

final

wild and scenic river study

june 1984

ESCATAWPA RIVER

MISSISSIPPI-ALABAMA



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U. S. administration.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY

Escatawpa River
Alabama and Mississippi

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

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I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Escatawpa River Study applied criteria provided in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the "National Wild and Scenic Rivers System: Final Revised Guidelines for Eligibility and Classification and Management of River Areas," published in the Federal Register, September 7, 1982. In addition, an analysis was made to determine the suitability of designating eligible river segments as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Study findings were based upon field surveys by air, land and water, extensive literature and data surveys, and numerous comments (written and oral) received from citizens, landowners, and public and private organizations.

1. That portion of the authorized study river starting approximately 1 mile downstream from the confluence of the Escatawpa River and Jackson Creek, to a point approximately 1 mile upstream from the same confluence was found ineligible due to existing shoreline development. (Approximately 2 river miles are ineligible.)
2. That portion of the Escatawpa River beginning approximately 2 river miles from the southern terminus of the study area and extending upstream approximately 14 river miles to the Jackson County Route 614 bridge was found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable scenic and recreational values. (Approximately 14 river miles are eligible and classified as scenic.)
3. That portion of the Escatawpa River from the Jackson County Route 614 bridge upstream approximately 22 river miles to a point approximately 1 river mile upstream from the U.S. Highway 98 bridge were found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable recreational values. (Approximately 22 river miles are eligible and are classified as recreational.)
4. That portion of the Escatawpa River from a point approximately 1 river mile upstream from the U.S. Highway 98 bridge upstream approximately 31 river miles, and to include approximately 7 river miles of Brushy Creek upstream from its confluence with Scarsborough Creek, to a point approximately 2 river miles downstream from the Yellowhouse Branch confluence with the Escatawpa River near the town of Deer Park, Alabama, were found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable scenic and recreation values. (Approximately 38 river miles are eligible and classified as scenic.)
5. That portion of the Escatawpa River from the northern terminus of the authorized study area at the Yellowhouse Branch confluence to a point downstream approximately 2 river miles was found ineligible due to residential development in close proximity to the river, and seasonally low flow. (Approximately 2 river miles are ineligible.)

Following determination of eligibility, an assessment of the Escatawpa's suitability for inclusion into the National System was made. Suitability is a matter of judgment regarding factors such as the following:

- a. whether or not the public and elected officials support designation;
- b. whether means can be found to protect the river at acceptable costs; and
- c. whether an administering body, either Federal, State, local or a combination of same can be found to manage the river.

The Secretary of the Interior reports to the President on the suitability or nonsuitability of a river for the National System. The President then reports his recommendations and proposals to the Congress with respect to designation.

Public opinion expressed through public workshops and written correspondence was strongly opposed to any Federal designation or management of the Escatawpa. In addition to the opposition from landowners, three county governments in the area--Jackson and George Counties, Mississippi, and Washington County, Alabama--passed resolutions against designation. The Sheriff and the Tax Assessor from George County both object to wild and scenic status for the river. Representatives of forest products companies owning land along the river were solidly opposed to designation. No official position has been taken by the State of Mississippi; however, the Governor of Alabama supports the findings and recommendations of this report. Mobile County, Alabama, submitted a resolution supporting designation and conservation groups also supplied statements in favor of making the Escatawpa a wild and scenic river.

Opponents of designation strongly oppose any governmental management (State or local) of the river beyond enforcement of existing laws and regulations.

State and/or local management of the eligible segment in the National System could be sought through provisions of Section 2(a)(ii) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

If State and/or local governments should wish to administer the eligible river segment as a component of the National System, application can be made by the Governor to the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of Section 2(a)(ii) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which authorizes the Secretary to add eligible river segments to the National System if certain conditions are met. (Section V of this report discusses the requirements for including a river in the National System under Section 2(a)(ii) of the Act.)

II. CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

Background and Purpose of Study

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542, October 2, 1968) established a national policy to preserve outstanding rivers or river segments in their free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was established by designating eight rivers as initial components. The Act and amendments authorized the study of additional rivers to determine their potential as components of the System. Currently, 61 rivers or river segments are included in the National System. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended by Public Law 95-625, November 10, 1978, added the Escatawpa River to the study list. The study authorization was as follows:

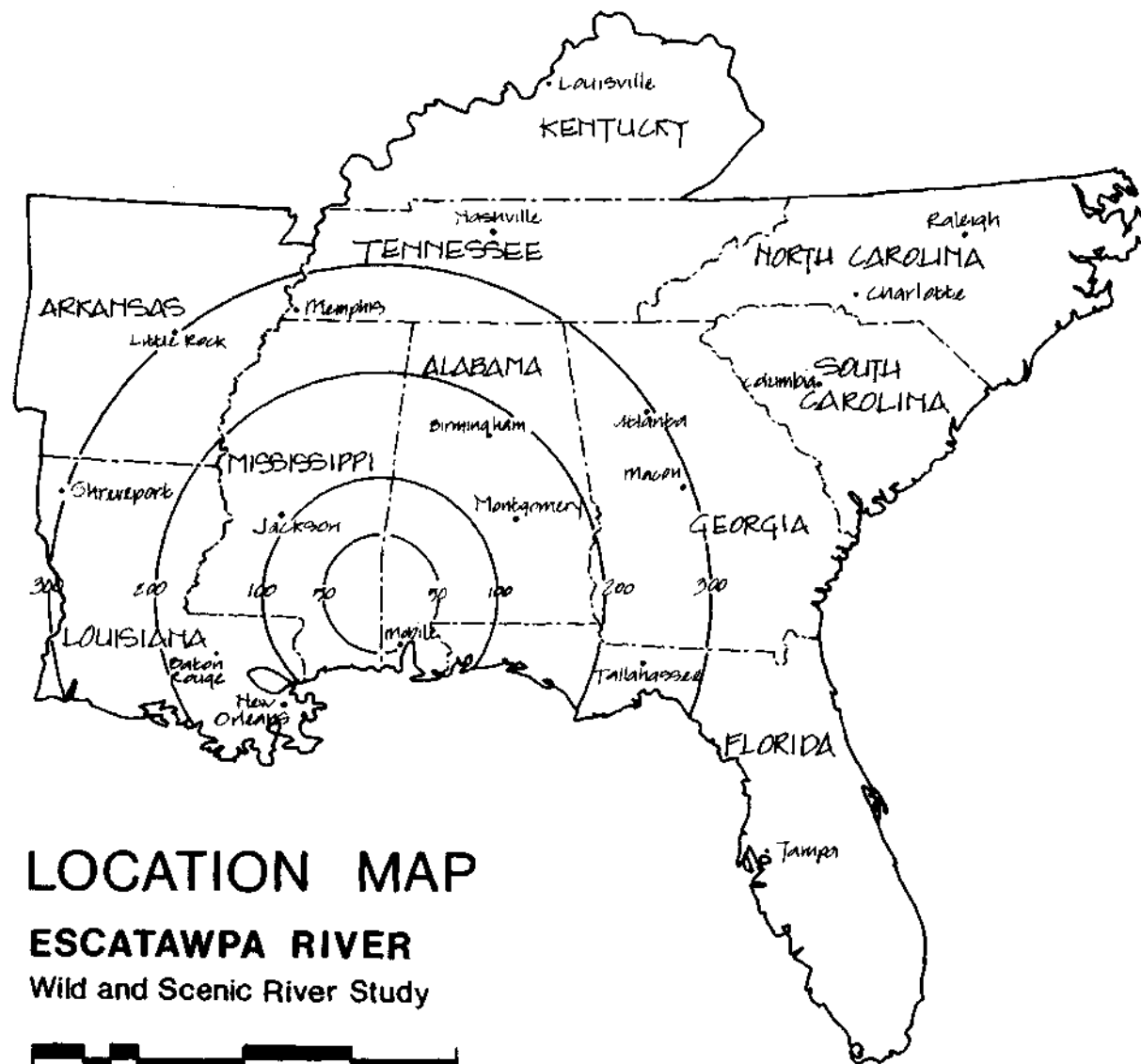
(69) Escatawpa, Alabama and Mississippi. The segment upstream from a point approximately 1 mile downstream from the confluence of the Escatawpa River and Jackson Creek to a point where the Escatawpa River is joined by the Yellowhouse Branch in Washington County, Alabama, near the town of Deer Park, Alabama; and the segment of Brushy Creek upstream from its confluence with the Escatawpa to its confluence with Scarsborough Creek.

