

Columbia Open House
Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Public Comment on Preliminary Alternatives*
June 25, 2009

Overview

The public comments provided below were recorded on flip charts during the Columbia Open House, held at the Courtyard by Marriott on June 25, 2009. A total of 127 people attended (signed in). At this open house the public was invited to provide their comments on the preliminary alternatives for the Ozark National Scenic Riverways General Management Plan. Here is some information to help you understand what is shown on the transcribed flip charts:

- National Park Service employees have typed up this record from the original flipchart pages, and every effort was made to type everything as originally written. We apologize in advance if any mistakes were made in transcribing these notes from the original.
- At the meetings, most flip chart comments were recorded by National Park Service staff. The name or initials of the recorder(s) is usually noted at the top of the first page.
- There were four open house stations, each one labeled for one of the alternatives—No Action Alternative; Alternative A; Alternative B; Alternative C. There were usually two flip charts at each station. (Different labeling and numbering approaches were used by the recorders to distinguish between the two sets of flipchart notes.)
- Each flip chart page was numbered. Next to the number is a letter to identify at which station the comment was recorded (and sometimes which flipchart):
 - N, NA—No Action alternative station
 - A—alternative A station
 - B—alternative B station
 - C—alternative C station
- The recorders sometimes abbreviated words. Some of the common abbreviations are:
 - HP—horsepower
 - NPS—National Park Service
 - BS—Big Spring
 - VB—Van Buren
 - LE—law enforcement
 - JK—Jacks Fork
 - TR—Two Rivers
 - RS— Round Spring

****Note:*** Handwritten comments that were placed in the comment boxes at the open houses have been recorded into the comment database separately.

G. Moss and Lindel Gregory

NA-01

- Support no action because would like to continue fishing the Two Rivers area – no change to horse power limits
- More visible patrols on river.
- Large fines for bad apples
- Maintain old farms
- Protect and serve not just enforcement
- Open old camping areas (Keatons)
- Open old roads for access to old farms
- Leave boat horsepower limit as is
- Make higher horsepower limit below Two Rivers

NA-02

- No boat horse power limit
- Enforce existing horsepower limits
- ---
- Limit on horse concessions
- Enforce protection of natural eco system
- Enforce easement strictly
- Endorse wilderness protection
- Limit river access points
- Close illegal roads and trails
- Enhance cultural and historic teaching
- Disagree with all above statements to [blue](#) line

NA-03

- More restrooms available for floaters
- Emergency phones for emergency contacts and law enforcement assistance
- Way too many horses in the water
- Support no change to Jacks Fork
- Stop excessive ATV's and horse use
- No limitations on horsepower!
- No zones at all!
- No zones
- No boat horsepower limits
- No change
- Show proof for changes in horsepower

NA-04

- Reason for zones!
- NO MORE REGULATIONS – let us stay on the land and play
- Too many horse restrictions on plans A, B, & C - In favor of no action
- Leave it alone, Mother Nature did a good job!
- As natural as possible
- No ATV's in the river or on gravel bars, restrict horses from the river, campgrounds are too large

NA-04

- Enforce rules on foul language and disorderly conduct, including loud music
- Ban alcohol on the rivers
- Increase trout stocking on upper Current River
- Eliminate trout stocking in rivers (this may be hurting our endangered Hellbenders)
- Confiscate ATV's if /when caught off road (or trucks)
- I'm for plan A – leave it as natural as possible (↑E-coli)
- No ↑ in HP allowed, please

A-1

- Recommend that the charts be clear on limits of ATV use.
- Like to see: (t see it) stay or go more primitive.
- *Embrace original mission to preserve and protect.
- *Equestrian access should be permitted as canoe numbers are permitted, but not unlimited numbers.

A-2

- 1) Do not want unauthorized motorized vehicle access above Round Spring.
- 2) Round Spring to Two Rivers should be non-motorized in Alt. A.
- 3) Provide signage on the river to let visitors know when they enter or leave river areas managed by NPS.
- 4) Support Alt "A" would like to see non-motorized down to 2 rivers.
- 5) Would like to see the river going back to an earlier time.
- 6) The condition of the ONSR is less preserved than other river ways not managed by NPS ie..("Il point")
- 7) Like to see the river back to an earlier time – like more deep pools and not so full of gravel.

