

The Nationwide Rivers Inventory 19 Segments for the State of Texas

Reference Source: <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/nri/> Note: Outstanding Resource Values (ORVs) Definitions at List Bottom

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| River | County | Reach | Length (miles) | Year Listed/ Updated | Potential Classification | ORVs | Description | Other States |
|--|----------------------------|--|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Brazos River | Hood, Parker, Palo, Pinto | From headwaters Lake Granbury (AKA De Cordove Bend Reservoir) upstream to Possum Kingdom Dam (AKA Morris Sheppard Dam) | 120 | 1982 | | S, R, W, O | See Brazos River Comments | |
| <p><u>Brazos River Comments:</u> Within migration route of Whooping Crane, a federally listed endangered species. Recommended for inclusion in proposed Texas Natural Rivers System. Rated as #1 scenic and recreational river in the northern half of state by River Recreationist Survey; one of top 10 in the state. Flow regulated by Possum Kingdom Dam, often only 20 cfs, but is heavily used for recreation. Barber Mountain-Pollard Bend area is one of the state's 100 top rated natural areas because of scenic, vegetation and wildlife values. Texas Natural Areas Survey indicated that rare plants occur at springs along the bluffs. Boy Scouts use area extensively for training and badge qualifications.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| Colorado River | Burnet, San Saba, Lampasas | From headwaters of Lake Buchanan upstream to Bend | 26 | 1982 | | S, R, G | See Colorado River Comments1 | |

Colorado River Comments1: Corridor is within migration route of Whooping Crane, a federally listed endangered species. This segment of the river is part of a longer segment recommended for inclusion in proposed Texas Natural Rivers System. Among its attributes are high limestone bluffs, vistas of rugged cedar-covered hills and the existence of one of the most spectacular waterfalls in Texas, Gorman Falls. Gorman Creek enters the river over a high limestone bluff and many ferns and mosses grow on the rocks in this area (called an "ecological gem"). Elm, sycamore and pecan trees line the river. A large limestone outcropping called "flat rock" covers several acres near Bend. Although the river is shallow during dry months, there is sufficient water for canoeing and periods of heavy rainfall create excellent recreation opportunities.

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| Colorado River | McCulloch, Coleman, Concho, Runnels | From US 283 bridge south of Rockwood upstream to US 67 bridge at Ballinger | 65 | 1982 | | S, R, F, W, H, C | See Colorado River Comments2 |
| Concho River | Concho | From confluence with Colorado River in the extreme SE corner of Runnels County upstream to US 83 bridge near Paint Rock | 18 | 1982 | | S, R, F, W, H, C | See Colorado River Comments2 |

Colorado River Comments2: The most outstanding feature along these segments is the quality and quantity of archeological and historical sites. Prehistoric sites include Paleo-Indian sites, some 12,000 years old. It is likely that human remains associated with extinct mammoth, camel and horse are present. Human burials and numerous (probably the greatest concentration in Texas) burned rock middens from the Archaic Period are present. Hearths and shell deposits can be found to depths of 15'. Some sites contain central Texas and Mexican pottery. Historically, the Spanish visited the area of the confluence in 1684, and in the 1850's, the first Anglos settled. John Chisholm had a ranch here before moving to New Mexico. One of the first attempts to use barbed wire on a large scale was in this area. A number of the houses from this era are still standing, and in use. The river segments provide high quality recreational experiences, such as floating, camping, hiking and fishing. The river corridors, with cliffs, bluffs, large trees, and abundant wildlife, provide sharp contrast to the uplands through which they flow. The Concho is noted as one of the few Texas rivers which flows through semi-arid lands, creating an unusual and unique vegetative cover, including mesquite, willow, elm, pecan, yucca, and cacti. This segment of the Colorado is recommended for inclusion in the proposed state rivers system. The Colorado below the Concho consists of riffles running over ledges of sandstone and limestone into large pools. Cliffs and bluffs up to 200' are common. Wild turkeys are common, with one of the highest densities in the state.

