



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825-1898

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

MP-727
PRJ-3.00

MAR 23 1993

Mr. Charlie Casey
Friends of the River
909 12th Street, Suite 207
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Determination of Wild and Scenic Eligibility of Segments of the
American River (General Investigation Program)

Dear Mr. Casey:

As you requested while attending one or more of the American River Wild and Scenic "eligibility" meetings, we are enclosing a copy of the Bureau of Reclamation's final report of the "American River Water Resources Investigation Technical Team's Inventory and Recommendation for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility and Preliminary Classification." On January 7, 1993, Regional Director, Roger Patterson, concurred in the report's recommendation and determined that three segments on the North and Middle Forks of the American River are eligible for Wild and Scenic designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968.

The next step will be a suitability study to determine if the eligible river segments are suitable for designation to the National Wild and Scenic River System. We anticipate this study will be conducted during the Phase II and III of the American River Water Resources Investigation scheduled for 1994-1995.

If you have any questions concerning this determination, please contact Mike Schaefer at (916) 885-7917.

Sincerely,

Enclosure

AMERICAN RIVER WATER RESOURCES INVESTIGATION
TECHNICAL TEAM'S INVENTORY AND RECOMMENDATION
FOR
WILD AND SCENIC RIVER ELIGIBILITY
AND
PRELIMINARY CLASSIFICATION

INTRODUCTION

When the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) conducts any new land or water resource planning, they are required to evaluate potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS) under Section 5(d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA). The American River Water Resource Investigation (ARWRI) requires NWSRS eligibility evaluation.

The evaluation process has four steps, and this report covers only the first two:

1. Divide the rivers in the study areas into logical segments and determine what segments are eligible for NWSRS designation.
2. Determine the potential classification of eligible river segments as "wild", "scenic", "recreational", or any combination thereof.
3. Conduct a suitability study/legislative EIS to determine if the eligible river segments are suitable for designation to the NWSRS.
4. Prepare a land/river management plan for suitable river segments and submit the appropriate information of all appropriate alternative uses to Congress for their legislative decision of river use or designation to the NWSRS.

Any river segment found to be eligible for inclusion into the NWSRS, will result in the adjacent Reclamation administered lands within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the river being managed to protect the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV) of the segment until the suitability issue is resolved.

In the following section we discuss 1) the Interagency Team involved in this study and 2) the process used to consider the eligibility of the selected river segments. It explains how Reclamation divided the study reaches of the American River into logical segments. The second section discusses eligibility criteria. The third and fourth sections are brief statements on how Reclamation addresses classification and suitability, respectively. Then following the discussion sections are the specific discussion of the river segments and their eligibility conclusion recommendations.

STUDY TEAM AND PROCESS

The WSRA does not provide specific process details for determining eligibility of rivers for potential inclusion into the NWSRS. Reclamation Instructions offer few guidelines to follow, so the ARWRI Project Manager investigated the processes used by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The following was decided as the process to be used:

1. An interagency team of the land and river managing and study agencies on the American River above Folsom Lake were assembled and asked to participate in the process. Representatives of this group were asked to name professionals who would be most knowledgeable of the eight resource categories that are considered under the WSRA for eligibility.

The managing and study agencies, and their representatives included:

California Department of Parks and Recreation	- Bruce Kranz, Superintendent, American River Division
U.S. Forest Service	- Pete Brost, Recreation Officer, Tahoe National Forest
	- Gary Bilyeu, Land Management Planner, El Dorado National Forest
Bureau of Land Management	- Dave Harris, Employee Relations Specialist
Bureau of Reclamation	- Mike Schaefer, Chief, American River Basin Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	- Mike Welch, Acting Chief, Environmental Planning Section

The resource categories, and the resource experts responsible to review them, were:

Recreation	- Mike Lynch, Ranger, DPR
Scenic	- Phil Horning, Landscape Architect, USFS
Fisheries	- Jody Brown, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, USFWS
Wildlife	- Jody Brown, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, USFWS
Geology	- Wendel Carlson, Geologist, BOR
Plants and Ecology	- Kathy Van Zuuk, Botanist, USFS
Archeological	- Jim West, Archeologist, BOR (Assisted by Mike Lynch, DPR)
Historical	- Jim West, Archeologist, BOR (Assisted by Mike Lynch, DPR)

The study team met on December 9, 1991, February 28, and May 4, 1992.