Prior planning efforts on the Escatawpa have been limited. The Corps of Engineers has two past studies which relate to the Escatawpa, a navigation study of the lower reaches of the river and a study of water supply problems in Jackson County, Mississippi. No action has been taken as a result of these studies. The water supply study included proposals for a major dam (Harleston Dam and Lake), but the Corps decided in 1976 not to seek project authorization because: (1) the dam would inhibit proper assimilation of waste discharges; (2) flood damages along the Escatawpa are minimal; (3) interest in preservation of the river in its natural state; and (4) strong objections of local landowners.

In 1975 the State of Alabama completed the "Water Quality Management Plan for the Escatawpa River Basin" in accordance with Section 303(e) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, 1972.

The purpose of this study is to determine the eligibility and suitability of the Escatawpa River or any of its segments for designation as a wild, scenic, and/or recreational river.

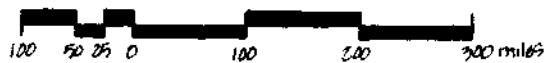
These determinations are made based on "National Wild and Scenic Rivers System: Final Revised Guidelines for Eligibility and Classification and Management of River Areas," published in the Federal Register, Tuesday, September 7, 1982.



LOCATION MAP

ESCATAWPA RIVER

Wild and Scenic River Study



The study was prepared by the National Park Service, Rivers and Trails Division, Southeast Regional Office in consultation with Federal, State and local government representatives, landowners, organizations and the general public. The Rivers and Trails Division reconnoitered the entire study river and collected and analyzed technical information from knowledgeable individuals, organizations, and agencies. Public comments, ideas and concerns expressed during public workshops were an important element of this study. The draft report was reviewed by all concerned parties, and the final report incorporates comments received on the draft report.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are frequently used throughout the Escatawpa River report:

Study Area: The portion of the Escatawpa River authorized for study and its immediate environment, which, in this study, is the land area extending 1/4 mile from each river bank.

River Area: That part of the river and its immediate environment eligible for inclusion in the National System.

Region: The surrounding environment of the study area, extending for several miles or more, which affects and is used to describe the river for study purposes. The regional boundary encompasses the counties through which the river flows.

Designation: Inclusion of a river area in the National System either by act of Congress or by authority of the Secretary of the Interior.

Eligibility: Qualification of a river or river segment for inclusion in the National System through determination that it is free flowing and, with its adjacent land area, possesses at least one outstandingly remarkable value.

Eligible Segment: The portion of the study river which is eligible for the National System.

Classification: The process of determining which of the classes defined in Section 2(b) of Public Law 90-542 (wild, scenic, or recreational) are appropriate for various segments of the river.

Suitability: A determination as to whether an eligible segment should be included in the National System based on such factors as extent of public lands in the river area; costs required for acquisition, development, management and operation; public, local or State interest in acting to protect and manage the river; the feasibility and timeliness of such action, etc.

Issues and Concerns

The concerns expressed during public workshops conducted in April 1983 are indicative of the polarization of landowners and recreation users concerning the degree of protection needed for the Escatawpa. Landowners

feel they are very conscientious in maintaining their land in a manner which protects and in some cases enhances the Escatawpa's environs. Landowners oppose the idea that a governmental entity would provide better stewardship. Conversely, users feel that timber cutting and development are inevitable and will result in degradation of the river resource without river designation and formalized governmental protection. Representative comments are summarized as follows:

Resource Issues:

Increased erosion, siltation and loss of scenic and recreation values due to timber harvest operations will occur if unprotected.

Greater pressure in the future for residential or second home development along portions of the river if not designated.

Increased recreational use resulting in degradation of soils, vegetation, fish and wildlife, water quality as well as increased vandalism, littering and forest fires would affect private landowners and river resources if designated.

Substantial loss of valuable private timber resources and the resulting adverse economic impacts if designated.

Public Concerns:

Suspicion of and opposition to governmental management of the Escatawpa River is very strong. Strongest opposition concerns any form of federal presence on the Escatawpa. It is generally felt that personal property rights as well as local public enjoyment of the river would be greatly decreased if not lost following designation.

Additional concerns which were heard often include:

Fear that national designation would invite overuse of the resource resulting in litter, pollution, vandalism, trespass, fire, poorer fishing, disregard for private property, and increased control and regulation of private property.

Belief that the Federal Government would eventually acquire private lands and dictate local zoning and development policy.

Fear that national designation would result in the termination of hunting and fishing.

Concern that States and local governments would be ineffective in preserving the resource values through enforcement of existing water quality standards, health codes and zoning regulations.

Concern that neither the State or local governments could commit the necessary funds or manpower to manage and protect the river.

Public Involvement

At the beginning of the Escatawpa Study a mailing list was developed consisting of elected officials, government agencies, local media and private organizations and individuals with a potential interest in the study. This mailing list was continually expanded as the study progressed.

In September 1982 notification of the study start was sent to all those on the mailing list. A news release was also distributed to the local media to inform the general public.

Informal meetings and consultations were held with government agencies and knowledgeable organizations and individuals to solicit information and opinions regarding the river's eligibility and suitability for national designation.

Field reconnaissance of the study area was made on three occasions and included both float trips on the river and aerial observation.

In April 1983 a public planning workshop brochure and questionnaire were distributed to those on the mailing list as well as those attending two public meetings held that same month. Approximately 450 people attended the meetings held at Mobile, Alabama, and Pascagoula, Mississippi. The public's views were sought on preliminary eligibility findings and river protection options, including national designation.

In June 1983 a summary of the opinions expressed at the planning workshops was sent out and additional public comment solicited.

This draft study report was then prepared and distributed to governmental agencies and the public for review and comment.

III. EVALUATION

Eligibility

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542) states that in order for a river to be eligible for designation, a river or river segment must possess one or more outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, and it must be free flowing.

