



*Upper Deschutes River*



## Oregon's Scenic Waterways

*Live,  
play,  
protect*

Oregon's diverse river systems contribute richly to our quality of life. Oregonians decided to protect special waterways in 1970 when they voted two-to-one to establish the Oregon Scenic Waterways Program. The program seeks to balance protection and wise use through cooperation among federal, state, and local agencies as well as individual property owners and those who recreate along a waterway.



*Rogue River*



*John Day River; Cottonwood Canyon State Park*

*Scenic Waterways are identified for their outstanding natural qualities, scenic beauty, and recreational opportunities.*

Oregon Scenic Waterways Program  
<http://bit.ly/scenicwaterways>

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
725 Summer St. NE, Suite C  
Salem, OR 97301  
[www.oregonstateparks.org](http://www.oregonstateparks.org)

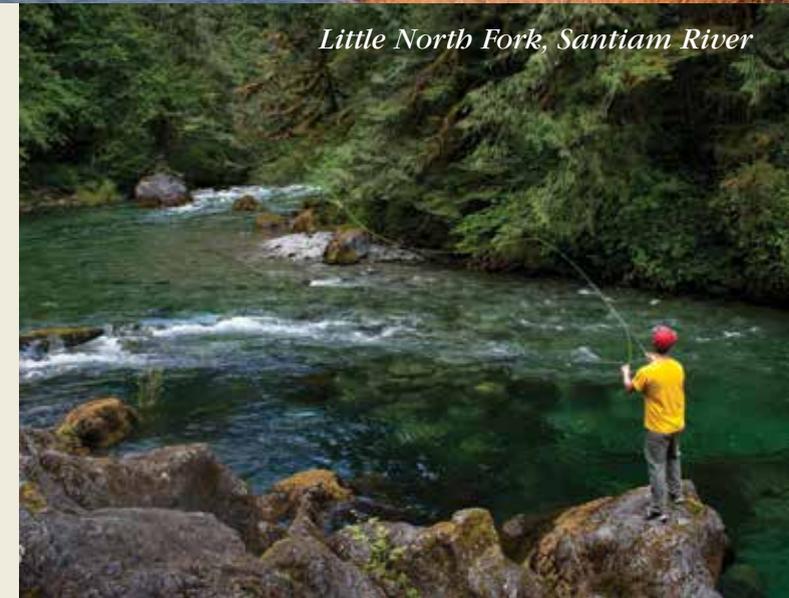


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Call 1-800-551-6949. Oregon Relay for the hearing impaired: dial 711.

63400-9837 (05/16)

### Program goals:

- Protect the free-flowing character of designated rivers;
- Protect and enhance scenic and natural values, recreation, and fish and wildlife;
- Promote expansion of the scenic waterways system;
- Protect private property rights;
- Encourage other agencies to act consistently with the goals of scenic waterways management.



*Little North Fork, Santiam River*

Congress establishes the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System “to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values.” This prompted Oregon lawmakers to consider a complementary state program.

1968

Oregonians vote by a two-to-one margin to establish the Oregon Scenic Waterways Program. The scenic waterways system originally included 496 miles of the Deschutes, Illinois, John Day, Owyhee, Rogue, and Minam rivers.

1970

An additional 113 miles are added from the Sandy, Clackamas, Santiam and Upper Deschutes rivers, plus the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the Willamette River.

