

Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Trails

Memorandums From the President

August 2, 1979

Memorandum for the Heads of Departments and Agencies

In my Environmental Message of August 2, 1979, I recognized the important natural, historic, and recreational values of our Nation's river corridors. It is important for the federal agencies to set an example of sound management for state, local, and private landowners by taking an aggressive role in protecting Wild and Scenic Rivers which flow through public lands.

In addition, I recognized that the 1968 National Trails System Act is designed to promote the development of recreational, scenic, and historic trails for persons of diverse interests and abilities - including the young, the handicapped, and the aged - and that the National Trails System is in its fledgling stage. The Act provides for designating trails on state, local and private lands, but only 130 trails have been established since enactment of the Act. In my Environmental Message I stressed the importance of expanding the National Trails System.

Therefore, I am directing that each of you take the following actions:

- Each federal agency shall encourage states, localities and private land holders to designate trails on their lands to participate with federal agencies and trail users in designing and creating overall National Trails System which will provide more fully for the trail needs of America.
- Each federal agency shall, as part of its normal planning and environmental review processes, take care to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on rivers identified in the Nationwide Inventory, prepared by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service in the Department of the Interior. Agencies shall, as a part of their normal environmental review process, consult with the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service prior to taking actions which could effectively foreclose wild, scenic, or recreational river status on rivers in the Inventory.
- Each Federal agency with responsibility for administering public lands shall, as part of its ongoing land use planning and management activities and environmental review processes, make an assessment of whether the rivers identified in the Nationwide Inventory and which are on their lands are suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. If an agency determines that a river would be suitable for inclusion in the System, the agency shall, to the extent of the agency's authority, promptly take such steps as are needed to protect and manage the river and the surrounding area in a fashion comparable to rivers already included in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. In addition, the agency is encouraged, pursuant to the revised Guidelines, to work with the Agriculture and Interior Departments to prepare legislation to designate the river as part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System if appropriate.

Please give these assignments your immediate attention.

Jimmy Carter