Approximately 67 miles of the Escatawpa River and 7 miles of its Brushy Creek tributary have been found to be free flowing and to have either outstandingly remarkable scenic or recreational values and, therefore, eligible for designation as a national wild and scenic river. With the exception of five bridge crossings, several utility crossings (submerged natural gas lines and overhead electric lines), several isolated fishing cabins and infrequent signs of commercial forest practices, the entire study area appears very remote and free of man-made intrusions. Vegetation is lush and remarkably scenic. Wildlife appears abundant. To the credit of the private landowners the entire study area is uncommonly primitive and beautiful. The river's black water meanders through both hardwood and pine forests passing numerous wide, brilliantly-white sand beaches providing exceptional recreational opportunities for day-use or over-night trips.

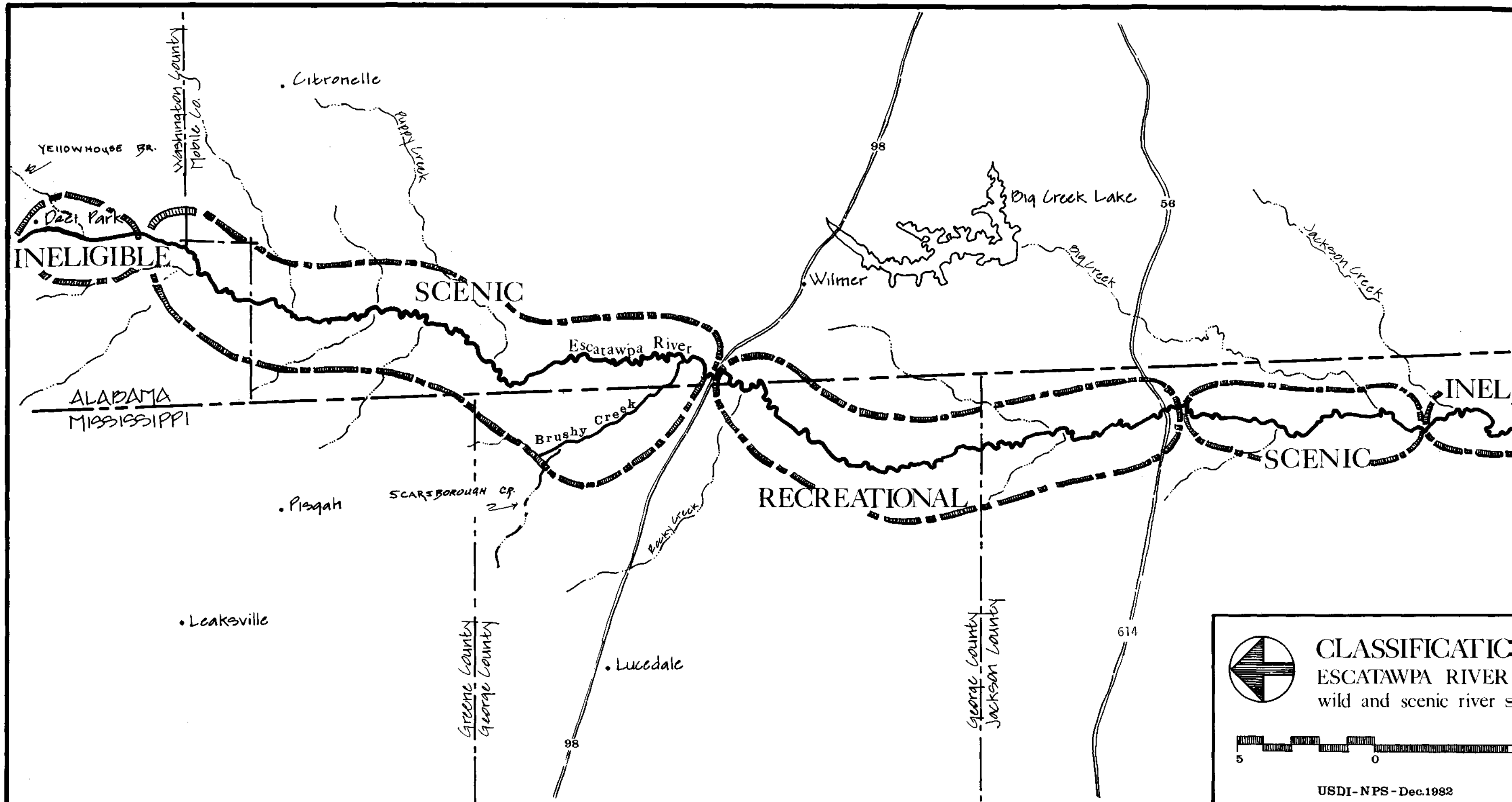
The Escatawpa River is probably the finest undeveloped black water stream in the nation. Although less than an hours drive from metropolitan Mobile, Alabama, and the rapidly industrializing Pascagoula, Mississippi, the Escatawpa has a unique naturalness due primarily to the stewardship of the relatively few, large landowners.

Classification

Based upon an evaluation of the existing levels of development for the eligible segment of the Escatawpa River, potential classification categories were determined. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires that study rivers found eligible for designation be classified as either wild, scenic, or recreational depending on the river's degree of naturalness. The classification categories are defined as follows:

Wild river areas--Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.

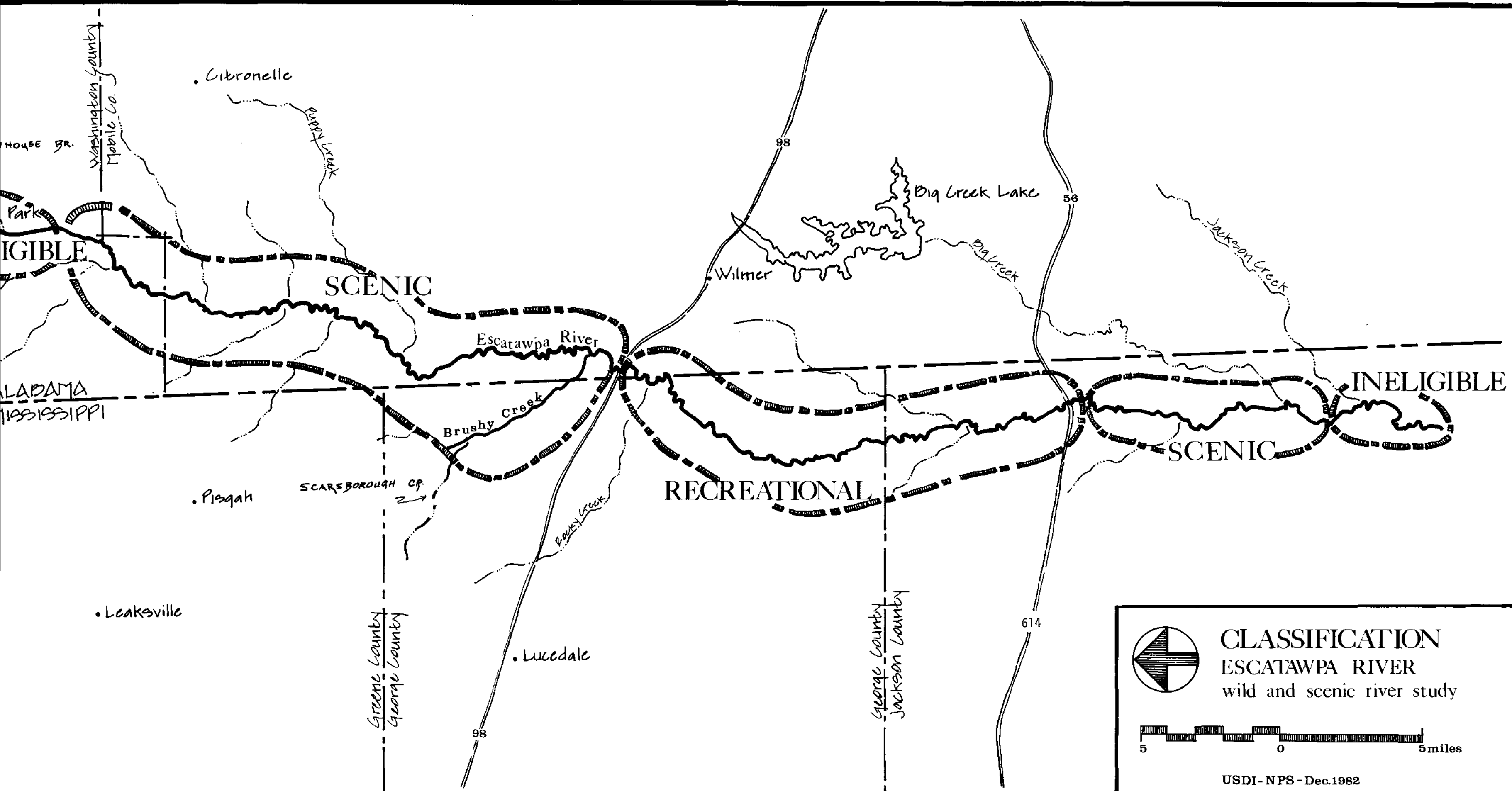
Scenic river areas--Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.