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| Devils River | Val Verde | From Amistad Reservoir upstream to Bakers Crossing (southernmost crossing of SH 163) | 44 | 1982 | | S, R, G, F, W, H, C | See Devils River Comments | |
| <p>Devils River Comments: Historic habitat of Goodenough Gambusia, a federally listed endangered species which is extinct in the wild. Recommended as a potential component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Provides an outstanding float trip experience, considered by many to be the clearest and cleanest naturally flowing stream in Texas. #1 priority of 100 significant state natural areas. This segment is a transitional area for three biotic and botanical provinces and possesses varied and unusual fish and reptile populations. Pecan, oak and sycamore line the river banks. It is a spring-fed river, and is bordered by limestone cliffs and formations. Prehistoric evidence is abundant in numerous caves and rock shelters, which reveal pictographs and burned rock middens, and represents a higher density of sites than in other parts of southwest Texas.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| Frio River | Uvalde, Real | From Concan upstream to headwaters | 40 | 1982 | | S, R, W, H | See Frio River Comments | |
| <p>Frio River Comments: Frio Cave, potential National Natural Landmark, is in vicinity. Recommended for inclusion in proposed Texas Natural Rivers System. One of top 10 rivers in the state- very popular recreational river for canoeing and tubing. Most recreational use based at Garner State Park. It is a clear, spring-fed river. The banks are lined with bald-cypress, pecans and oaks, with limestone outcroppings and bluffs. Springs which form the Frio River issue from a 3,000 acre ranch north of Leakey. Black phoebes nest in canyons- deer and other mammals present. Old wagon tracks are visible in the rock of river bed.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| Guadalupe River | Comal, Kendall, Kerr | From headwaters of Canyon Lake upstream to headwaters near Kerrville | 81 | 1982 | | S, R, G, O | See Guadalupe River Comments | |

Guadalupe River Comments: Rated as #1 recreational river in the state, and #2 scenic river. A segment of the river was previously recommended as a Scenic Waterway. It is heavily used by canoeists, kayakers and tubers. At Edge Falls (on Curry Creek tributary), existence of extremely rare *Styrax plantnifolia* (silverbell tree) has been noted. Many Spring fed streams supply the river with a constant flow of good quality water. There are two major waterfalls and numerous rapids. Limestone bluffs line the river. Interesting limestone formations occur, such as travertine and flowstone/dripstone.

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| Medina River | Bandera | From headwaters of Lake Medina upstream to SH 173 bridge in Bandera | 12 | 1982 | | S, R | See Medina River Comments | |
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Medina River Comments: This segment is recommended for inclusion in the proposed state rivers system and is #4 in popularity in the state for floating. The river flows through an extremely scenic portion of the Hill Country. It is a small but beautiful stream, containing crystal clear water and many limestone outcroppings. The water flows swiftly over a limestone bottom and forms numerous small rapids. The Medina River is spring fed and always has a steady flow of water. It flows through rugged cedar and live oak covered hills. The corridor also contains stately bald cypress trees, draped with Spanish moss. The Medina River is a potential state parkway.

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| Neches River | Jasper, Tyler, Angelina, Polk, Trinity, Houston, Cherokee, Anderson | From the north end of B. A. Steinhagen Lake upstream to Lake Palestine | 180 | 1982 | | S, R, F, W | See Neches River Comments1 | |
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Neches River Comments1: This segment provides habitat for the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker and American Alligator, and wintering grounds for the Bald Eagle, federally listed endangered species. It partially forms the boundaries of the Davey Crockett and Angelina National Forests and is recommended for inclusion in the proposed state rivers system. This segment has good water quality; heavy rainfall and numerous tributaries provide sufficient water for recreation use. The segment flows through gently rolling hills covered with pine and hardwood forests, with trees forming a canopy over the river. The river receives significant recreation use by canoeist and fishermen. The upper reaches contain the Big Slough area, which is designated a loop canoe trail by the Forest Service and is considered a wilderness-type area. It is an area of a wide variety of vegetative types, and is highly scenic. Below Big Slough, the river is very remote and extremely scenic with forests of cypress, oak, sweetgum and pine. It is an important recreation area, and a quality recreation waterway. Public boat ramps, Forest Service campgrounds and numerous sandbars are available for recreation use. Swimming conditions are ideal at sandy beaches.