A classification subcommittee then met on May 26, 1992, to determine the potential classification of each river segment. Classification is based on a matrix of qualifications published in the Federal Register and attached to this report as Enclosure 1. This subcommittee's members included:

Bureau of Land Management	- Jim Eicher, Recreation Planner
U.S. Forest Service	- Art Allan, Resource Officer
Bureau of Reclamation	- Mike Schaefer, Project Manager, ARWRI
California Department of Parks and Recreation	- Mike Lynch, Ranger

2. The experts were asked to review their respective resource category and report back to the study team their findings of existing data (no new studies would be initiated) and their opinion regarding "outstandingly remarkable values" (ORV).
3. After the professionals submitted their report on ORV's then the managing and study representatives were to consider, and where appropriate, recommend that segment of river as eligible. The program manager would submit his report with the study team's recommendation(s) to Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Regional Director who will make the final determination if the river or segments of the river are eligible. A copy of each of the professionals' report is enclosed in Enclosure 3.

RIVER SEGMENTS IDENTIFIED

The WSRA states that to be eligible for inclusion into NWSRS, a river or segment of the river must be free flowing, and within its immediate environment, must possess one or more of the outstandingly remarkable values in the categories of scenic, recreational, geologic, fish, wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values. An ORV is not specifically defined in the WSRA but is interpreted as being the highest value resource based on a National or regional scale, and not just a local scale. "Free flowing", as defined in section 16(b) of the WSRA, means "existing or flowing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. The existence, however, of low dams, diversion works, and other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion in the national wild and scenic rivers system shall not automatically bar its consideration for such inclusion." A river may flow between large impoundments and may qualify if conditions within the segment meet the eligibility criteria. There are many river segments already in the NWSRS which are downstream from or between major dams which severely regulate and diminish the flow of water in the affected segments.

There is no maximum or minimum river segment length. Some designations have exceeded 40 miles, while others have been as short as 4 miles. However, for this study, any segment less than one mile in length was not considered.

The three river segments considered in this study include the following, and are shown on Enclosure 2.

MF - The Middle Fork, from Oxbow Dam to the confluence with the North Fork American River. Length is approximately 23 miles.

NF₀ - The North Fork, from Colfax-Iowa Hill Bridge to the upper end of Lake Clementine. Length is approximately 16 miles.

NF₁ - The North Fork, from North Fork Debris Dam to the intake of the Auburn Dam diversion tunnel. Length is approximately 5 miles.

OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE VALUES (ORV)

In order for the river segment to be considered eligible in this study, the ORV must occur on federally administered land, and be within ¼ mile of the river.

The following ORVs have been recommended by the majority of the Managing and Study Team members. Some objections by one or more study team members were raised concerning several of these recommendations. These objections include:

1. The ORV identified is not "river-related" (i.e., Western States Trail).
2. The source of information is only based on a personal communication (i.e., Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog, Shirttail Creek Stonefly, Scorpion Fly, Spiny Rhyacophilan Caddisfly, Townsend Big-Eared Bat, Pallid Bat, Native Wild Rainbow Trout, Clarkia, Great Copper Butterfly, Lindsey's Skipper Butterfly, and Wright's Butterfly.)
3. The area is heavily developed with roads, bridges, homes, transmission lines (i.e., "scenic" on NF₁).

Even with these objections, the majority of the study team members made the request to leave the following complete list of ORVs to be considered under the "Suitability" portion of the Study.

OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE VALUES (ORV)

North Fork - Upper (NE.) (See Enclosure 2)

Recreation: White water rafting, because 80% of users are from out of the local area, and there are unique Class IV & V runs.

Scenic: Land form and water form are ORVs, due to deep and steep canyon walls, some dramatic rock formations, rugged terrain, and steep V-shape side canyons. There is excellent and high water quality, with little evidence of human activity below Iowa Hill-Colfax Bridge.

Geologic: No ORVs

Wildlife: The threatened Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle may be in the area as Elderberry bushes are found in significant numbers along the river.