CLASSIFICATION
ESCATAWPA RIVER
wild and scenic river s



USDI - NPS - Dec. 1982



Recreational river areas--Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

As previously described in the "Summary of Findings", page 1, of this report, the river classifications are graphically displayed on the map on page 9.

Suitability

As the study progressed, several possible alternatives for the future of the Escatawpa River were developed to serve as a basis for discussion and evaluation of the river's suitability for designation. These alternatives ranged from "no action" to designation as a national wild and scenic river. The considered alternatives were presented to the public during public workshops in April 1983. A brief description of these alternatives follow:

Alternative A - Congressional designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa as a national wild and scenic river with Federal or Federal/State management

With this alternative, Congress would pass legislation designating all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa as a national wild and scenic river. The river would be managed jointly by the Federal and State Governments.

Alternative B - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River within the States of Alabama and Mississippi with cooperative management between Alabama and Mississippi

Before the Secretary of the Interior could designate any segment of the Escatawpa, the State(s) would have to designate it as a component of a State Wild and Scenic Rivers System or pass single purpose legislation designating the Escatawpa as a wild and scenic river. The Governor(s) could then apply to the Secretary of the Interior outlining a proposed program of action to protect the natural values of the river. If the Secretary feels the program of action would provide effective protection of these values, he could designate the Escatawpa as a component of the National System.

Alternative C - Protection at the Local Level

Another option which could be used to protect the river would be for local governments to control the quantity and quality of development occurring in the river corridor through their zoning and permitting authorities. This could be done by each county separately, or jointly by multicounty agreement. Another possibility would be the establishment of a River

Corridor Commission covering all or part of the Escatawpa. The Commission would be comprised of representatives from counties, towns, landowners, area planning councils and local interest groups. The Commission would define a river corridor and be empowered through applicable State laws to protect that corridor through a variety of means such as planning, implementing zoning and subdivision regulations, acquiring property through donation or purchase, or developing and operating facilities.

Alternative D - No Action/Existing Trends

Under this alternative no action would be taken by Federal, State, local governments or private organizations to provide any special protection for the Escatawpa. Existing conditions and trends would determine the future use of the river.

Extent of Public Lands in the River Area

The extent of publicly-owned land in the river area weighs heavily in evaluating whether a river is suitable for designation. There are no public lands in the entire study area. Approximately 60 percent of the land is owned and managed by forest product companies. Much of the remaining 40 percent is under long-term lease to the forest product industry.

The lack of publicly-owned lands along the river would make development and implementation of a protection program relatively expensive unless satisfactory protection mechanisms other than acquisition were feasible and practical.

Public Interest in River Protection

Public input was obtained through public workshops, letters, telephone conversations and individual meetings. The overwhelming consensus of the public meetings was that the Escatawpa River should be left as it is. Landowners felt that they were doing a good job of protecting the river and were strongly opposed to any Federal or State involvement with the Escatawpa.

Those who opposed any special governmental protection for the Escatawpa cited several different reasons in support of their position. Among them were:

- 1) Opposition to governmental acquisition of privately-owned land.
- 2) Fear that designation would result in increasing incidences of trespass, litter, vandalism, etc.
- 3) Belief that the river is not under any imminent threats of development or degradation.
- 4) Belief that existing laws and regulations are adequate to protect the river.

Some individual citizens and members of conservation organizations were in favor of special protection for the Escatawpa. They expressed concern that without additional protection the river would be subject to incremental development and timber harvest practices which would ultimately destroy its outstanding aesthetic values.

State and Local Government Interest in River Protection and Management

Neither Mississippi nor Alabama have State river protection legislation. Neither State has expressed a priority interest in protecting the Escatawpa River in view of budgetary constraints and the apparent strong landowner opposition to governmental river protection. Three of the four counties in the study area presented resolutions in opposition to river protection. One, Mobile County, Alabama, presented a resolution favoring national designation.

IV. ALTERNATIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

Although, the Escatawpa was found to qualify for inclusion in the national system, a viable, feasible protection alternative must be found. The following discussion evaluates each alternative and the conclusions drawn from study of each:

Alternative A - Congressional designation of all or part of the eligible segment of the Escatawpa as a national wild and scenic river with Federal or Federal/State Management.

Discussion: Federal budgetary constraints have imposed severe limitations on Federal parkland acquisition and operational funds. No public ownership exists on the Escatawpa thus necessitating fee or easement acquisition in addition to substantial management funds as a minimal Federal expenditure if designated. Currently, the river resource does not appear to be in danger of substantial alterations due to development projects. Citizen support for designation has been indicated primarily via correspondence; however, riverfront landowners and many citizens do not favor designation.

Conclusion: Although eligible the Escatawpa is not suitable for Congressional designation at the present time.

Alternative B - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River with State or joint State/local Management.

Discussion: Section 2(a)(ii) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act provides for this method of designation. Neither the State of Alabama or the State of Mississippi have State wild and scenic river legislation or a program of protection for the Escatawpa River both of which are required by the Act prior to Secretarial designation. Planning assistance could be provided by the Federal Government to either State to assist in such a program, but the States must initiate this action.

Conclusion: Without required State river programs, although eligible the Escatawpa cannot be considered for Secretarial designation at the present time.

Alternative C - No designation/protection at the local level.

Discussion: A number of local river protection options have proven effective throughout the nation. This alternative has appeal for the Escatawpa since only four counties (2 in Mississippi and 2 in Alabama) border the entire study river and since the resource is relatively undisturbed at present. Local governments have the opportunity to restrict the quantity and assure the quality of development occurring in the river corridor through their zoning and permitting authorities. This could be done by each county separately, or jointly by multicounty agreement.