A-3

- 1) A little more protect and serve and less enforcement and more visibility on the river – be willing to provide water.
- 2) No action – Alt "A" – Alt "B" – Alt "C" would be devastating to the recreation and economy o f the local counties.
- 3) Like to see an "open season" for any HP motors when floaters are not abundant. – (NO!)
- 4) Glad to see the park service doing this.
- 5) Ranger presence to emphasis rules and be available to assist the public.
- 6) Would like to have more access to the history sites and ONSR sites.
- 7) (blank)

A-4

- 1) Limit motorized access (especially ATV's) – check ATV website that promotes park as ATV friendly
- 2) Can we make areas of the ONSR more friendly to motorized recreation than others?
- 3) In favor of limited motors to the max extent totally if possible.

- 4) Want to keep motorized (EQ) off the gravel bars.
- 5) In favor of Alt "A"
- 6) Would like to see no "2-cycle" motors in the water – oil in exhaust pollutes
- 7) Would like to see the zones remain as they are – much like a "no-action" alternative.
- 8) Support management decisions on water quality and biota based on scientific data. There is a vast amount of information and science to show impacts.

A-5

- 1) It costs far more to remediate damage to resources than to prevent them.
- 2) How will "solitude" be achieved? Allow a certain number of put-ins (vessels/boats, not location), as at the Boundary Waters?
- 3) Get the trucks off the gravel bars. New roads in Shannon County lead right to the gravel bars.
- 4) No boats with motors above Two Rivers downstream. Number of horses in park is too many and river crossings too often. Restrict, limit ORV's around Jack and Current River.

A-6

- 1) Other National and Scenic Riverways (St. Croix, MN/WI) enforce "No Drinking" on rivers. This has eliminated MANY problems. Maybe we should look into this in Missouri? Even with the river located next to a major metropolitan area, one can find a quiet and peaceful time!
- 2) I also do not think motor boats should be allowed above Two Rivers. (Pollution, stream bank erosion, safety).
- 3) Permits should be issued to limit # of canoers' and horses on rivers/trails at one time.
- 4) Please don't turn it into a water theme park.
- 5) Don't place concrete everywhere to make it a commercial enterprise.

A-7

- 1) Would rather have a more natural state.
- 2) Some of the interpretive programs move away from a natural experience.
- 3) Don't understand why horses have to cross the river.
- 4) Limit the river crossings for horse use.
- 5) Preserve clean water for future generations.
- 6) Strong support for Alt. A & B regarding restoring wilderness and river corridor.
- 7) Boat restriction in Alt. A is what I like.

Alt. "A" Columbia Rusy 6/25

A-1

- 1) Stop motorized boat above Two Rivers. More a canoe river above that. Jet boats stir up sediment and damage the aquatic organisms, cause bank erosion. Below Two Rivers it is wide and deep enough, more suitable for motorized boats.
- 2) Tough to use hp as a determinant; speed (wake) is more important. New boats have low hp, but still can go fast enough to cause.?
- 3) Use "No Wake" areas – instead of limiting motor size.

- 4) "Primitive" status is self-limiting of uses. NPS funding/ staffing is inadequate to manage such long rivers, especially with amount of use by commercial businesses, particularly trail rides with 1,000's of horses.
- 5) Trail rides should be more responsible – pick up horse droppings. E-coli danger.

A-2

- Current level of staffing can't patrol illegal roads that allow ATV'S. Alt. A would limit this.
- Look at impacts on the river and let science play a more important role in decisions. Are certain management practices causing damage/impacting the river and aquatic resources? YES. Use the information on management decisions.

Alt. A Columbia 6/25 SM

B-1

- There is room for all. But, no 4 wheelers in the river. I'd like to see motor boats restricted to the area downstream from 19 bridge. (Round Sp.) I really like Alt. B, sees a balance in it.
- It is important to be able to have a "back country" river and a back country" upland experience. Not all primitive areas are adjacent to non-motorized stretches, making it likely to hear motors in the back country, and reducing the likelihood of a back country experience on the river.
- Also, will #'s of floaters/canoes be limited in stretches adjacent to primitive zones? You need a back country permit system like Boundary Waters to limit numbers. I saw a big bunch of drunks who made my experience miserable.

B-1-2

- The park needs to stop giving in to the St. Louis people. Start working to educate local population about benefits to them of preserving the Riverways. The park needs to focus on long term goals rather than short term solutions.
- Write the motor boat "bad apples" tickets; the ones offending canoers and being stupid. I'd like to see more "protect and serve" and less enforcement.
- Maybe carry water bottles to give out as a friendly gesture.
- NPS said they'd keep up the old homesteads, cemeteries, etc., and they haven't.
- NPS rangers should be more visible on the river to deter bad behaviors.

