

Scenic Area, the US Forest Service would be the federal agency tasked with managing the Wild and Scenic waterway. The agency then began studying the river, and after seeking input from Klickitat and Skamania Counties, Washington State, the Yakama Nation, local residents and private landowners, the agency drafted a Record of Decision for the National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan in November of 1991.

The Forest Service then adopted boundaries for the Wild and Scenic River Corridor, which, according to the Record of Decision itself, was a contentious process:

*“The planning team was challenged to strike a balance between adequately protecting and enhancing the river by maintaining the current character of the river area and providing long-term protection and enhancement of its outstandingly remarkable values, without unduly limiting other uses, including private lands, that do not substantially interfere with public use and enjoyment of the river’s values.”*

This says that federal and state wildlife agencies initially pressed the agency to incorporate the maximum amount of acreage allowed by the Wild and Scenic River Act — “an average of not more than 320 acres per mile on both sides of the river” — while others urged the Forest Service to constrict the corridor according to Washington State’s Shoreline Management Act, which provides a continuous buffer of 200 feet from the river’s shoreline. The Forest Service eventually adopted Alternative 6, which brought 1,874 acres into the Wild and Scenic Corridor — an average of 244 acres per river mile.

