

St. Louis Open House
Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Public Comments on Preliminary Alternatives*
June 26, 2009

Overview

The public comments provided below were recorded on flip charts during the St. Louis Open House, held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel (Clayton) on June 26, 2009. A total of 186 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
 - JF—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.*

06/26/09 – St. Louis, MO

Greg Moss & Jodi Towery

N.A. – 1

Need more staff to enforce original intention for projection including:

- A. Closing roads and fining those trespassing.
- B. Ticketing drunk persons; four wheelers on illegal roads; ticketing littering.
- C. Limit commercial enterprises:
 - # horses/day
 - # canoes/½ day
- D. Reduce access points:
 - Change current access landings to primitive instead of developed.
- E. More support for NPS staff on rivers.
- F. More education – Visitors
 - Local Communities
 - Statewide

N.A. – 2

1. No Action Plan

- Does not single out restrictions on any one particular group.
- All visitors of ONSR should be able to enjoy the recreational activities available.
- Camping at Cardereva gravel bar should have picnic tables, trash cans, trash pick-up, plus toilet services, if required to pay for camping.
- Limit the horseback riders out of Eminence.
- Park should install and maintain restrooms or port potties on the rivers at specific area for visitors.
- Get rid of jet boats, none allowed on river, unless emergency vehicles.

N.A. – 3

- No horses allowed within the park.
- No action and no additional restrictions on river.

- No restrictions to horseback riding.
- No restrictions to motor boat use.
- Mine the gravel out of the river.
- River ways was created for recreation and current numbers of visitors does not damage the resource, therefore, numbers of tourist and locals visiting the river should not be limited.
- The resource should be available for the public to use, to touch, to experience, not just to see a picture behind your desk in the office.
- The locals take care of these resources and have for 200 years, which explains in part why they desire to live and to recreate in this area – O.N.S.R.

N.A. – 4

- Minority rights have been protected in the past from other minority groups, and they should also be protected in South Central Missouri.
- The Native Americans had their land and their rights taken away from the, as the Europeans aided by the Government and this is the case with O.N.S.R.
- Economic rights of the locals should also be protected as they also desire for the resource to be intact for future generations.
- Should turn/protect Big Spring as wilderness area, and to include the adjacent U.S.F.S. lands around that tract.
- Do not like motorboats and ATVs. They should be banned from the entire park.
- Horses should be dealt with or maintained due to horse crap in the river.
- Should allow geocaching with reasonable restrictions in the park.

N.A. – 5

- Ban motorboats and ATVs from the park.
- Limit motorboats and ATVs and horses.
- No action = no such thing. This plan will include natural degradation to the resource, which is sometimes called “entropy”. The park needs a continuous thoughtful design that promotes “appreciation”, of the entire resource that is there.
- No action is the only alternative that should be considered for the reason that there is no data that supports any damage has been done by any recreational activity (so this is all uncalled for).
- The O.N.S.R. admits that 90% of all tickets are written to tubers and canoes for alcohol and drug citations. So why should boaters be punished by HP limits.

N.A. – 6

- Canoes and tubes should be limited to specific times to put in at access points. This may prevent river congestion.
- Boaters help and rescue floaters who are in trouble. Some have saved lives.
- No action alternative provides the maximum amount of opportunities for everyone to enjoy the O.N.S.R. There is no conclusive evidence that the present regs are allowing the natural ecosystems to be harmed.
- Improve educational opportunities for children.
- Likes the no action alternative – enforce the existing regs and laws.

N.A. – 7

- Remove the HP limits, the river will regulate itself.
- The NPS & MDC should partner up to create a small mouth management zone in the Two Rivers – down zone within the park.
- Survey the park so it can be posted.
- Restrict bicycles and pedestrians use to prevent damage.
- Ban ATVs from park.
- Leave the park as primitive as possible.
- Likes the No Action Plan because of the revenue the canoe/tubes/boats bring to the local area.

N.A. – 8

- Need more boat landings north of Van Buren near Waymeyer.
- No HP limits on boats.
- Put numbers on waterways to identify problem people/floaters (commercial boats have these numbers) or any emergency reason.
- Restrict number of floating groups to stop overcrowding of both gravel bars and narrow areas where conflicts occur with motorboats.

