

A B S T R A C T S

Idaho Chapter, Wildlife Society

WINTER MEETING

Boise, Idaho

January 25, 1969

"IMPACT OF THE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT ON IDAHO."

1st Panel Speaker: Bruce Bowler, Attorney, Boise

Title: "What is in the Act?"

Public Law 542 of the 90th Congress approved October 2, 1968, provides for three classes of rivers--Wild river areas, Scenic river areas and Recreational river areas. The policy of the law is that certain selected rivers with their immediate environments possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or like values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

The purpose of the law is to implement that policy.

Wild rivers classification is free of impoundments with shorelines or watersheds largely primitive and undeveloped but accessible in places by roads.

Recreational rivers classification is readily accessible by road and may have some development and undergone some impoundment or diversion.

To implement the policy to protect water quality and its immediate environment in fulfilling conservation objectives is legislation establishing National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, with federal administrative functions by Interior and Agriculture Departments. States may designate classification, with approval of Interior Secretary, for state administration with grants to be available from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund laws.

The law immediately included the Middle Fork of the Clearwater from Kooskia to Lowell, the Lochsa from Powell to Lowell, and the Selway from its origin to Lowell, and the Middle Fork of the Salmon from its origin to its confluence with the main Salmon, with Agriculture (Forest Service) the designated administrative agency, which has a year to establish the boundaries and determine which of the three classifications best fits. The boundaries shall include an average of one quarter of a mile, not more than 320 acres per mile on both sides of the rivers.

The law further provides that Interior and Agriculture study other rivers for their inclusion within the system, and those in Idaho in the study section are the entire main stem of the Bruneau, the Moyie from the Canadian line to its confluence with the Kootenai, the entire main stem of the Priest and Saint Joe, and the main Salmon from North Fork to its confluence with the Snake.

The study rivers are to remain free-flowing and protected from development that would infringe their scenic and recreational values. Ten years is allowed for the studies during which there is protection for five years plus such time Congress needs, from Federal Power dam license or loans for development. The states are encouraged to formulate plans for Wild and Scenic rivers.

2nd Panel Speaker: Richard Harris, U.S. Forest Service, Ogden

Title: "Implementation of the Act."

The Forest Service, in cooperation with other agencies, studied a number of proposed wild and scenic rivers over a period of several years prior to passage of the Act.

At this time (January 1969), detailed plans for implementing the Act are still being formulated.

Two separate jobs are involved:

- (1) By October 2, 1969, detailed boundaries must be established for each component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; the segment of each river must be classified as either wild, scenic, or recreational; a plan for development and management of each river must be prepared; and, the above three items must be published in the Federal Register and forwarded to Congress.
- (2) By 1978, studies are to be made and reports submitted to the President and Congress on each potential addition to the system listed in Section 5(a) of the Act. These studies will involve a cooperative effort of Federal and state agencies.

3rd Panel Speaker: Dr. Robert Lee, Idaho Water Resources Board

Title: "Possible Effects of the Act on Idaho Water Resource Planning."

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act has a definite impact upon the water resource development in the areas already designated as wild rivers in Idaho and a potential impact on those designated as possible additions to the national wild and scenic rivers system.

The naming of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River as a wild river has little effect on water resource development because the area is so remote and the quantity of water limited in the upper reaches. However, the designation of the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River from Kooskia upstream to Lowell and the Selway and Lochsa tributaries prohibits development of the Penny Cliffs Hydro Power Project with a resultant loss in economic benefit to the state and region.

Upon examination, this loss may be compensated by preserving the free-flowing nature of the stream.

To assess the impact of potential additions to the wild and scenic rivers system, the Idaho Water Resource Board has initiated a contract with the University of Idaho Water Resources Research Institute to conduct a multi-disciplinary study of the methodology for evaluating wild and scenic rivers. This study will focus on the main stem of the Salmon River because of the complexity of the issues involved. Results from the study will be put into Idaho's state water plan and the Pacific Northwest River Basins Commission comprehensive plan.

The question to be resolved is how much additional wild and scenic rivers mileage can be added from Idaho without reaching the point of diminishing returns for the state and the nation.

4th Panel Speaker: Dr. Maurice Hornocker, Idaho  
Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit

Title: "Effects of the Act on Recreation and Wildlife."

To assess the 'effect' of the legislation on wildlife, we must consider the effect of alternative uses, such as impoundment and inundation, road building, logging, mining, etc. In Idaho, where topographic relief bordering the rivers is usually great, the relatively small area of land affected by the Act often constitutes an important part of the winter range for big game animals. Wild and Scenic Rivers legislation insures the retention in a natural state of this small but extremely critical portion of land.

Recreation is the Pacific Northwest's fastest growing industry--it ranks fourth (third in Idaho) and projections indicate by the year 2000 it will be the largest industry in the region. In the Northwest, recreation is a basic or export industry. That is, the economic structure of tourism serves to generate a significant net credit in the region's balance of interregional payments. The recreation industry's impact, both economic and cultural, must be considered against that of alternative, and often conflicting, uses. Further, the whole recreation industry, now and its projections for the future, must be scrutinized and weighed against the alternatives.

Idaho's rivers are an extremely important part of the state's recreational resource bank--their role is a vital one in the future of the state's recreation industry. A system of classifying and evaluating the recreation potential of each of our major streams is needed. Further, this classification and evaluation should periodically be updated as the recreation industry expands and needs arise.

"THE DWORSHAK RESERVOIR STORY"

By: Liven Peterson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
River Basin Studies

This presentation is a brief, informal summary of the investigations and negotiations concerning wildlife as related to the Dworshak Project. It is not a success story; the purpose is to provide a case history of the efforts made by wildlife interests to obtain adequate mitigation of losses caused by the project. Problems, mistakes, turning points, and possible future plans are described. Lessons learned on this project could be applied to future investigations of this type.

"DEER WINTER RANGE REHABILITATION RESEARCH IN SOUTHERN IDAHO"

By: Dean Medin, U.S. Forest Service

The deteriorated condition of many southern Idaho deer winter ranges has required an artificial approach to restoring productive capacities. Early cooperative research developed techniques for reestablishing essential browse species, particularly bitterbrush (Purshia tridentata), on critical winter ranges. Experimental plantings based on these findings and recommendations resulted in well-established, though limited, stands. Successes were uncommon, however, on larger-scale operational plantings. Recent research has dealt with identifying the causes of erratic results and developing corrective measures. Future research programs should be designed to test and confirm, or reject, present techniques and develop a broad base for successful winter range rehabilitation.

"WHO NEEDS MANAGEMENT?"

By: Levi Mohler, Idaho Fish and Game Department

Assuming that everybody can benefit from the results of wildlife management, this report will mainly list some questions which must be answered at both policy and operational levels before management can be fully effective.

The questions will be directed mainly at species management and the diversity of various programs under which everybody hopes his favorite species can achieve maximum productivity and supply continued recreational hunting or other use.