Management of WSR's – Overview of the WSR Act

Randy Welsh, WO, Forest Service

Brian Goldberg & Sid Woods, Bridger-Teton National Forest, Forest Service

This course presents agency responsibilities for managing a designated wild and scenic rivers (WSR). The content of this course is derived from *Wild and Scenic River Management Responsibilities* (March 2002), a technical report of the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Council (Council) (www.rivers.gov/publications.html).

Participation will result in increased understanding of the protection requirements associated with managing a designated WSR, and of the contents and key elements of a comprehensive river management plan (CRMP). This increased foundation will result in greater protection of each river's values through development of its CRMP.

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand the provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) that guide management of a designated WSR.
- Share the management implications of designation within the river-administering agency and with local, federal and state governments, tribal governments, landowners and nongovernmental organizations.
- Provide guidance for decision makers relative to proposed projects and new decisions on federal lands prior to completion of the CRMP.
- Know the general contents and key elements of a CRMP.
- Develop an integrated approach for preparation of a CRMP.

Participants will increase their knowledge in:

- Protections provided in the WSRA.
- The application of the protect and enhance mandate of Section 10(a) to interim management and development of a CRMP.
- How to evaluate a proposed project or new decision on federal land prior to completion of a CRMP.
- How to prepare a detailed river corridor boundary.
- The protection and decision framework of a CRMP.
- How to prepare a CRMP.

Managing Utah's First Wild and Scenic River

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This session will describe the Wild and Scenic River planning framework used for the development of the Comprehensive River Management Plan for the Virgin River at Zion National Park and adjacent BLM Wilderness. NPS has developed a process that includes defining outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs), establishing goals and objectives for protecting river values, conducting boundary delineation, addressing development of lands and facilities, addressing visitor use management and capacity, evaluating water resource projects and instream flows, and establishing a monitoring strategy. This planning effort included river segments with very diverse visitation and management objectives – from highly developed frontcountry recreational segments to wild segments in designated Wilderness. This presentation will share outcomes of the planning process as well as lessons learned and on-going monitoring and planning efforts.

Key Learning Objectives:
1) Understanding the planning framework for Wild and Scenic Rivers
2) Best practices for planning and managing use on Wild and Scenic Rivers
3) Strategies for managing a variety of river segments from frontcountry to Wilderness

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Wild and Scenic River Outstandingly Remarkable Value Identification and Assessment using Georeferenced Videomapping

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Abstract

GPS-based river videomapping has been used to continuously map river systems at the National Park Service (NPS) Obed (45 miles) and Wekiva (12 miles) Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR). River videomapping consists of continuously acquiring georeferenced video and river physical characteristics of river systems. Physical river features such as river width, depth, rugosity and sinuosity have been mapped in ArcGIS. In addition, substrate, river characteristic (pool, riffle, run), embeddedness and river infrastructure have been determined continuously. From these features, locations of wildlife habitat (including optimum endangered aquatic species habitat) and Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV) have be determined. ORV's and human intrusion infrastructure (houses, docks, bridges, etc.) have been mapped at the Wekiva WSR. Dock density plots and associated images have been incorporated into the ArcGIS maps. Using the technology, "wild", "scenic" and "recreational" ORV's can be identified and mapped. The georeferenced video database of the Wild and Scenic River provides a snapshot of the existing ORV conditions that need to be mapped, monitored and managed. The video can be reviewed to detect river condition changes as impacts occur.

Assessing Complex Issues of Resource Protection and Allocation; Weighing Science, Management, Politics, and Public Opinion. A Case Study on Wild and Scenic Rivers in Grand Canyon National Park.

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This training workshop is designed to help public land managers and conservation advocates develop strategies to better understand and evaluate input from science, management, politics, and public opinion. Short presentations from the panel will set the context for structured small group work that generates practical working strategies. Using wild and scenic river designation in Grand Canyon National Park as our case study, we will explore the challenges of complex issues of resource protection and allocation. The Colorado River and its tributaries in and around the Grand Canyon have yet to be honored with WSR designation. This comes as a surprise to many; even those actively involved in river conservation and public lands management. One could easily assume that the spectacular Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon are shining gems of the National Wild and Scenic River System. Grand Canyon National Park is currently revising its Backcountry Management Plan, but thus far in the planning process, WSRs have been identified as “beyond the scope” of this plan. This is the same stance the park took on WSRs in the Colorado River Management Plan back in 2006. This situation begs the question, “if not now, when?” in regards to WSRs in GCNP. In this workshop we will explore the implications of WSR designation for the Colorado River and its tributaries in and adjacent to GCNP from ecological, management, and biopolitical perspectives.