N.A. – 9

- Lower the HP on boats, in all areas.
- Create designated horse trails and keep them away from the water.
- At designated Fords, create bridges so the motor vehicles are not in the water.
- I have been riding boats on Current River since I was two weeks old. Leave the river like it is. Nathan Moss.
- No action is not an option.
- Impose speed limits for boats on the river.
- Fewer access points.
- Education is needed for all user groups so they understand the impact of uses.
- Preserve the river and its resources.

N.A – 10

- Disagree with lowering HP on the river. It's not safe and it's discriminating.
- Lift all HP limits, so there is no HP limit.
- I suggest an elected advisory council consisting of four counties to help advise on new and old regulations pertaining to the O.N.S.R.
- Why are the motorboats users always the ones singled out for more and more regulations.
- Under the present economic conditions, it is a very poor time to arbitrarily cut the tax base for all the counties and state. Any more regs on boats and motors will have a definite negative monetary impact.
- How many times do the motor boaters save lives and aid canoeists, etc.

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6/26 – Alt. A-1

- NPS should continue with active natural resource management. E.G. Prescribed fire and invasive species control. Don't neglect the land surrounding the rivers.
- Would like to see no motorboats in this park. There are many places outside the park where motor boats can go.
- Horses and bikes should not be grouped. In alt's A & B, bikes should be considered to be human-powered vehicles and therefore treated as equal to canoes and kayaks.
- ONSR should be preserved in its natural condition so that people have the ability to experience the rivers, caves and natural environment, including the plants & animals, and watershed, in as natural a state as possible.

A-2

- Horses should be kept out of the water as much as possible, due to the impact that they have on the water quality.
- ATV use should be limited to the trails/roads that have been developed for their use, and this should be enforced!

A-1

1. No ATV's
2. No horseback riding
3. Hiking trails
4. The need to preserve areas that are wild and natural increases in America each day that goes by; for it has been truly said that "wilderness is a resource which can shrink but never grow". – Leonard Hall, Life along an Ozark River Starts Upstream.
5. No motorized boats-causes disruption and noise.
6. The fewer motors, the better.
7. Curb drunk rafting.

A-2

1. Overcrowding on wkends. Limit number of river users.
2. No motor boats in park at all!
3. More education on policies and held accountable for unlawfulness.
4. More LE on river & horseback patrolling.
5. The ATV's & horseback riding & motorboats are not compatible with conserving the clean water of the river.

6. Recreation is important. But when it becomes "ruination", we become the infamous generation.
7. People can use motorboats on the "Lake of the Ozarks" - not the rivers.

A-3

1. Montauk to Akers = KEEP NATURAL, Limit canoe-livery permits, no ATV's, no outboard motors, fewer horses!
2. We need to do all we can to preserve the water quality & pristine nature of the river....very few countries of the world have the water quality of the Missouri Rivers. Need to preserve it.
3. Limit the # number horses at one time. Canoes - Limits! Limits! Trails, horses, vehicles.
4. Limit the volume of or # of, canoes in the park. Noise and clamorous increased.
5. Restore & preserve wilderness areas.
6. The human use should be as "low impact" & non-intrusive as possible, i.e. Canoes rather than motor boats-not ATV's or ORV's.
7. Without more development – provide education for Ecosystem & plant & animal life, so that people can understand & value the whole Earth community.

A-4

1. Limit the number of horses via a permit system.
2. Keep the horses away from the stream banks with a buffer zone (compacting soil from trampling by horses, along the banks, kills vegetation & causes erosion & pollution – horse urination & fecal material).
3. Land owners who surrendered land were told do so in order to allow for a natural, primitive environment. Now to allow more development does not align with the reasons we were told the land was used for. We want to leave the land the way we were told to keep it.
4. NO ATV's on the river.
5. No more new restrictions-please leave it "AS-IS'.
6. Remove horsepower limit on the river, want to run the same speed using less gas.

A-5

1. Protect it in the most natural state possible. Limit horses, ATVs and motorized boats.
2. Put it back the way it was in 1960. Close off illegal rds. Even the rd Shannon Co. put in.
3. Keep horses out of drain(ing) into river.