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| Neches River | Orange, Hardin, Jasper, Tyler | From confluence with Pine Island Bayou just north of Beaumont upstream to B. A. Steinhagen Lake | 60 | 1982 | | S, R, W, O | See Neches River Comments2 | |
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Neches River Comments2: This segment provides habitat for the Red Wolf, Red-Cockaded Woodpecker and American Alligator, and wintering grounds for the Bald Eagle, federally listed endangered species. The river flows through the Big Thicket National Preserve which is characterized as a transitional zone between the arid southwest and the tropical coastal marsh, and the central prairie and eastern woodlands. It has been called the ecological crossroads of North America and this unique transitional characteristic, combined with 60" of annual rainfall, provides a rich habitat for plant and animal life. It also offers vast and varied recreation and education opportunities. There are over 300 bird species, 40 wild orchid species and 9 carnivorous plant species. This segment is one of the more popular and scenic waterways in the state. Overall scenic beauty is outstanding, with thickly forested banks of pine, hardwoods, stately bald cypress and water tupelo. Water quality is good, and heavy rainfall and numerous tributaries provide sufficient water for a quality recreation experience. Public boat ramps are available and large sandbars are used for camping and day use. The southern reaches contain a maze of sloughs and swamps. The middle reaches contain hardwoods and are laced with sloughs. Jack Gore Baygall is an important natural feature, a wild, swampy area. The entire river is ideal for swimming at sandy beaches and provides good catfish fishing. It is a year-round mecca for recreationists and nature lovers.

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| Nueces River (AKA East Nueces River) | Uvalde, Real, Edwards | From southernmost SH 55 crossing (NW of Uvalde) upstream to headwaters | 54 | 1982 | | S, R, G, F, W | See Nueces River (AKA East Nueces River) Comments | |
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Nueces River (AKA East Nueces River) Comments: Devil's Sinkhole, a designated National Natural Landmark, occurs near headwaters. Montell Creek and Indian Creek Cave, potential National Natural Landmarks, are also in the vicinity. Recommended for inclusion in proposed Texas Natural Rivers System. Referred to as "purest, cleanest stretch of stream this size in Texas". Canoeable in all seasons. The river is springfed, has numerous rapids, and the banks are lined with oaks and pecans. Included in the top 100 natural areas in the state. Geologic oddities, such as "pin-ball rapids", occur. Banks are lined with ferns, sedges, switch grass, cardinal lobelia, frog fruit, and water cress. Green herons, spotted sandpipers, green kingfishers, turkey vultures and others live in river corridor.

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|-------------|------------------------------|---|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Pecos River | Val Verde, Terrell, Crockett | From Amistad Reservoir upstream to US 290 crossing near Sheffield | 108 | 1982 | | S, R, G, F, W, H, C | See Pecos River Comments | |

Pecos River Comments: Independence Creek, a potential National Natural Landmark, is a tributary to the Pecos River. The upper end is within the habitat of Lloyd's Hedgehog Cactus, a federally listed endangered species. Fort Lancaster State Park and Live Oak Creek Archaeological District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, are also located near the upper end of the segment. Recommended for inclusion in the proposed Texas Natural Rivers System. Flows through wild and rugged country with many sections of rapids. There are numerous canyons, the most spectacular ones occurring on the lower end. The Southern Pacific Railroad Bridge (lower end) was once the tallest bridge in the nation. The Pecos River is included in the listing of significant state natural areas. It is a transitional zone for three biotic and botanical provinces and supports a variety of species, with ten protected species. Numerous species reach the limits of their ranges in the watershed. The river is bordered by limestone cliffs and formations. Numerous rock shelters and a few caves reveal prehistoric evidence, such as burned rock middens, pictographs and petroglyphs.

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| Pedernales River | Travis, Hays, Blanco, Gillespie | From confluence with Lake Travis upstream to headwaters | 99 | 1982 | | S, R, W, H | See Pedernales River Comments | |
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Pedernales River Comments: LBJ National Historic Site is adjacent to river between Stonewall and Hye. River corridor is within migration route of the Whooping Crane, a federally listed endangered species. The Texas Blind Salamander, is known to exist in the upper part of Hays County. Recommended as potential component of National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. River Recreationist Survey ranked it 5th as state recreational river. LBJ State Park is adjacent to river near Stonewall. Pedernales Falls State Park provides access to Pedernales Falls, a major waterfall. River is spring-fed with many limestone formations and bluffs. Cypress Canyon-Hamilton's Pool is a significant natural area. In this area, near-unique survival conditions exist for many Edwards plateau species. West Cave Canyon is the most beautiful spot in central Texas. Bald cypress, red columbine and native orchids grow along the river, which provides habitat for abundant wildlife.