Another possibility would be the establishment of a River Corridor Commission covering all or part of the Escatawpa. The Commission could be comprised of representatives from counties, towns, landowners, area planning councils and local interest groups. The Commission could define a river corridor and be empowered through applicable State laws to protect that corridor through a variety of means such as planning, implementing zoning and subdivision regulations, acquiring property through donation or acquisition, or developing and operating facilities.

Conclusion: Although local protection of the Escatawpa is possible, a central focal point to guide such an effort would have to emerge to spearhead this effort and provide overall continuity. The current intense local opposition would be a substantial impediment to local protection.

Alternative D - No action/existing trends.

Discussion: The Escatawpa is clearly eligible to be a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and is particularly outstanding among coastal blackwater candidates; however, feasibility of undertaking an ambitious river protection program by any level of government at the present time is doubtful. River landowners have done, for the most part, a remarkable job of preserving the rivers outstanding scenic, natural and recreational characteristics.

Conclusion: In lieu of a feasible management alternative, it is concluded that a continuation of existing trends is the likely course of action for the foreseeable future. If this should lead to an eventual deterioration of the Escatawpa's natural values, this study may point to several alternatives to halt that process.

The "Alternative Analysis Matrix," page 15 provides a more graphic presentation of the alternatives evaluation.

ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS MATRIX

<u>Alternatives</u>	<u>Major Issues Considered</u>					
	<u>Federal</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Local Government</u>	<u>River Protection Interest</u>	<u>Landowners</u>	<u>Forest Industry</u>
Alternative A:						
Congressional designation with federal or federal/State management.	No existing federal ownership and budgetary constraints on new park land acquisition. No imminent threat.	No existing ownership. No proposed acquisition. No proposed management.	Opposed to designation, except Mobile County.	Preferred alternative of organized river protection groups.	Adamantly opposed to federal presence to include designation and management.	Opposed to any possible land controls or loss of land.
Alternative B:						
Secretarial designation with State management (Section 2(a)(ii) designation).	Requires State initiative. Could receive federal planning and assistance through existing programs.	No existing or pending State legislation as required for Section 2(a)(ii) designation.	Same as above.	Considered to be less desirable than Alternative A, but would support.	Adamantly opposed.	Oppose - same as above.
Alternative C:						
Local protection (no federal designation).	Would support and cooperate. Would not be sufficient for federal designation.	Would support and cooperate.	Protection efforts to date are varied.	Considered inadequate protection alternative but would support in lieu of Alternative A or B.	Considered adequate at present.	Considered to be adequate at present.
Alternative D:						
No action/existing trends.	Preliminary preferred alternative in lieu of another feasible alternative at the present time.	Would continue current programs such as fire control, etc.	Would continue to enforce current standards and policies relating to the river resource.	Considered to be unacceptable alternative.	Preferred alternative.	Preferred alternative.

V. THE RIVER ENVIRONMENT

The Escatawpa River study area is fully contained within a four-county area of Alabama and Mississippi. Accordingly, resource information gathered was limited primarily to this four-county area.

Location and Access

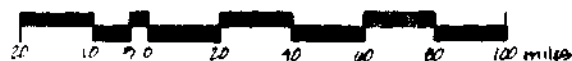
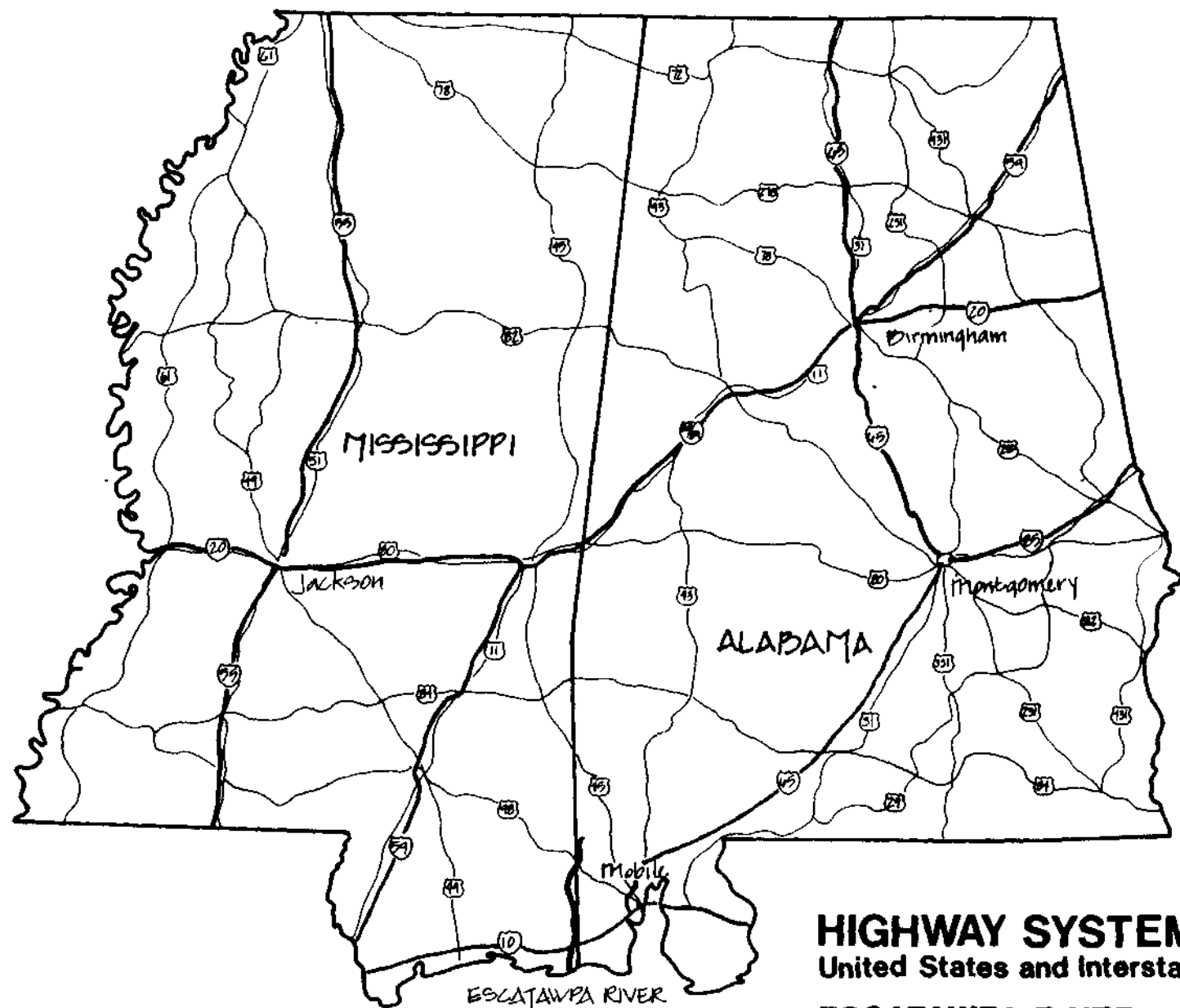
The Escatawpa River Basin is located in the southwestern portion of Alabama and southeastern corner of Mississippi. The Escatawpa River Study area begins in the southwestern portion of Washington County, Alabama, where the river flows southwesterly through the northwestern corner of Mobile County, Alabama, before continuing southwesterly through George and Jackson Counties, Mississippi. The study area ends before the Escatawpa's confluence with the much larger Pascagoula River near Pascagoula, Mississippi. The basin is approximately 15 miles wide and 100 miles long with approximately one-half of the 80 study area river miles in Alabama and the remainder in Mississippi.