4. No motors on Jacks Fork & limited horse power above Big Spring (Current River).
5. Protect & enforce easement granted by land owners.
6. The economies of local towns depend on the income brought in by the recreation created by river. Change would drastically damage these economics & should be considered when the ONSR makes these decisions.

A-6

1. We want all groups/users to be considered.
2. The ONSR is for all people (local & visitors). Plans A, B & C restrict some users so no action should be the plan chosen.
3. No motor boats allowed at all in the park!
4. All access curtailed down to & on the gravel bars.
5. Deal with human waste thru educating by the park.
6. All motor boats should be gone out of the park.
7. I would like to see all motor restrictions lifted, the river regulates itself, shallow water tears up boats. Boaters don't like canoes and canoeists. Canoeists don't like boats. They naturally avoid each other. Boaters and canoes use different parts of the river.

A-7

1. Limit regulation that tends to limit park use, let the people use the park!
2. Partner with the MO Dept of Conservation to manage Two Rivers down as a trophy small mouth river.
3. More scenic access areas along the river.
4. More maps /publications that show natural scenic areas, guide to natural beauty.
5. The no action ALT. is the best course of action to allow all segments of the population to enjoy the scenic river ways. There is no conclusive evidence to support claims that the present reg. harms any of the natural eco systems.
6. No action! Just enforce current laws!
7. Folks who work during the week are unable to enjoy a quiet experience on the river.
8. Ditto #6

A-8

1. No new restrictions leave it as is, enforce current laws. Local business will suffer if more regs are put on the park.
2. I prefer the no action Alt., all others affect local economies.

3. Support Alt. "A"
4. More development is counterproductive to the mission for which the park was created.
5. Support Alt "A"
6. NO ACTION because there is no data that says any damage is being done to the river by any recreational activity.

A-9

1. No action; all of the other Alts effect one or more of the other recreational user groups in a negative way.
2. Leave it in a natural state as possible with minimal impact from user groups.
3. Consider a permit system for river access.
4. Support Alt. "A"
5. Once you destroy it, it's gone.
6. I want my 7 year old nephew to enjoy this river- preserve it.
7. I support Alt. A-I feel that the ONSR should be maintained in as primitive condition as possible so that present & future generations can experience this natural area in as pristine condition as possible.

A-10

1. Education: teach the big picture; taking care of the river & land around it. It may be possible to allow all users groups to use the natural resources once they understand the impact – neg. or pos on that resource. Remember to respect the flow of the river upstream to downstream.
2. I would like the park to represent its natural environment and serve as an area for people to experience the watershed with minimal human intervention & development.

A-11

1. I will support Alt. A not that I'm for more regs. I just don't want it to get worse than it is already, enforce the laws already in place.
2. I'm concerned with the abuse of alcohol on the river & behavior that comes along with it.
3. Control the amount of noise pollution that I hear when I'm floating: boomboxes, cussing, rude behavior.
4. Limit the horse power on the boats along Entire River.
5. I don't think there should be any horse power limits; leave it up to LE to determine if there is a problem.
6. Majority of noise doesn't come from locals.

A-12

1. Monitor the size of groups of floaters & have some type of identification so the problem people can be identified or in case of an emergency.
2. We believe the reason for the park is to preserve area for people to enjoy the river & wildlife in its natural state.
3. Noise & other pollution from power boats & ATV's & uncontrolled horseback riding prevent this enjoyment and contribute to the destruction of this rare & valuable resource for the present & future generations.
4. Don't mess with the horse power on the boats.
5. No new wilderness areas.
6. Would like to continue to allow folks to be able to float the river & experience a good time – responsibly.
7. There should be education before people go onto the river – safety & resource protection & environmentally aware.

B-1

1. We can't take trips to the rivers because they are too rowdy for the boys. Boy Scout Leader.
2. Don't fix it if it isn't broke. Keep horse riders on trails. Bottom line – who's problem, is it? NPS resources spread thin and NPS has bigger fish to fry.
3. River eco-system, why all the algae? Are trout responsible? Trout eat bottom feeders.
4. Ban ALL motorized from Montauk to Cedar Grove, in water and along river: boats & ATV's & SUV's.
5. I'd like to see limitations on things rather than out right banning things. If you make a rule – enforce it!
6. Plant mowed areas at Big Spring/Alley Spring with native plants.
7. I like to trout fish; I'd like to see more trout. Need for people to make connection to the resource or they won't come back. At same time the uses shouldn't impair the resources.
8. Ditto – the Boy Scout leaders comments - there are many rivers in MO where people can go if they want to be rowdy!