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| Red River, Prairie Dog Town Fork | Hall, Brisco, Armstrong, Randall | Highway 70 crossing at Briscoe-Hall County Line upstream to Lake Tanglewood. | 80 | 1982 | | S, R, G, H, C | See Red River, Prairie Dog Town Fork Comments | |
| <p><u>Red River, Prairie Dog Town Fork Comments:</u> Flows through Palo Duro Canyon State Park, a designated National Natural Landmark, which is significant as a "superb example of a landform that has been created by the geologic work of running water". JA Ranch, Palo Duro Canyon in Armstrong County, has been designated a National Historic Landmark. There is also evidence of the use of the Canyon by prehistoric man as well as several Plains Indian Tribes. River is used by canoeists when stream flow is sufficient.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| Sabinal River | Uvalde, Bandera | From US 90 crossing in Sabinal upstream to headwaters | 37 | 1982 | | S, R, G, W, O | See Sabinal River Comments | |
| <p><u>Sabinal River Comments:</u> Within habitat of Tobusch Fishhook Cactus, a federally listed endangered species. Lost Maples State Natural Area, a designated National Natural Landmark is near headwaters. Recommended for inclusion in proposed Texas Natural Rivers System. Hiking trail in Lost Maples Natural Area recommended for inclusion in proposed Texas Trails System. Sabinal Canyon is a wooded canyon with the only good stand of Big Tooth Maples in central Texas Hill Country. Many canyon wrens and other birds. Scenic limestone canyon walls (to 300 feet). River is spring-fed. Gorgeous fall colors. New National Champion Texas Ash and Escarpment Black Cherry north of Vanderpool.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| Sabine River | Orange, Newton (Calcasieu, Beauregard and Vernon Parishes in LA) | From I-10 crossing above Sabine Lake upstream to Toledo Bend Reservoir | 110 | 1982 | | S, R, W | See Sabine River Comments1 | LA |

Sabine River Comments1: Federally listed endangered species occurring in the area are: Red Wolf, Bald Eagle, Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, American Alligator and Arctic Perigrine Falcon migration corridor. Recommended for inclusion in proposed Texas Natural Rivers System. River maintains larger flow of water due to heavy rainfall and numerous tributaries and springs, with long isolated stretches. Forested, gently rolling hills in area. Banks are heavily vegetated with stately cypress trees and other hardwoods. River is popular for float trips. Swampy terrain provides habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Fine white sand bars utilized for camping and day use.

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| Sabine River | Panola, Harrison, Rusk | From headwaters of Toledo Bend Reservoir upstream to town of Easton (near Lake Cherokee) | 50 | 1982 | | S, W, H | See Sabine River Comments2 | |
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Sabine River Comments2: The Red-Cockaded Woodpecker and the American Alligator, federally listed endangered species, inhabit the area. Part of a segment of the Sabine River recommended for inclusion in a proposed state system in 1973. This segment is characterized by: (1) a low gradient streambed with associated marshes, sloughs, bayous, oxbows and backwaters; (2) a near total lack of riffle rapid and waterfall areas; (3) a broad, deeply cut channel; (4) a diverse mixture of bottomland hardwood forests, pine ecosystems and wetland habitats with all stages of the hydric-xeric successional continuum being well represented; (5) diverse plant and animal assemblages; (6) archaeological and historical sites of potential importance; (7) a minimum of human development within sight of the river; and (8) outstanding scenic qualities. At least 7 Natural Areas are present, including "Woodland Cathedral", a natural oxbow lake amphitheater containing a nearly pristine oak-cypress-sweetgum forest, which is being leased by the Nature Conservancy. A number of state listed threatened/endangered species potentially occur in the corridor.

| River | County | Reach | Length (miles) | Year Listed/Updated | Potential Classification | ORVs | Description | Other States |
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| Terlingua Creek | Brewster | From confluence with Rio Grande to Adams Ranch | 51 | 1982 | | S, G, O | See Terlingua Creek Comments | |

Terlingua Creek Comments: Joins the Rio Grande at Santa Elena Canyon, one of the most spectacular canyons along the Rio Grande. Terlingua Creek is partially within Big Bend National Park and possesses similar qualities. Corridor is rugged and barren with scenic canyons and cliffs. Although intermittent, the creek provides water for a unique desert environment, which prompts limited recreational use in the corridor.