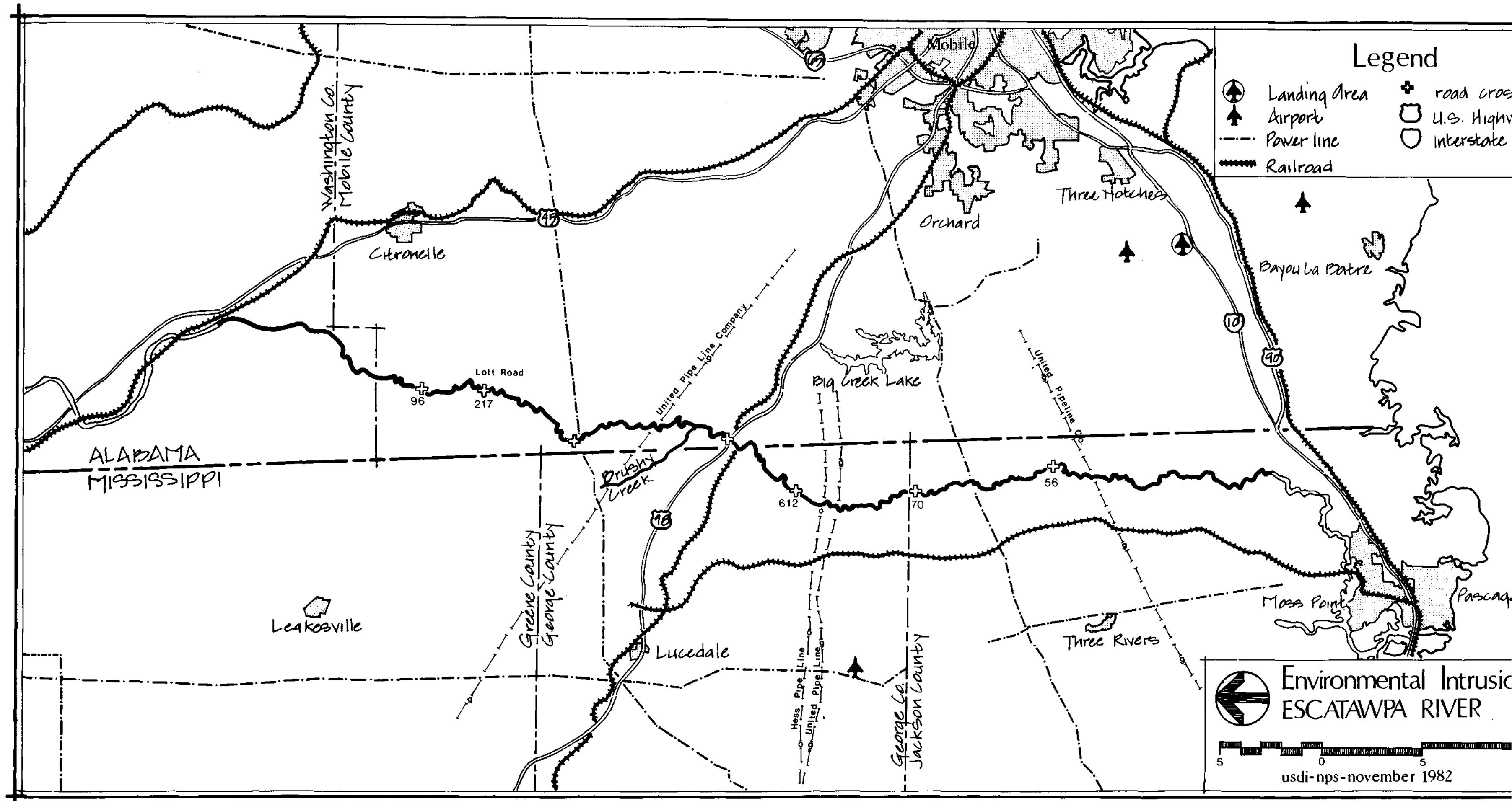
Only one U.S. Highway (U.S. 98) crosses the Escatawpa. The U.S. 98 bridge is at the approximate mid-point of the study area on the Alabama-Mississippi State line. Four additional county road crossings are dispersed throughout the study area. Numerous small dirt roads lead to the river or in some cases parallel it. These small roads are used primarily for access by private landowners for both land management practices and recreational use of the river. The relatively limited access to the Escatawpa is in part responsible for the dirth of man-made intrusions throughout its length.

