system, each local governmental unit with jurisdiction over a portion of the system shall adopt or amend its ordinances and land use district

maps to the extent necessary to comply with the standards and criteria of the commissioner and the management plan.

(b) If a local government fails to adopt adequate ordinances, maps, or amendments within six months, the commissioner shall adopt the ordinances, maps, or amendments in the manner and with the effect specified in section 103F.215.

(c) The commissioner shall assist local governments in the preparation, implementation, and enforcement of the ordinances.

Subd. 2. Local governmental units must implement system. All state, local and special governmental units, councils, commissions, boards, districts, agencies, departments, and other authorities shall exercise their powers to implement the purposes of sections 103F.301 to 103F.345 and management plans adopted by the commissioner.

Subd. 3. Land transfers consistent with system plan. Land owned by the state and political subdivisions shall be administered in accordance with the management plan, and land owned by governmental bodies within the designated boundaries of a wild, scenic, or recreational river area may not be transferred to any other person or entity if the transfer would be inconsistent with the management plan.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 37.

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St.1988, §§ 104.36, 104.38.

Laws 1973, c. 271, §§ 6, 8.

Library References

Zoning and Planning 1 4.

WESTLAW Topic No. 414.

C.J.S. Zoning and Land Planning § 11.

103F.341. Federal-state relations

Sections 103F.301 to 103F.345 do not preclude a river in the state system from becoming a part of the federal wild and scenic rivers system as established in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Public Law Number 90-542; United States Code, title 16, section 1271 et seq., as amended. The commissioner is authorized to seek, alone or in conjunction with other governmental authorities, financial and technical assistance from the federal government and to enter into written cooperative agreements for the joint administration of a river in the federal wild and scenic rivers system.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 38.

103F.345. Conflict with other laws

A river in the wild and scenic rivers system is subject to the provisions of sections 103F.301 to 103F.345, except that in case of conflict with some other law of this state the more protective provision shall apply.

Laws 1990, c. 391. art. 6, § 39.

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St. 1988, § 104.40.

Laws 1973, c. 271, § 10

LOWER ST. CROIX RIVER

103F.351. Lower St. Croix Wild and Scenic River Act

Subdivision 1. Findings. The lower St. Croix River, between the dam near Taylors Falls and its confluence with the Mississippi River, constitutes a relatively undeveloped scenic and recreational asset lying close to the largest densely populated area of the state. The preservation of this unique scenic and recreational asset is in the public interest and will benefit the health and welfare of the citizens of the state. The state recognizes and concurs in the inclusion of the lower St. Croix River into the federal wild and scenic rivers system by the Lower St. Croix River Act of the 92nd Congress, Public Law Number 92-560.¹ The authorizations of the state are necessary to the preservation and administration of the lower St. Croix River as a wild and scenic river, particularly in relation to those portions of the river that are to be jointly preserved and administered as a wild and scenic river by this state and Wisconsin.

Subd. 2. Comprehensive master plan. (a) The commissioner of natural resources shall join with the secretary of the United States Department of the Interior and the appropriate agency of the state of Wisconsin in the preparation of the comprehensive master plan relating to boundaries, classification, and development required by section 3 of the Lower St. Croix River Act of 1972,² and by section 3(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Public Law Number 90-542.³

(b) The commissioner shall make the proposed comprehensive master plan available to affected local governmental bodies, shoreland owners, conservation and outdoor recreation groups, and the general public.

(c) Not less than 30 days after making the information available, the commissioner shall conduct a public hearing on the proposed comprehensive master plan in the county seat of each county which contains a portion of the area covered by the comprehensive master plan, in the manner provided in chapter 14.

Subd. 3. Acquisition of land and easements. The commissioner of natural resources may acquire land, scenic easements, or other interests in land by gift, purchase, or other lawful means, and may acquire scenic easement interests in land by eminent domain. The acquisitions must be proposed for acquisition by the state by the comprehensive master plan.

Subd. 4. Rules. (a) The commissioner of natural resources shall adopt rules that establish guidelines and specify standards for local zoning ordinances applicable to the area within the boundaries covered by the comprehensive master plan.

(b) The guidelines and standards must be consistent with this section, the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act,² and the federal Lower St. Croix River Act of 1972. The standards specified in the guidelines must include:

- (1) the prohibition of new residential, commercial, or industrial uses other than those that are consistent with the above mentioned acts; and
- (2) the protection of riverway lands by means of acreage, frontage, and setback requirements on development.