The following are candidates for Federal or State endangered threatened listings:

Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog (Federal Candidate -2)
 Shirttail Creek Stonefly (Federal Candidate -2)
 Scorpion Fly (Federal Candidate -2)
 Townsend Big-Eared Bat (Federal Candidate -2)
 Pallid Bat (California species of special concern)
 Wildlife habitat is of exceptionally high quality and diversity

Fish: No ORVs

Ecological and Other Values: The following are unique biological communities:

Clarkia with richest diversity known
 Butterflies: - Great Copper
 - Lindsey's Skipper
 Ecosystem diversity

Eligibility

Conclusion: Eligible

Classification: Scenic 1A, 2B, 3B

OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE VALUES (ORV)

North Fork - Lower (NF_L) (See Enclosure 2)

Recreation: Western States Trail (Tevis Cup 100-mile total length, & Western States Endurance Run: 100-mile total length; only about 2½ miles in the NF_L)

Scenic: Land form and water form are ORVs, although there are more signs of civilization; roads, bridges, dam, homes

Geologic: No ORVs

Wildlife: The threatened Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle may be in the area as Elderberry bushes are found in significant numbers along the river.

The following are candidates for Federal and State endangered or threatened listings:

Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog (Federal Candidate -2)
Townsend Big-Eared Bat (Federal Candidate -2)
Pallid Bat (California species of special concern)
Wildlife habitat is of exceptionally high quality and diversity

Fish: No ORVs

Ecological and
Other Values:

The following are unique biological communities:

Clarkia with richest diversity known
Butterflies: - Great Copper
- Lindsey's Skipper
Ecosystem diversity

Cultural: No Hands Bridge

Eligibility

Conclusion: Eligible

Classification: Recreational 1A, 2C, 3C

OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE VALUES (ORV)

Middle Fork (MF) (See Enclosure 2)

Recreation: Western States Trail Ride (Tevis Cup 100 mile total length & Western States Endurance Run 100 mile total length; only about 9 miles in the MF)
 White water rafting - 80% of users from out of local area
 - high demand use
 - unique Class IV & V runs.

Scenic: Land form and water form are ORVs, due to deep and steep canyon walls. Rugged terrain, but not as many dramatic cliff faces as NF_U. Rucky-Chucky and Tunnel Shoot are dramatic.

Geologic: No ORVs

Wildlife: The threatened Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle may be in the area as Elderberry bushes are found in significant numbers along the river.

The following are candidates for Federal and State endangered or threatened listings:

Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog (Federal Candidate -2)
 Spiny Rhyacophilan Caddisfly (Federal Candidate -2)
 Townsend Big-Eared Bat (Federal Candidate -2)
 Pallid Bat (California species of special concern)
 Wildlife habitat is of exceptionally high quality and diversity

Fish: Rainbow Trout and habitat, because of its high quality and cold water releases from Oxbow powerplant.

Ecological and Other Values: The following are unique biological communities:
 Butterflies: - Lindsey's Skipper
 Ecosystem diversity

Cultural: Horseshoe Bar tunnels are the State's first manmade bedrock tunnels.

Eligibility Classification: Eligible

Classification: Scenic 1A, 2B, 3B

Summary and Conclusions

The subject American River's Middle and North Forks are unique river segments in several ways. Professional representatives of several Federal and State agencies have reviewed eight resource categories and found that several ORVs exist in each segment qualifying these segments as "Eligibility" for Wild and Scenic designation. Only one ORV is required to qualify a river segment as being eligible for Wild and Scenic designation. A "Suitability" study will now be required to examine the technical, economic, and practical aspects of this determination.

Henry L. Hansen
 acting Chief, American River Basin Branch

I concur: Tulson & Hayes Jones
 Chief, Planning and Technical Services Division

ACTING I concur: Henry Masterson
 Project Superintendent, Folsom Office (CVP)

I concur: Robert K. Arthur
 Regional Director, Mid-Pacific

Enclosures

- 1 - Classification Criteria for Wild, Scenic, and Recreation of River Areas
- 2 - Map of River Segments
- 3 - Professionals' Reports on ORVs