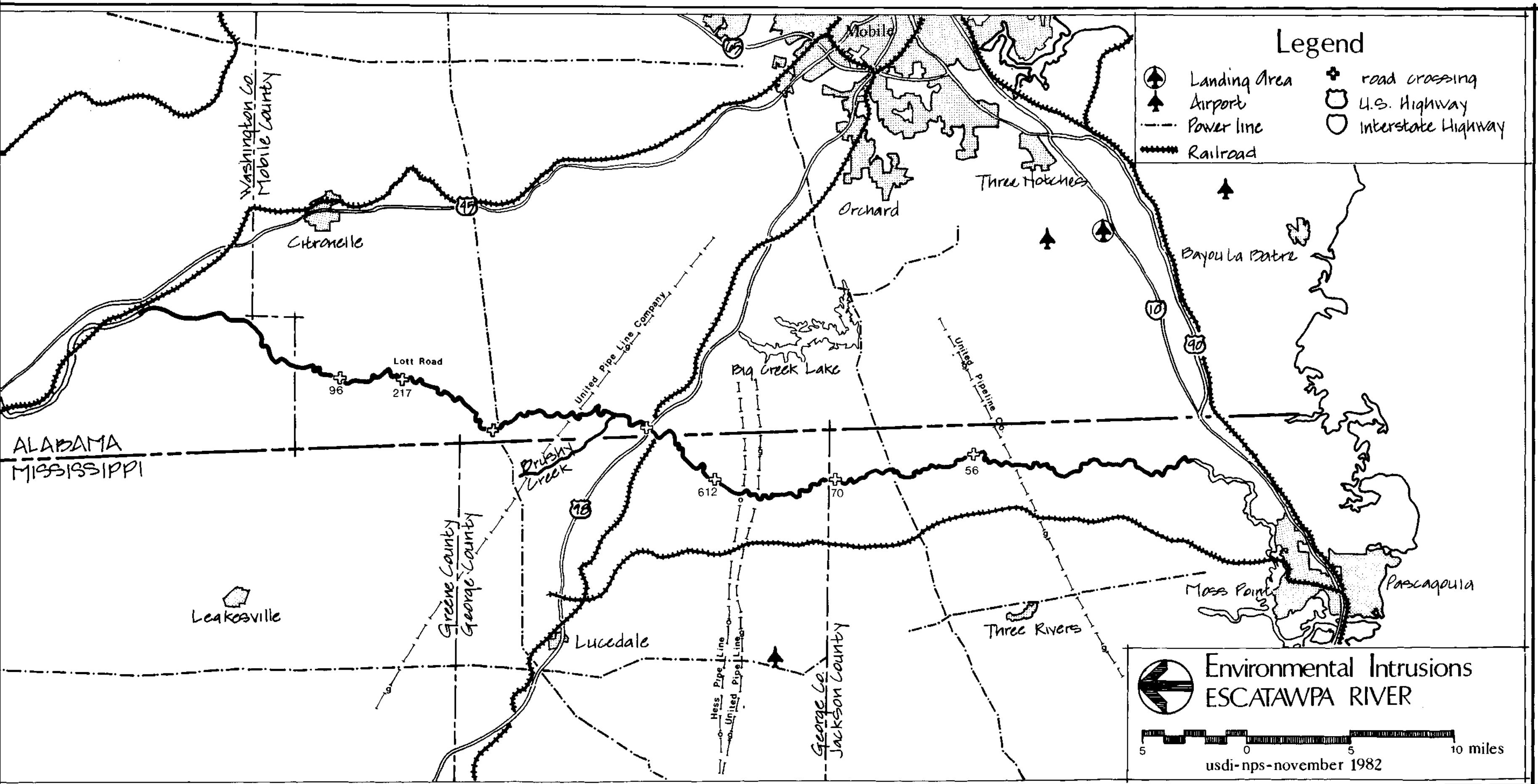
Population

Population trends of the Escatawpa study area are comparable to those found throughout the southeast as urban areas have continually increased in population while rural areas decline or gain only slightly. The primary population center is the Mobile SMSA (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area) with a 1980 population of 444,000, up 17.7 percent over the 1970 population of 377,000. The Mobile SMSA includes Baldwin and Mobile Counties, Alabama. Washington County, Alabama, has shown a population increase of less than 500 people over the 1930 census figure with a higher than normal increase of 3.7 percent between 1970 (16,200) and 1980 (16,800) follwing several decades of declining population. Mobile County population is almost entirely urban, while the Bureau of the Census classifies the entire Washington County population as rural.

Similar, but less pronounced, is the Mississippi study area population. For the first time the 1980 U.S. Census classified Pascagoula-Moss Point (Jackson County) as a SMSA. The Jackson County population increased 34 percent from 88,000 in 1970 to 118,000 in 1980. Remarkably, the urban population increased by 47 percent from 62,700 to 92,000 during the same period. In contrast the entirely rural George County experienced a significant growth of 22.4 percent from 12,500 in 1970 to 15,300 in 1980.







The noticeable contrast between urban and rural populations are very illustrative in contrasting philosophical differences of opinions among the rural residents who perceive no need for special governmental protection of the Escatawpa River and the urbanites who believe the rivers pastoral nature will be threatened in the near future by residential, commercial and industrial sprawl.

COUNTY POPULATION DATA

<u>State</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
<u>Alabama</u>			
Mobile County	317,300	365,000	+15.0
Washington County	16,200	16,800	+3.7
<u>Mississippi</u>			
Jackson County	88,000	118,000	+34.1
George County	<u>12,500</u>	<u>15,300</u>	<u>+22.4</u>
TOTAL	434,000	515,100	+18.7

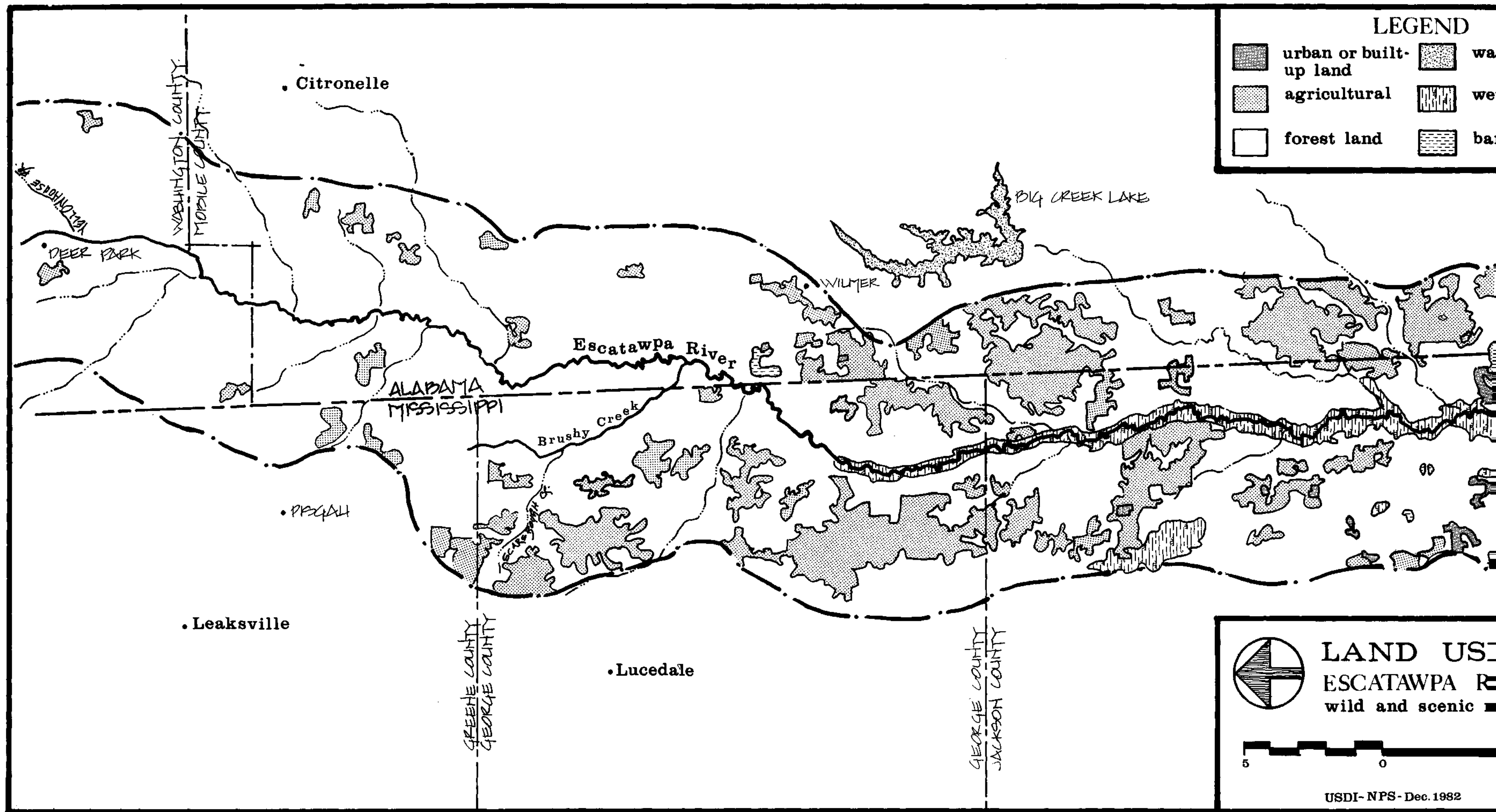
Landownership and Use

Land Use

The Land Use Map (page 20) depicts the land uses within a 5-mile corridor on either side of the Escatawpa River. Agriculture and forestry are the principal land uses within this corridor. The major agricultural products are crops (corn, soybean, etc.), livestock, poultry and their products, and forest products. Forest products have become an increasingly important monetary asset of the study area in the last decade. Even the predominant commercial forest lands of the study area are very limited on land adjacent to the lower third of the river as high water frequently overflows its channel creating a broad cypress-gum swamp.