B-3

- Limit horsepower by days of the week/holidays rather than seasonally. Give boats a chance to enjoy summer as well.
- I come to enjoy the scenic values, wildlife, herons and such and the natural quiet. I want you to strictly limit unauthorized access points. I'd prefer to keep ATV's off the rivers. Need better enforcement of easements. Horseback riding

should be strictly regulated, especially concessionaires. I urge wilderness designation for Big Sp wilderness.

- I couldn't fish due to motorboats. Boats damage aquatic vegetation, increase sediment loads. Plenty of rivers that are not national parks where they could go. I'd like to see no jet boats from Two Rivers up. (On Current) and from Alley Spring up on Jacks Fork.

B-4

- I'm not a fan of ATV'S. You can ban them completely. They are noisy and tear up the ground. Horses are quiet and tear up the ground. Keep horses out of the water. Need some places along river where you could get to an emergency phone. Phones could have a locator system.
- *I miss the campground at Akers. It limited the spots we could get to easily for camping.
- *Vehicular access to gravel bars needs to be further restricted.
- One of my biggest concerns is contamination of the river by horses - or any contaminating. I would favor anything that maintains, retains or returns to the natural environment of the river, which would include restricting access at the gravel bars/roads.

B-5

- Why haven't you lived up to the original (1964) agreements? For example: in last 20 years I know you've walked a dozer into the river to remove obstacles. Worst was ½ below Waymeyer where you entered the river with dozer and altered the river. It's supposed to be left natural.
- I'm concerned with the park competing unfairly with local private campgrounds by too low prices.
- Sand and gravel is taking over river bottom and changing river from its natural state. Shoals getting shallower.
- I want them to enforce what they said they were going to enforce. Some of these jet boats that blow by – if they are 40 hp then I can fly!! Littering by tubing folks. Keep vehicles away from river, maintain ½ mile walk in rule (setback).

B-6

- Take into account everyone in area who makes a living from river. Not just big operators. If you want to see how the river used to be, go during the week. September – May is not a problem.
- I'm disappointed with alternatives offered. They are not detailed enough to give the public an idea of where the NPS wants to head.
- Disappointed with management of watershed resources since it came out that horses were cause of E-coli in Shawnee Creek.
- Majority of park's problems are people problems, especially alcohol related people problems.
- Like to see detailed plans for roads, vehicles and horses and see those plans enforced.
- There's too much alcohol on the river. All groups do it: canoers, boaters, tubers, etc.. Incidents you don't want kids to see.
- Please make a forum where public can read all these comments.

B-7

- Close some gravel bars to vehicles so you can camp without being run over! I want to have it so cars (roads) don't access gravel bars. I want it so there are some gravel bars with only river access.
- The issue of large trail rides is not addressed in any of the alternatives. Number of horses and number of rides needs to be reduced.
- I'd like to do away with motorized boats above Two Rivers.
- Leave horsepower limits the way they are.
- No vehicles – ATV's on gravel bars.
- ATV's tear up the river bottom. You want to enjoy the fish and river life, but the vehicles leave oil on the water and an awful smell. That is what you leave the city to avoid.

B-8

- We love to enjoy the rivers, but we won't take families on Saturdays because behavior is so bad.
- *I really want to see a balance between resource preservation and recreational usage. May include limiting usage through a permit system.
- I prefer Alt. A because it returns the river to a natural state while allowing limited recreation.
- I agree with this *.
- Let's not wait any longer. Let's go for the most protection we can get. We're going backward! In 30 years since the Clean Water Act we've done some negative impact. The opposition to the act has decreased in rural communities.

C-1

- Larger motor's south of log yard 60hp?
- Larger motors south of Two Rivers, no limit hp
- Access and interp at Rocky Ford Mill site
- Strict limits on hp as possible
- Unauthorized access should be closed, limited access
- Water quality issues due to motors, noticed great changes since the 1960's and more trash and impacts on aquatic sources

C-2

- Does not like the way NPS maintains roads – according to the Road and Trails Plan (1991)
- Limit access for ATV
- Need primitive restrooms in highly used camping area
- Limit horse use!

C-3

- Thank NPS for the great job their doing

- Park needs a type of forum for discussion on NPS guidelines/changes and or information sessions throughout the year
- Find a balance between resource preservation and rec usage!
- Increased #s of people who want to use the resource should be paired with less impacting uses, i.e. less big trail rides and motorized use

Laura Melton

Columbia

A-C