B-2

1. No gigging or horses or powerboats or loud music at night, on the river. My main concern is to keep the river clean. No dumping in the river.
2. I'm for No Action. No action is best way for everyone to get the most out of it. Doesn't single out one group of users. No action.
3. Landowners who sold their property for the park were promised that the river & the land would be kept natural, undeveloped & pristine.
4. Horses and bikes should not be lumped together. Human powered (bikes, canoes, hikers) should be grouped together.
5. In favor of no action rule, but would like to see the old horsepower limit (prior to 1992) cheaper – old/smaller engines burn more gas to move a family on the river.

B-3

1. Any new restrictions would deter tourists from using the river ways & would devastate the economies of Reynolds, Carter & Shannon counties, who depend on the sales tax.
2. It's all about future generations. We need to think of nature first, not economics. You can make a living marketing this as a natural ecosystem. Market it as a place that is left alone. People will come. There are other rivers where people can have the other experience.

3. No conclusive evidence that the regulation "as is" have done any harm to any natural ecosystem. "No Action" would be best course of action so that everyone has the opportunity to experience the ONSR.

B-4

1. "No Action" is the only alternative, I feel, that is the one that needs to be implemented. I've been on the river all 44 years of my life. I have seen no change in the river, so there's no reason for any other alternatives.
2. No action – enforce the current laws.
3. Try a free market approach to canoe rentals, don't limit number of outfitters, "The Market" will create a natural limit to users on river.
4. No action – please keep gravel bar camping at Sinking Creek, even if you have to raise the price.
5. Figure out ways to impact the local economy minimally. Keep cultural heritage.

B-5

1. I want to float, fish & camp on the river gravel bars. Natural processes help limit hp on the river.
2. Please not have forum in this hotel – Clayton – difficult for parking. Use community colleges.
3. The conflict isn't activities per se; the conflict is the time and location. When you pull everyone into one place at same time, that's when there's conflict.
4. They need to enforce laws they already have. They need more rangers. Limit the horses.
5. Let's get enough enforcement out there to enforce the laws on the books.
6. Hire extra law enforcement to work summers. Maybe hire teachers and train them to do law enforcement. No change in horsepower limit. Would have bought a different boat/motor otherwise. A taking.

B-6

1. Current River trail is an important part of the future of the park. The zone from Round Spring down river to Brush Creek should accommodate a hiking trail under any alternative.
2. I first floated the Current in 1956 (age 16 – toted our own canoes-no outfitter then). Still do it every April. Hope you don't relax any restrictions at all – period.

3. "No action". Any other alternatives would be devastating to our community. I work at places that would be in terrible trouble w/o folks who go to the river. They should enforce the rules they have now.
4. Alt. B would do best job of balancing most peoples' wants, although I personally prefer A. I realize I'm a visitor down there and residents live there year round. "Art of the possible".

B-7

1. The locals care about the resources evidenced by the fact that they reside in this area despite the economy & other factors. The locals have taken.

B-8

1. I like Alt. A, only because in negotiations you ask for the most but settle for a little less. I'd like to see alcohol & drugs controlled. Bad to mix alcohol and guns. I feel vulnerable when I'm on the river.
2. No Change – horsepower limits as they are.
3. Rangers should be more visible, not hidden; more open will deter things from happening.
4. Must consider economic impact on area residents. Horsepower limits how many people (weight) you can carry in a boat. Could result in more boats on the rivers.
5. I think motorcycles and ATV should be allowed. Trails should be flat. More campsites, there shouldn't be a horsepower or a speed limit.

B-9

1. I don't think there should be ANY horsepower limits on the river. Horsepower not limited on the highway, but speed is. Discriminating against locals on Current River. No local will willingly agree to 25hp. For people who use it daily, not seasonally. Also think tubers & floaters need some identification on tubes in case of trouble, whether private or commercial. Control volume of tubers/floaters in one group, monitor/control.
2. I think tubers & floaters should get preference. There should be zoning to separate out from floaters and tubers. Should be some limits on HP. Facilitate multiple uses.
3. We need a HP limit because it's only practical way to limit speed. The throttle is the most practical way to regulate speed.
4. If horsepower ratings are changed, 60/40 motors could be Grandfathered in.

