



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

D18(2510)

APR - 6 2011

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Chairman, Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are pleased to transmit the enclosed New River Wild and Scenic River Study and the related Summary of Public Comments. The National Park Service conducted the study pursuant to Public Law 102-525, signed into law on October 26, 1992. The goal of the study was to determine if a 19.3 mile long segment of the New River in Virginia and West Virginia is eligible and suitable for designation as a wild and scenic river under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The New River study area is located within a block of federally owned land known as the Bluestone Lake Project Area, managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The West Virginia lands are licensed to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources for management, while the Virginia lands are retained under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers management.


The study has determined that this segment of the New River is eligible for designation as a wild and scenic river. The river system is free-flowing and possesses several outstandingly remarkable values, which are described in the study document.

The study further found, however, that this 19.3 mile segment is not suitable for designation, because there are strongly divided constituencies on the issue of a potential designation. There was some public support for designation in both Virginia and West Virginia, but it was stronger in Virginia and there was also significant opposition in West Virginia. Virginia exhibited strong local and State government support for the designation. In West Virginia, there was strong support designation at the local government level but not at the State level. The State of West Virginia and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would ultimately be partners in managing this segment of the river under the wild and scenic designation. The States lack of support weighs heavily in the suitability finding.

The Department of the Interior (Department) does not find designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to be appropriate for the 19.3 mile river segment at this time. However, there is clearly general public and State support for designation of approximately 6 miles of the river in Virginia only.

An identical letter is being sent to the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Richard N. Hastings, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives; and the Honorable Edward Markey, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives. Members of the Virginia and West Virginia delegations will also receive copies of this letter and of the study report.

Sincerely,



Wil Shafroth
Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish
and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable John D. Rockefeller
United States Senate

The Honorable Carte P. Goodwin
United States Senate

The Honorable James H. Webb
United States Senate

The Honorable Mark Robert Warner
United States Senate

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
House of Representatives

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
House of Representatives

The Honorable Rick Boucher
House of Representatives

Governor Joseph Manchin III (WV)

Governor Robert F. McDonnell (VA)



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APR - 8 2011

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Minority Member,
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United State Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

We are pleased to transmit the enclosed New River Wild and Scenic River Study and the related Summary of Public Comments. The National Park Service conducted the study pursuant to Public Law 102-525, signed into law on October 26, 1992. The goal of the study was to determine if a 19.3 mile long segment of the New River in Virginia and West Virginia is eligible and suitable for designation as a wild and scenic river under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The New River study area is located within a block of federally owned land known as the Bluestone Lake Project Area, managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The West Virginia lands are licensed to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources for management, while the Virginia lands are retained under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers management.

The study has determined that this segment of the New River is eligible for designation as a wild and scenic river. The river system is free-flowing and possesses several outstandingly remarkable values, which are described in the study document.

The study further found, however, that this 19.3 mile segment is not suitable for designation, because there are strongly divided constituencies on the issue of a potential designation. There was some public support for designation in both Virginia and West Virginia, but it was stronger in Virginia and there was also significant opposition in West Virginia. Virginia exhibited strong local and State government support for the designation. In West Virginia, there was strong support designation at the local government level but not at the State level. The State of West Virginia and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would ultimately be partners in managing this segment of the river under the wild and scenic designation. The States lack of support weighs heavily in the suitability finding.

The Department of the Interior (Department) does not find designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to be appropriate for the 19.3 mile river segment at this time. However, there is clearly general public and State support for designation of approximately 6 miles of the river in Virginia only.

An identical letter is being sent to the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Richard N. Hastings, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives; and the Honorable Edward Markey, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives. Members of the Virginia and West Virginia delegations will also receive copies of this letter and of the study report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wil Shafroth", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Wil Shafroth
Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish
and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosures

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APR - 8 2011

The Honorable Richard N. Hastings
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are pleased to transmit the enclosed New River Wild and Scenic River Study and the related Summary of Public Comments. The National Park Service conducted the study pursuant to Public Law 102-525, signed into law on October 26, 1992. The goal of the study was to determine if a 19.3 mile long segment of the New River in Virginia and West Virginia is eligible and suitable for designation as a wild and scenic river under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

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The study has determined that this segment of the New River is eligible for designation as a wild and scenic river. The river system is free-flowing and possesses several outstandingly remarkable values, which are described in the study document.

The study further found, however, that this 19.3 mile segment is not suitable for designation, because there are strongly divided constituencies on the issue of a potential designation. There was some public support for designation in both Virginia and West Virginia, but it was stronger in Virginia and there was also significant opposition in West Virginia. Virginia exhibited strong local and State government support for the designation. In West Virginia, there was strong support designation at the local government level but not at the State level. The State of West Virginia and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would ultimately be partners in managing this segment of the river under the wild and scenic designation. The States lack of support weighs heavily in the suitability finding.

The Department of the Interior (Department) does not find designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to be appropriate for the 19.3 mile river segment at this time. However, there is clearly general public and State support for designation of approximately 6 miles of the river in Virginia only.

An identical letter is being sent to the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; and the Honorable Edward Markey, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives. Members of the Virginia and West Virginia delegations will also receive copies of this letter and of the study report.

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Ranking Minority Member,
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The study further found, however, that this 19.3 mile segment is not suitable for designation, because there are strongly divided constituencies on the issue of a potential designation. There was some public support for designation in both Virginia and West Virginia, but it was stronger in Virginia and there was also significant opposition in West Virginia. Virginia exhibited strong local and State government support for the designation. In West Virginia, there was strong support designation at the local government level but not at the State level. The State of West Virginia and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would ultimately be partners in managing this segment of the river under the wild and scenic designation. The States lack of support weighs heavily in the suitability finding.

The Department of the Interior (Department) does not find designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to be appropriate for the 19.3 mile river segment at this time. However, there is clearly general public and State support for designation of approximately 6 miles of the river in Virginia only.

An identical letter is being sent to the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; and the Honorable Richard N. Hastings, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives. Members of the Virginia and West Virginia delegations will also receive copies of this letter and of the study report.

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