



## What is a Wild and Scenic River?

In 1968 Congress took bold action to balance the established policy providing for water supply, power generation, and other public benefits with a new policy—that of protecting the natural and cultural values of selected free-flowing rivers for their associated public benefits and enjoyment. Since then over 200 rivers, creeks, or sections of rivers administered by a variety of federal, state, and local agencies have been protected by inclusion in the national wild and scenic rivers system.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act provides broad guidance for these rivers:

- They must meet eligibility requirements, including having one or more outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values.
- They must be administered to protect and enhance the values that caused them to be included in the system.
- Federal agencies that administer rivers potentially eligible for the system are required to consider their eligibility, and if the river is designated, to prepare a comprehensive management plan that provides for the protection of river values.

## Yosemite is home to two Wild and Scenic Rivers

In 1984, Congress designated 83 miles of the **Tuolumne River** (54 of which are within Yosemite National Park) as part of the national wild and scenic rivers system.

In 1987 and 1992, Congress designated 122 miles of the **Merced River and its South Fork** (81 of which are within Yosemite National Park) as part of the national wild and scenic rivers system.

In accordance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the National Park Service is preparing a comprehensive management plan for these two rivers.

Both plans will lay out the long-term guidance for how each river will be managed into the future, ensuring that its free-flowing character will be preserved and its unique values will be protected and enhanced.



For more information about these two planning efforts, visit the park's website:

Tuolumne River Plan: [www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/trp.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/trp.htm)

Merced River Plan: [www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/mrp.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/mrp.htm)

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