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C-1

- All ecosystems have a carrying capacity. Resource use has to be limited, or it will be limited for you.
- When using power tools around beautiful works of art – one must be very careful.
- Fewer ATV's!
- Fewer horse use!
- "Horse Trail Riders" of 1,000 + horses & riders 3-4 times a year out of Eminence should be LIMITED!
- Visitors of the Park need to be educated about all the recreational activities on the riverways (boats, etc).

C-2

- Heavily in favor of no action at all. Further restrictions would be economically devastating to local communities, as would restrictions on recreation. Fear that more restrictions would result in fewer tourists & a loss in sales tax.
- No change, but if there were a change, lift horse power limits. Less than 40 HP is inadequate for family boat use.
- Partner with MDC for trophy small mouth bass fishing management.
- No action, enforce current laws!

C-3

- No action, with no action alternative, provides the most opportunity for people with dif. Interests to experience National Scenic Riverways.
- There is no conclusive evidence to support claims that the present reg's are allowing the natural ecosystems to be harmed.
- Keep gravel bar camping at Sinking Creek even if you raise the fee to \$10.00 per vehicle/nt. \$5.00 is ridiculously low when the Round Spring showers look like that. No action except to modify current mgt. plan to maintain & improve current facilities.
- Use Lake of the Ozarks for motorized recreation, and use the riverways for natural recreation i.e. human powered!

C-4

- Unrestricted recreational activities i.e. Hunting, fishing, gigging, canoeing, motor boating, hiking & horseback riding.
- No limitations on Jon Boats Motor HP. Jon Boats are one of the most safe vessels.

- Some of the issues & problems people cite occur on the river, would not happen if the NPS would have uniformed employees along the river in canoes and motor boats, not to harass but to provide information and a presence which would deter rowdy behavior.

C-5

- No action!
- Enforce current laws that are in place.
- Communities need the tourists and sales tax!
- Extremely opposed to Alt. C., it will be hard to enforce, and expensive to tax payers. And it will cause the most damage to the natural resources.
- Leave Big Spring to gooseneck unrestricted!
- No action!

C-6

- What would people do in cities if we took away their recreational activities? The local communities enjoy everything the river brings us. It is OUR recreation! i.e. Boats, fishing, gigging, & etc.
- I'm for locals enjoying the river and its recreation but at the same time, take pride in it. Don't litter and don't abuse it.
- It would be great to have alcohol and guns controlled with any river use.
- Limit boat speeds to keep wakes down for canoeists.
- Encourage campers to pack out solid/human waste.
- Keep horses out of river floodplain to control waste contamination.

C-7

- Concerned about the lack of game fish on the upper Current, from Welch to Round Spring; would like to see it as it was in the 1950's & 1960's.
- Would like to see conditions stay the same on the Current River.
- Opposed to all wilderness areas. Will take away hunting areas. Poaching will be a problem.
- Horsepower should be raised from Round Spring down. Have to have 40 hp at the pump, 60 hp at power head.
- Keep current conditions the same!
- Don't want canoes stock piled along the Riverways!

C-8

- NPS needs to do a better job of communicating & educating the public, with policies and potential changes that may occur.

- NPS needs to work on building better relationships with the people who live in the area (local public relations)!
- No horse power limit within the Ozark National Riverways.
- Needs to be some type of way to be able to indentify anyone using the waterways. i.e. number on tubes, boats, canoes, and a way to link the users to the vessels.

C-9

- NPS needs to regulate the numbers of floaters per group.
- Needs to be more visible uniformed staff on the water.
- Would like no wildness areas and would like to leave the horsepower restrictions alone!
- The local economy will suffer If any changes are made; especially for the motor boats.
- Need to be more, more visible law enforcement on the water.
- The floaters need to be better educated about the boats on the river and what it takes to run safely!

C-10

- All developed camp grounds need to be private property. All electric sites' needs to be solar! I.e. hot water, etc.
- Reduce the # of access points.