1972-1987

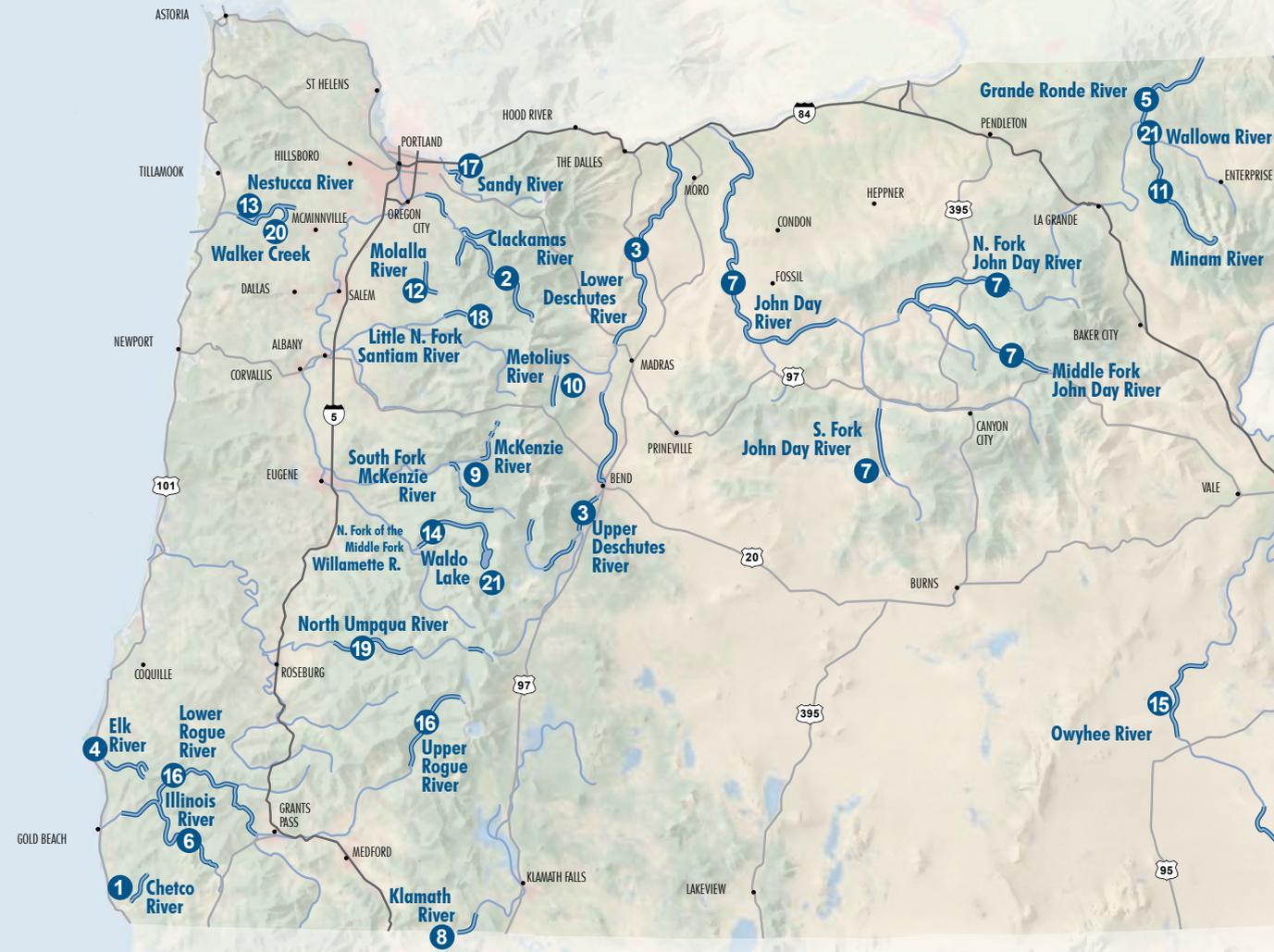
Voters pass an initiative to add 573 miles of scenic waterways, nearly doubling the waterways system to approximately 1,200 river miles on 1,180 river miles.

1988

Portions of the Chetco and Molalla rivers—totaling approximately 17 miles—are added. The program now protects approximately 1,200 river miles on 21 rivers and one mountain lake.