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| Village Creek and Big Sandy Creek | Hardin, Polk | From confluence with Neches River upstream to headwaters | 81 | 1982 | | S, R, F, W | See Village Creek and Big Sandy Creek Comments |
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Village Creek and Big Sandy Creek Comments: The Red Wolf, Red-Cockaded Woodpecker and American Alligator, federally listed endangered species, inhabit the area. The rivers flow through portions of Big Thicket National Preserve. Recommended for inclusion in proposed Natural Rivers System. River Recreationist Survey rated Village Creek as the #1 scenic and recreational river in East Texas. Heavily used by canoeists floating through Big Thicket National Preserve. Noted as a high priority significant natural area, associated with Big Thicket National Preserve. Attributes of the Preserve apply to these waterways (outstanding botanical, zoological, ecological, scenic, natural and recreational values). Many species of flora and fauna represent a variety of ecotypes.

Outstanding Resource Values (ORV) Definitions:

Scenery (S): The landscape elements of landform, vegetation, water, color, and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features and/or attractions. When analyzing scenic values, additional factors -- such as seasonal variations in vegetation, scale of cultural modifications, and the length of time negative intrusions are viewed -- may be considered. Scenery and visual attractions may be highly diverse over the majority of the river or river segment.

Recreation (R): Recreational opportunities are, or have the potential to be, popular enough to attract visitors from throughout or beyond the region of comparison or are unique or rare within the region. Visitors are willing to travel long distances to use the river resources for recreational purposes. River-related opportunities could include, but are not limited to, sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, photography, hiking, fishing and boating.

- o Interpretive opportunities may be exceptional and attract, or have the potential to attract, visitors from outside the region of comparison.
- o The river may provide, or have the potential to provide, settings for national or regional usage or competitive events.

Geology (G): The river, or the area within the river corridor, contains one or more example of a geologic feature, process or phenomenon that is unique or rare within the region of comparison. The feature(s) may be in an unusually active stage of development, represent a "textbook" example, and/or represent a unique or rare combination of geologic features (erosional, volcanic, glacial, or other geologic structures).

Cultural (C): The river or area within the river corridor contains archaeological sites or areas significant to traditional cultures. Examples might be American Indian burial grounds, petroglyphs, the oldest known human use site in a region, or streams that support traditional agriculture, subsistence fishing, or religious ceremonies

Fish (F): Fish values may be judged on the relative merits of either fish populations, habitat, or a combination of these river-related conditions.

- *Populations:* The river is nationally or regionally an important producer of resident and/or anadromous fish species. Of particular significance is the presence of wild stocks and/or federal or state listed (or candidate) threatened, endangered or sensitive species. Diversity of species is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of "outstandingly remarkable."
- *Habitat:* The river provides exceptionally high quality habitat for fish species indigenous to the region of comparison. Of particular significance is habitat for wild stocks and/or federal or state listed (or candidate) threatened, endangered or sensitive species. Diversity of habitats is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of "outstandingly remarkable."

Wildlife (W): Wildlife values may be judged on the relative merits of either terrestrial or aquatic wildlife populations or habitat or a combination of these conditions.

- *Populations:* The river, or area within the river corridor, contains nationally or regionally important populations of indigenous wildlife species. Of particular significance are species considered to be unique, and/or populations of federal or state listed (or candidate) threatened, endangered or sensitive species. Diversity of species is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of "outstandingly remarkable."
- *Habitat:* The river, or area within the river corridor, provides exceptionally high quality habitat for wildlife of national or regional significance, and/or may provide unique habitat or a critical link in habitat conditions for federal or state listed (or candidate) threatened, endangered or sensitive species. Contiguous habitat conditions are such that the biological needs of the species are met. Diversity of habitats is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of "outstandingly remarkable."

Prehistory (P): The river, or area within the river corridor, contains a site(s) where there is evidence of occupation or use by Native Americans. Sites must have unique or rare characteristics or exceptional human interest value(s). Sites may have national or regional importance for interpreting prehistory; may be rare and represent an area where a culture or cultural period was first identified and described; may have been used concurrently by two or more cultural groups; and/or may have been used by cultural groups for rare sacred purposes. Many such sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is administered by the NPS.

History (H): The river or area within the river corridor contains a site(s) or feature(s) associated with a significant event, an important person, or a cultural activity of the past that was rare or one-of-a-kind in the region. Many such sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A historic site(s) and/or features(s) is 50 years old or older in most cases.

Other Values (O): While no specific national evaluation guidelines have been developed for the "other similar values" category, assessments of additional river-related values consistent with the foregoing guidance may be developed -- including, but not limited to, hydrology, paleontology and botany resources.