Understanding and Managing Visitor Use on the Virgin River, Utah

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This session will describe lessons learned while addressing visitor use management and visitor capacity during the development of the Comprehensive River Management Plan for the Virgin River at Zion National Park and adjacent BLM Wilderness. This plan used a proactive and adaptive process of planning for and managing characteristics of visitor use and its physical and social setting. The process provides a variety of strategies and tools to sustain desired conditions for river values and provides the framework within which visitor capacity should be addressed when necessary. The plan followed guidance from both the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordination Council (IWSRCC) and the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council (IVUMC). Updates on the work of the IVUMC will be provided during this session. The IVUMC collaborated with the IWSRCC on their guidebook for “Addressing User Capacities in Comprehensive River Management Plans”. The IVUMC is also working to complete “how-to” guidebooks for the visitor use management framework, visitor capacity, and indicators and thresholds. Progress on these topics will be discussed in the context of the Virgin River planning effort.

Wild and Scenic River Study Process – How to complete a WSR Study

Cassie Thomas and Jim MacCartney, National Park Service

This course presents an introduction to complete a the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) Study Process for eligible or suitable river segments. The content of this course is derived from *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: Wild and Scenic River Study Process*, a technical report of the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Council (Council) (www.rivers.gov/publications.html).

Participation will result in improvements in future applications of the Wild and Scenic River Study process, for both eligible and suitable river segments, based on increased knowledge of its intent, content and procedures.

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Apply the correct study methodology for a Wild and Scenic River study.
- Develop an integrated approach with appropriate interdisciplinary team members for the study process.
- Conduct the study, including public involvement.
- Share information with landowners, local and state governments, and nongovernmental organizations.

Participants will increase their knowledge in:

- The Wild and Scenic River study process requirements of the WSRA.
- The sources of information for rivers to consider in the study process.
- The differences between eligible and suitable river segments.
- The role of ORV's in the study process.
- The differences in WSR classification and how to apply them to study segments.
- The requirements for interim management direction for eligible and suitable river segments.

Sustainable Recreation: Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River Planning

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The goal is to create a community during the planning process the helps assure the needed support to sustain the programs, facilities and river ecosystem. We are engaging the next generation of river professionals by including new employees in the planning process.

ABSTRACT

The Forest Service is on a journey to transition the agency's Recreation program toward sustainability and this paradigm change is referred to as "Sustainable Recreation". The development of the Comprehensive River Management Plan was the first opportunity to use this new framework for a Wild and Scenic River. It is the Forest Service's premise that the goal of sustainable recreation creates greater lasting public benefits and facilitates the emergence of more self-organizing and resilient social-ecological systems. While the situation contained many complex and so called wicked problems the use of sustainability driven collaborative methods lead toward the creation of a future that is both more desirable and sustainable and brings people together. The presentation will also demonstrate new techniques that quickly help develop alternatives, address the outstanding resource values and potentially conflicting uses.

The goal of this presentation is to promote the use of state of the art sustainability science to the planning management of rivers. Plans must create futures that are resilient to changing ecological conditions and social conditions. The planning process is an opportunity for learning and a cycle of learning, innovation and adaptations in the end protects the ecosystem services and provides for intergenerational equity by ensuring that the program enhances our capabilities to provide benefits for future generations

The key points include:

- That sustainable recreation will be the guiding framework for the 21st century river managers.
- That sustainable recreation is about the quality of life, how to develop it and how to sustain it.
- That better understanding the dynamics of human-environmental systems will help create new and better possibilities and will bring together social and natural sciences.
- That by appreciating the many world views and encouraging group learning collaboration becomes far more possible.
- That collaboration and community building is the key to the sustainability of rivers.

Section 7 Determinations – How to complete a Section 7

Randy Welsh & Steve Chesterton, WO, Forest Service

This course presents an introduction to and how to complete a Section 7 Determination for the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA). The content of this course is derived from *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: Section 7*, a technical report of the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Council (Council) (www.rivers.gov/publications.html).

Participation will result in improvements in future applications of Section 7, based on increased knowledge of its intent, content and procedures.

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Apply appropriate evaluative standards.
- Develop an integrated approach with appropriate interdisciplinary team members.
- Conduct an analysis adequate to support the determination.
- Provide early consultation/collaboration to federal assisting agency.
- Share information with landowners, local and state governments, and nongovernmental organizations.

Participants will increase their knowledge in:

- What a water resources project is under Section 7 of the WSRA.
- How to apply Section 7 to state-administered, federally designated rivers; congressionally designated rivers; and congressionally authorized study rivers.
- Definitions.
- Roles of the involved agencies.
- Evaluation standards for a designated river.
- Evaluation standards for a congressionally authorized study river.
- Evaluation procedures.
- The timing of a Section 7 analysis and determination, and the responsible official.
- Riverine stewardship.