2016

## Oregon State Scenic Waterways



- 1 Chetco River**
  - Steel Bridge to Alfred A. Loeb State Park (14 miles)
- 2 Clackamas River**
  - North Fork (14 miles)
  - South Fork (4 miles)
  - \* • Main stem from Ollalie Lake Scenic Area to North Fork Reservoir (49 miles)
  - River Mill Dam to Carver Bridge (14 miles)
- 3 Deschutes River**
  - \* • Upper Deschutes: various segments from Little Lava Lake (headwaters) to Lake Billy Chinook (97 miles)
  - \* • Lower Deschutes: Pelton Dam to Columbia River (100 miles)
- 4 Elk River**
  - \* • North Fork (6 miles)
  - South Fork (5 miles)
  - \* • Main stem from confluence of North and South Forks to Elk River Fish Hatchery (18 miles)
- 5 Grand Ronde River**
  - \* • Confluence with Willamette River to Washington border (43 miles)
- 6 Illinois River**
  - \* • Deer Creek to Rogue River (46 miles)
- 7 John Day River**
  - \* • North Fork: North Fork John Day Wilderness boundary to River Mile 20.2 above Monument (57 miles)
  - \* • South Fork: Post-Paulina Road crossing to Murderers’ Creek Wildlife Area above Dayville (30 miles)
  - Middle Fork: Crawford Creek to confluence with North Fork (73 miles)
  - \* • Main stem: Parrish Creek to Tumwater Falls (158 miles)

- 8 Klamath River**
  - \* • John Boyle Dam powerhouse to California border (11 miles)
- 9 McKenzie River**
  - South Fork: Three Sisters Wilderness boundary to main stem, excluding Cougar Reservoir (21 miles)
  - \* • Three segments of the main stem from Clear Lake to Paradise National Forest Service Campground (14 miles)
- 10 Metolius River**
  - \* • Metolius Springs to Candle Creek (12 miles)
- 11 Minam River**
  - \* • Minam Lake to Willamette River (50 miles)
- 12 Molalla River**
  - Confluence of Table Rock Fork to Glen Avon Bridge (13 miles)
- 13 Nestucca River**
  - Main stem: McGuire Dam to Blaine (27 miles)
- 14 North Fork of Middle Fork of Willamette River**
  - \* • Waldo Lake to River Mile 1.5 near Westfir (42 miles)
- 15 Owyhee River**
  - \* • Crooked Creek to Birch Creek
  - \* • South Fork: Idaho Border to Three Forks (26 miles)
- 16 Rogue River**
  - \* • Upper Rogue: Crater Lake National Park to Rogue River National Forest boundary (44 miles)
  - \* • Lower Rogue: Applegate River to Lobster Creek Bridge (83 miles)

- 17 Sandy River**
    - \* • Bull Run River to Dabney State Park (13 miles)
  - 18 North Santiam River**
    - Little North Fork: Battle Ax Creek to River Mile 16.7 at Willamette National Forest boundary (9 miles)
  - 19 North Umpqua River**
    - Mt. Thielsen Wilderness boundary to Lemolo Reservoir (7 miles)
    - \* • Soda Springs Dam powerhouse to Rock Creek (34 miles)
  - 20 Walker Creek**
    - Source to confluence with Nestucca River (3 miles)
  - 21 Willowa River**
    - \* • Confluence with Minam to confluence with Grande Ronde (10 miles)
  - 22 Waldo Lake**
    - 6,672 acres, 13 miles north of Oregon Highway 58
- Full descriptions are at <http://bit.ly/scenicwaterways>
- \* National Wild and Scenic Rivers

## How are waterways designated?

The Oregon Scenic Waterways Act (ORS 390.855 to 390.865) establishes procedures to designate new scenic waterways.

1. Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) must periodically study rivers for inclusion in the program. This process includes involving the local community. The study must show that the waterway meets the following criteria to be eligible for designation:

- Is the river relatively free-flowing?
- Is the scene from the river pleasant and undisturbed?
- Does the river segment provide outstanding recreational and natural values?
- Is the segment large enough so that recreation use will not damage the natural settings?

2. OPRD and the Water Resources Commission review the study and public comments, then make a recommendation to designate the waterway.

3. The governor reviews the recommendation and may officially designate the river as an Oregon Scenic Waterway. The Legislature could act to void all, or part of, the governor’s designation.

4. Waterways can also be designated by voter initiative or legislative action.

## What is allowed in a state-designated Scenic Waterway?

OPRD requires notification of certain activities proposed within a 1/4 mile of the bank of a scenic waterway, including some logging, mining, and construction activities. Additional information on what is allowed is available at <http://bit.ly/scenicwaterways>



Coho salmon on a tributary of the Sandy River