

## Wild and Scenic River

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 USC 1271-1287) Public Law 90-542, approved October 1968 established a National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The reason for this act is noted in Section 1(b) of the Act, “It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstanding remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.”

It is extremely unlikely that any USDA Rural Development Project will ever impact the section of the Rio Grande River that is designated a Wild and Scenic River. The location of this area within Brewster and Terrell Counties in the Big Bend Area of Texas is too remote and inaccessible for development. Other States like Oregon and Idaho have several designated rivers and have to be more attentive to this in their environmental reviews.

A project that is near the Rio Grande River and has a water discharge into a watershed that is upstream from the designated Wild and Scenic area could have an environmental impact and would require a detail review.

To find information about the “Wild and Scenic Rivers Act”, simply input the words into a web search engine such as “Google”. There is generally more information than you will ever need for an environmental report. One good source for information for Wild and Scenic Rivers can be found here: <http://www.rivers.gov>. The option buttons along the top of the page will access a wealth of information on the topics available.

By clicking on the “National System”, a list of designated rivers by state will display. Scroll down and locate Texas. You can click on the provided links to obtain additional information about the Rio Grande River.

To access a map of all the designed rivers in the lower 48 States, move the screen arrow over the “Publications” button on the Home Page. Then click on the, “Maps & GIS” button in the drop-down menu. Scroll down and click on the link to the, “Download the US Map” in either 72 dpi, 150 dpi, or 200 dpi. An option box will ask you if you want to open, save or cancel the page. Recommend to save the map to your computer for later access or editing.





## Rio Grande

### Texas

Big Bend National Park  
 Post Office Box 129  
 Big Bend National Park, Texas 79834  
 Telephone: (915) 477-2251

**Designated Reach:** November 10, 1978. The segment on the United States side of the river from river mile 842.3 above Mariscal Canyon downstream to river mile 651.1 at the Terrell-Val Verde County line.

**Classification/Mileage:** Wild — 95.2 miles; Scenic — 96.0 miles; Total — 191.2 miles.

This 191-mile stretch of the United States side of the Rio Grande along the Mexican border begins in Big Bend National Park. The river cuts through isolated, rugged canyons and the Chihuahuan Desert as it flows through some of the most critical wildlife habitat in the country.

Related Sites: [Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River \(National Park Service\)](#)  
[Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park](#)

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Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, Texas

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