(c) Cities, counties, and towns lying within the areas affected by the guidelines shall adopt zoning ordinances complying with the guidelines and standards within the time schedule prescribed by the commissioner.

Subd. 5. Administration. The commissioner of natural resources in cooperation with appropriate federal authorities and authorities of the state of Wisconsin shall administer state lands and waters in conformance with this section, the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the federal Lower St. Croix River Act of 1972.

Laws 1990, c. 391, art. 6, § 40.

¹ 16 U.S.C.A. § 1274.

² 16 U.S.C.A. § 1274(a)(9)

³ 16 U.S. C.A. § 1271 et seq.

Historical and Statutory Notes

Derivation:

St. 1988, § 104.25.

Laws 1986, c. 444.

Laws 1985, c. 248, § 70.

Laws 1982, c. 424, § 130.

Laws 1973, c. 246, § 1.

Laws 1973. c. 123. art. 5, § 7.

Administrative Code References

Lower Saint Croix water surface use and riverway ordinances, see Minn. Rules 6105.0300 et seq.

Library References

Navigable Waters 29, 35.

Woods and Forests 8.

WESTLAW Topic Nos. 270, 41 1.

C.J.S. Navigable Waters §§ 11, 55 et seq., 106 to 114.

C.J. S. Woods and Forests §§ 11, 12.

RIVER SEGMENT CLASSIFICATION TABLE

Designated River Segment

Classification

Kettle River

From the Carlton-Pine county line downstream to the Kettle scenic River dam site at Sandstone

From the dam downstream to its confluence with the Saint Croix River

wild

Mississippi River

From county state aid highway No. 7 bridge at Saint Cloud to the county line at the Clearwater River between Steams and Wright counties, and state highway No. 24 in Sherburne County

scenic

From the county line at the Clearwater River between Steams and Wright counties, and state highway No. 24 in Sherburne County, to the northwestern boundaries of the city of Anoka and the city of Champlin

recreational

North Fork of the Crow River

That portion in Meeker County from spillway at the southern end of Lake Koronis to the Meeker-Wright County line

recreational

Minnesota River

From the Lac qui Parle dam to the U.S. Highway 212 bridge in the corporate limits of Montevideo

scenic

From U.S. Highway 212 bridge in the corporate limits of Montevideo to the Great Lakes Pipeline one-quarter mile downstream of the Minnesota Falls dam

recreational

From the Great Lakes Pipeline one-quarter mile downstream

scenic

of the Minnesota Falls dam to the Redwood County state aid highway 11 bridge

Rum River

From the Ogechie Lake spillway (excluding the shoreland of Shakopee Lake), to the river's northernmost confluence with Lake Onamia

wild

From the Mille Lacs CSAH 20 bridge to the Mille Lacs CSAH 9 bridge, and from the Mille Lacs CSAH 13 bridge to the T31 N--T 32 N line on the southern border of the Anoka County fairgrounds

scenic

From the state highway 27 bridge in Onamia to the Mille Lacs CSAH 20 bridge, from the Mille Lacs CSAH 9 bridge to the Mille Lacs CSAH 13 bridge, and from the T 31 N -- T 32 N line on the southern border of the Anoka county fairgrounds in the city of Anoka to a line crossing the river between the center lines of Madison Street and Rice Street

recreational

Cannon River

From the northern city limits of Faribault (the common border of the north and south halves of Sections 19 and 20, T 110N-R20W) to the state highway 56 bridge, and from the Lake Byllesby Dam (the common border of Sections 13 and 14, T112N-R18W) to the common border of Sections 7 and 8, T112N-R1 7W, in Cannon Falls. The Lake Byllesby Reservoir is excluded from this segment.

recreational

From the common border of Sections 7 and 8, T112N-R17W, in Cannon Falls to the river's confluence with the Mississippi River.

scenic

St. Croix River (A Federally-designated National Scenic Riverway)
See National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act for federal definitions of wild, scenic and recreational classifications

Upper St. Croix (St. Croix National Scenic Riverway)

From the source near Gordon, Wisconsin to the headwaters of the reservoir impounded by the dam at Taylor's Falls,

scenic

Minnesota (89.5 mi.). Includes the Namekagon River from its source at Lake Namekagon to the railroad bridge near Trego, Wisconsin (63.5 mi.).

