

PAST

The land development occurring in the United States during the 1950s included damming, polluting, development and diversion of the nation's rivers. In the 1960s, the American public was beginning to realize the implications that conversion of our waterways was having and would continue to have. Recognition of this fact spurred changes to our laws and protection was provided to our waterways.

In 1968 the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Also at the national level, 1970 saw the enactment of The National Environmental Policy Act, the Water Quality Improvement Act, Clean Air Act, the first Earth Day and creation of the EPA.

Louisiana would not be left behind by America's growing conservation and environmental movements. Stewards Gladney Davidson and State Senator George Oubre were important figures in the Louisiana Legislatures creation of the state's Natural and Scenic Rivers System through the "Louisiana Scenic Rivers Act" of 1970. This act was developed for the purpose of preserving, protecting, developing, reclaiming, and enhancing the wilderness qualities, scenic beauties, and ecological regimes of certain free-flowing Louisiana streams.

Thirty-eight Louisiana streams, bayous, and rivers were initially included and afforded protection with the creation of the 1970 legislation. It resulted in one of the largest, if not the largest, programs of its kind in the country. It remains so today.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Once a waterbody is accepted into the system as a Louisiana Designated Historic or Natural & Scenic River, the benefits afforded to that waterbody include:

- Safeguarding the aesthetic, scenic and recreational qualities
- Protection of the stream's fish, wildlife and botanical resources
- Protection of the stream's natural and physical features including ecological, archaeological and geological features

These benefits are accomplished in part by ensuring certain activities are prohibited on designated Natural and Scenic Rivers because of their detrimental ecological impacts on the streams.

These prohibited activities include:

- channelization
- clearing and snagging
- channel realignment
- reservoir construction
- commercial cutting of trees within 100 feet of the ordinary low water mark
- use of a motor vehicle on the stream (see website for specific information)

A Scenic River permit is required for all activities on or near system rivers that may detrimentally impact the ecological integrity, scenic beauty or wilderness qualities of those rivers. These permits, when granted, contain specific conditions aimed at preserving the stream's natural character and quality.

Additional duties conducted by the Louisiana Scenic Rivers Program staff help to ensure the protection of designated waterways through complaint investigation, providing technical assistance to landowners, developers and planners, coordination of enforcement action when violations have been reported, monitoring and surveying designated waterways and adjacent lands, and by the development of management plans of each designated waterway.

LOUISIANA'S NATURAL & SCENIC RIVERS



PRESENT

Today, there are more than 60 Louisiana streams and rivers totaling over 3,100 miles protected by a Louisiana Scenic River designation. These rivers, streams and bayous, and segments thereof, are located throughout the state and offer a unique opportunity for individuals and communities to enjoy two of Louisiana's greatest natural resources; its wilderness and its water.

Photo by Gregory LeBlanc

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Responsible Use

Using these rivers and their adjacent lands in responsible ways will help to maintain their natural beauty for many generations. Enjoyment of these beautiful streams, rivers and bayous will help develop a genuine appreciation for their integral roles in our way and quality of life in Louisiana.

Get Involved

Many of our streams need help. They are threatened by impacts such as pollution, resource extraction, unwise development, and the loss of intact riparian habitat. You can help by getting to know the laws, regulations and local ordinances, joining or initiating a local conservation group, participating in project reviews and local planning, and educating friends and neighbors.

Initiate River Cleanup Projects

Helping to keep ANY waterway in Louisiana clean of man-made waste will benefit both humans and wildlife.

Stream Nomination

Rivers can be nominated for inclusion in the Scenic Rivers System by your local legislators. Strong support from local citizens is necessary to ensure success of any stream nomination.

Contribute to the Friends of the Scenic Rivers Fund

Donations made to the group will be used to support and raise awareness of our Louisiana Scenic Rivers through a variety of methods including (but not limited to) creation of outreach materials, acquisition of necessary field equipment, providing resources to local conservation groups, providing public access, and acquisition of conservation servitudes.



Photo by Greg Harper



If you would like to support the Louisiana Scenic Rivers program by making a tax deductible donation, please contact:

Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation

225-765-5100

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P.O. Box 80378

Baton Rouge, LA 70898-0378



LOUISIANA | WILDLIFE & FISHERIES | FOUNDATION

For more information and interesting facts about Louisiana's Scenic Rivers:

www.wlf.la.gov/page/scenic-rivers

or call 225-765-2642

To report a violation along a Louisiana Designated Natural & Scenic River

24-hours a day:

LDWF Enforcement Division Operation

Game Thief: 800-442-2511

Anti-Litter Hotline: 888-548-7284

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LOUISIANA SCENIC RIVERS PROGRAM



Photo by Margaret Crosby