

Wild and Scenic Rivers Review

(1) Overview

Three Washington rivers managed by the U.S. Forest Service are protected by the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: the Klickitat River and White Salmon River, both located in the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area, and the Skagit River in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

In addition, Washington State has a Scenic Rivers System designation ([79A.55 RCW](#)) documenting management policies and river inclusion criteria. This designation pertains to sections of the Skykomish River, Beckler River, Tye River, and Little Spokane River.

While no specific permits are required, close agency coordination is needed on studies, agency determination of impacts and possible mitigations, and selection of alternatives.

For most WSDOT projects – those using federal funds – requirements will be completed during the NEPA process. However, for projects that use only state funding and require a federal Corps Section 10 or Section 404 permit, WSDOT will need to comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act during the permitting process. The Corps will not approve the permit unless WSDOT has complied with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

[Chapter 450](#) of the Environmental Procedures Manual identifies the specific rivers subject to the federal or state requirements and additional information regarding applicable statutes and regulations, policy guidance, and technical guidance.

(2) How to Apply

While no specific approvals are required, evidence of close coordination with the agencies or officials with jurisdiction must be documented. For Washington's designated rivers, the responsible agencies are: Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Mt. Adams Ranger District for the Klickitat and White Salmon rivers; and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Mt. Baker Ranger District for the Skagit River. Contact should be initiated early to identify any agency concerns.