That portion of the Namekagon River between the railroad bridge near Trego, Wisconsin and the dam at Trego (6.5 mi.) recreational

The Namekagon River from the dam at Trego to its confluence with the St. Croix River (28.0 mi.) scenic

The St. Croix River from the headwaters of the reservoir impounded by the dam at Taylor's Falls to the dam itself (12.5 mi.) recreational

Lower St. Croix (Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway)

The St. Croix River from the dam at Taylor's Falls to the Chisago-Washington county line (10.3 mi.) scenic

From the Chisago-Washington county line to confluence with the Mississippi River at Prescott, WI. (41.7 mi.) recreational

CLASSIFICATION: WILD, SCENIC & RECREATIONAL RIVERS

General river characteristics

To be eligible for inclusion in the Minnesota Wild and Scenic rivers system, a river or segment of a river, and its adjacent lands must possess outstanding scenic, recreational, natural, historical, scientific, or similar values. The river or its segments shall be classified into one or more of the three classes of rivers: wild, scenic, and recreational. Each river shall be managed so as to preserve and protect the values which qualify it for designation and classification.

Classification: Wild

Wild rivers are those that exist in a free-flowing state with excellent water quality and with adjacent lands that are essentially primitive. Wild rivers should not be paralleled by conspicuous and well-traveled roads or railroads.

Minnesota rivers with segments classified as wild: Kettle, Rum

Classification: Scenic

Scenic rivers are those rivers that exist in a free-flowing state and with adjacent lands that are largely undeveloped (i.e., adjacent lands still present an overall natural character, but in places may have been developed for agricultural, residential, or other land uses.)

Minnesota rivers with segments classified as scenic: Kettle, Mississippi, Minnesota, Rum, Cannon, St. Croix.

Classification: Recreational

Recreational rivers are those rivers that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past and that may have adjacent lands which are considerably developed, but that are still capable of being managed so as to further the purposes of this act. This means that bordering lands may have already been developed for a full range of agricultural or other land uses, and may also be readily accessible by pre-existing roads or railroads.

Minnesota rivers with segments classified as recreational: Mississippi, North Fork of the Crow, Minnesota, Rum, Cannon, St. Croix.

THE WILD & SCENIC MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Designation - The Mississippi River from St. Cloud to Anoka was added to Minnesota's Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1976.

Classification - The river is designated as "scenic" from St. Cloud to Clearwater, and "recreational" from Clearwater to the Anoka/Champlin line (See table.) *Current status* - The original management plan for this stretch of the Mississippi River was adopted in 1976. The management plan is currently being rewritten by the citizens of Minnesota, local governments, and state agencies using a community-based planning

We began the community-based process to revise the 1976 management plan at the beginning of 1998 with a series of informal RiverTalk Open Houses. RiverForum meetings were started in April 1998 to discuss issues and concerns identified by citizens at the open houses and to develop solutions to river management problems. RiverForum meetings will continue until a new management plan is developed for the Mississippi River (anticipated completion is December 1999). It's not too late to get involved and voice your opinion!

Oct.1998/September 1999 - RiverForum Meetings: Current discussion of issues Citizens, local officials, and affected agencies are currently discussing major issues and developing an *Alternative Strategies Workbook* for Mississippi River management. Anticipated completion is October 1999.

THE WILD & SCENIC KETTLE RIVER

Designation - The Kettle River was added to Minnesota's Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1975. The designated stretch extends through Pine County to its confluence with the St. Croix River.

Classification - The Kettle River has segments in both "wild" and scenic" classifications (See Table).

Current Status- The original management plan for this stretch of the Kettle River was adopted in 1975. A community-based planning process to update this plan is expected to begin within the next few years.

There is currently no Wild & Scenic Rivers planning process underway for the Kettle River. Community-based revision of the 1975 management plan is expected within the next several years. Watch this page for future developments.

THE WILD & SCENIC RUM RIVER

Designation - The Rum River was added to Minnesota's Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1978. The designated stretch extends along Mille Lacs, Sherburne, Isanti and Anoka counties.

Classification - The Rum River has segments in all three "wild", "scenic", and recreational" classifications (See Table).

Current Status - The original management plan for this stretch of the Rum River was adopted in 1978. A community-based planning process to update this plan is expected to begin within the next few years.

There is currently no Wild & Scenic Rivers planning process underway for the Rum River. Community-based revision of the 1978 management plan is expected to begin within the next several years.

THE WILD & SCENIC NORTH FORK OF THE CROW RIVER

Designation- The North Fork of the Crow River was added to Minnesota's Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1976. The designated stretch lies within Meeker County.

Classification- The North Fork of the Crow River in Meeker County is classified as "recreational" (See Table).

Current Status- The original management plan for this stretch of the Crow River was adopted in 1976. A community-based planning process to update this plan is expected to begin within the next few years.

There is currently no Wild & Scenic Rivers planning process underway for the North Fork of the Crow River. Community-based revision of the 1976 current management plan is expected within the next several years.

THE WILD & SCENIC MINNESOTA RIVER

Designation - The Minnesota River was added to Minnesota's Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1977. The designated stretch extends from Lac Qui Parle Dam to Franklin.

Classification - The Minnesota River has two segments classified as "scenic" and one classified as "recreational". (See Table).

Current status - The original management plan for this stretch of the Minnesota River was adopted in 1977. A community-based planning process to update this plan is expected to begin within the next few years.

There is currently no Wild & Scenic Rivers planning process underway for the Minnesota River. Community-based revision of the 1977 management plan is expected within the next several years.

THE WILD & SCENIC CANNON RIVER

Designation - The Cannon River was added to Minnesota's Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1986. The designated stretch extends from Faribault to its confluence with the Mississippi River.

Classification - The Cannon River has segments in both "scenic" and recreational" classifications (See Table).

Current status - The original management plan for this stretch of the Cannon River was adopted in 1980. A community-based planning process to update this plan is expected within the next few years.

There is currently no Wild & Scenic Rivers planning process underway for the Cannon River. Community-based revision of the 1980 management plan is expected within the next several years.

ST. CROIX NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAY

Designation - The St. Croix National Scenic Riverway includes the upper 200 miles of river extending from its headwater source near Gordon, WI and along the Minnesota/ Wisconsin border to Taylor's Falls, MN/St. Croix Falls, WI. It includes the Namekagon River in Wisconsin, the St. Croix's largest tributary. The riverway is one of eight original rivers designated by Congress when the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Program was established in 1968.

Classification - The 200-mile riverway includes 181 miles of "scenic" classification and 19 miles of "recreational" classification under the federal program (See Table).

Management - The Upper St. Croix River is managed by the National Park Service (NPS). See also Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

Management direction for the Upper St. Croix River originally came from a 1976 "master plan", which in recent years had become outdated and in need of replacement. The National Park Service began development of a new management plan in 1994, and a draft plan was distributed for public review in late 1997. Following public comment, that plan was revised and a final plan was completed. It became available August 31, 1998. To obtain a copy, call the National Park Service at (715) 483-3284.

LOWER ST. CROIX NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAY

Designation - The Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway includes the lower 52 miles of the St. Croix River between Taylors Falls, MN/St. Croix Falls, WI and the confluence with the Mississippi River at Point Douglas, MN/Prescott, WI. The lower St. Croix was the first river added to the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Program by Congress in 1972.

Classification -The upper 10-mile stretch of the Lower St. Croix is classified as scenic, while the lower 42 miles are classified as "recreational" (See Table).

Management- The riverway is managed jointly by the National Park Service, the Minnesota DNR and the Wisconsin DNR. National Park Service land acquisition is limited to the upper 27 miles of the riverway (from Taylor's Falls to Stillwater).

Current status - A new management plan is currently being drafted for the lower St. Croix River following two years of community-based planning and decision making by local citizens and the management agencies. (See also St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.)

A community-based planning process to update the 1976 management plan for the Lower St. Croix River began in February 1996. The Lower St. Croix Management Commission is responsible for development of the new plan. The commission is assisted by a citizens group (the Lower St. Croix Planning Task Force), which has met 50+ times to provide local input into the plan. A draft plan is currently being developed and should be available for formal public review in Spring 1999. The citizen task force, meanwhile, is at work preparing a companion document for the plan that focuses on watershed issues that lie outside the narrow boundary of the riverway.

A newly formed Land Use Advisory Group is being organized (February 1999) to specifically address land use issues within the corridor.

What's been happening so far....

Lower St. Croix Planning Task Force Activities: Summary

- Formation of the citizen-driven task force (February 1996)
- Preparation of vision statement; researching of issues (February 1996-April 1997)
- Development of alternatives for river management (April 1997-April 1998)
- Decision-making workshops (April-August 1998)
- Continuing works-in-progress (September 1998 - present)

Lower St. Croix Land Use Advisory Group

- Introductory memorandum (February 12, 1999)
- News release (February 1999)
- Meeting schedule 1st organizational meeting March 9, 1999. Everyone is welcome!

What's next...

- Upcoming meetings to discuss development of land use regulations for the riverway and formulation of a Watershed Stewardship Statement. (September 1998 - Spring 1999)
See Upcoming Events for next scheduled meeting.
- Draft management plan for the Lower St. Croix Riverway (anticipated late May 1999)
- 60-day public review period for management plan expected late May-July 1999)