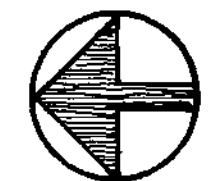
Streamside development is practically non-existent with only a few, isolated fishing/hunting cabins on the southern end of the study area. Along the middle and northern segments of the river infrequent signs of clear-cutting, usually beyond the cypress/hardwoods that line the riverbank, can be seen. At points near bridge crossings some signs of garbage dumping, bank fishing, picnicking, camping, and four-wheel drive vehicle use are apparent.

With the exception of increasing timber production activities, very few active land-use practices are apparent along the Escatawpa, when observed either from boat or air.



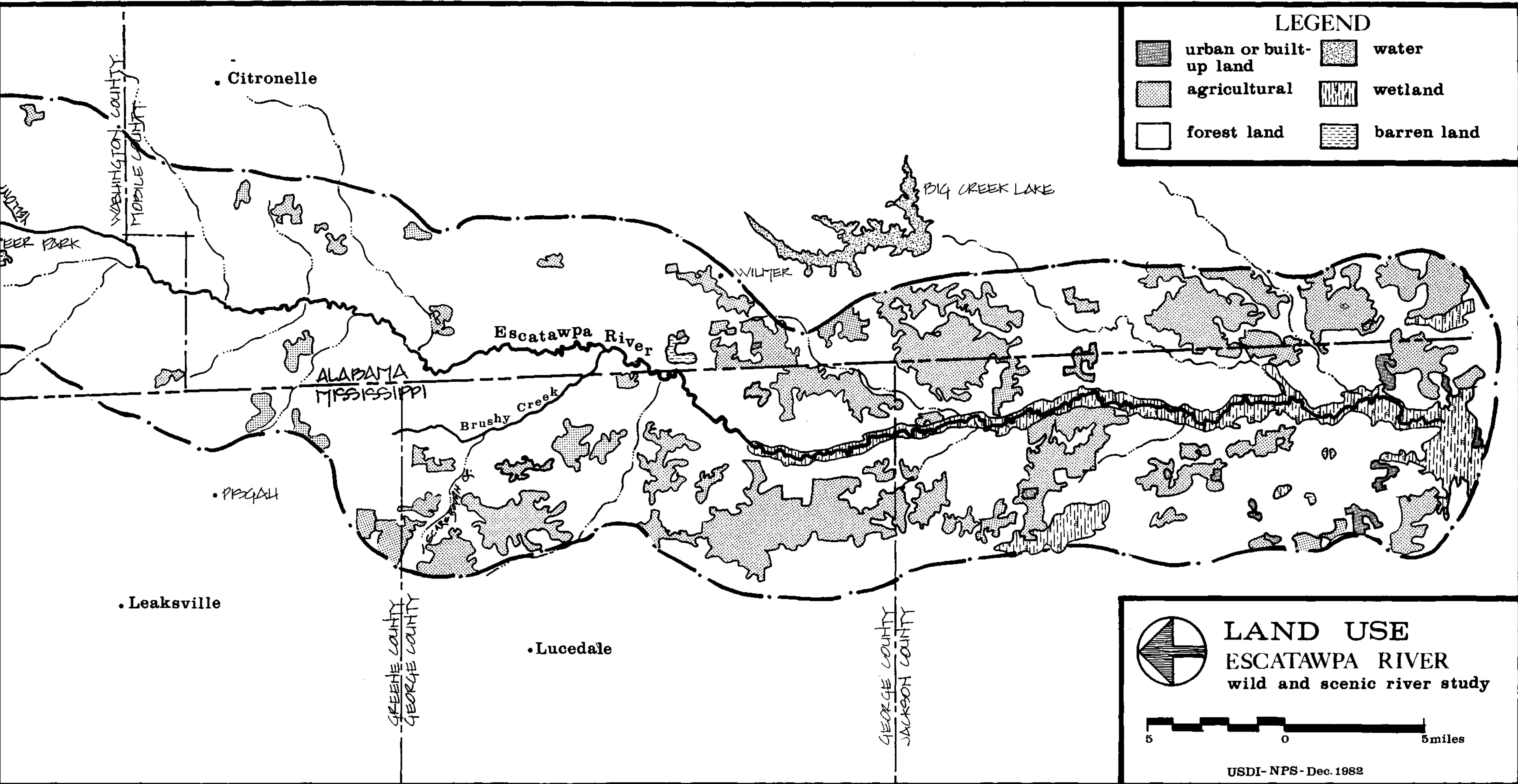
LEGEND

- urban or built-up land
- agricultural
- forest land
- water
- wetlands
- barren land



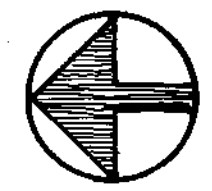
LAND USE
 ESCATAWPA R
 wild and scenic





LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
|  urban or built-up land |  water |
|  agricultural |  wetland |
|  forest land |  barren land |



LAND USE
ESCATAWPA RIVER
wild and scenic river study



No changes to the current land-use patterns appear imminent. For the most part the forest product companies and individuals appear to be doing an adequate job of both utilizing their land for timber production and preserving the rivers natural integrity.

In isolated cases water is pumped from the Escatawpa for agricultural irrigation resulting in a minor intrusion to the normal natural appearance of the bank.

Landownership

There are no publicly-owned lands along the Escatawpa. Analysis of property maps revealed that approximately 60 percent of the land within 1/4 mile of the riverbank is owned by commercial timber companies. Further research indicates that the majority of the remaining privately-owned land is under long term contract to timber companies for forest management and/or timber production. Discussion with the two largest corporate owners, International Paper Company and Scott Paper Company, indicated that both corporations have written management policies which protect a minimum of 200 feet along the riverbank from timber harvest. Corporate rationale for this policy is twofold: first, due to the predominant tree species (hardwoods) and terrain such harvest would not be economically beneficial and, secondly, a desire to preserve the aesthetic character of the Escatawpa.

Natural Resources

Physiography/Geology

The Escatawpa River Basin, in the Southern Pine Hills and the Pine Meadow subsections of the East Gulf Coastal Plains, includes valleys and plateaus that range from 250 to 300 feet above mean sea level in the northern part of the area to only 3 or 4 feet above mean sea level in the swampy Mississippi Sound area. The river studied drops only about 120 feet mean level throughout its 80-mile course from a bank elevation less than 130 feet mean sea level near Deer Park, Alabama, to an elevation less than 5 feet mean sea level north of the Jackson Creek confluence in Mississippi.

The land surface is weathered and the development of lateritic soils indicates exposure during the humid, subtropical climate of the Pliocene Age. The sand and clayey sand that underlie much of the area yield to mechanical erosion, but support fairly steep hillsides. The plateau edges have been dissected by erosion, but they have been so weathered in some areas that the divides are ranges of rounded hills.

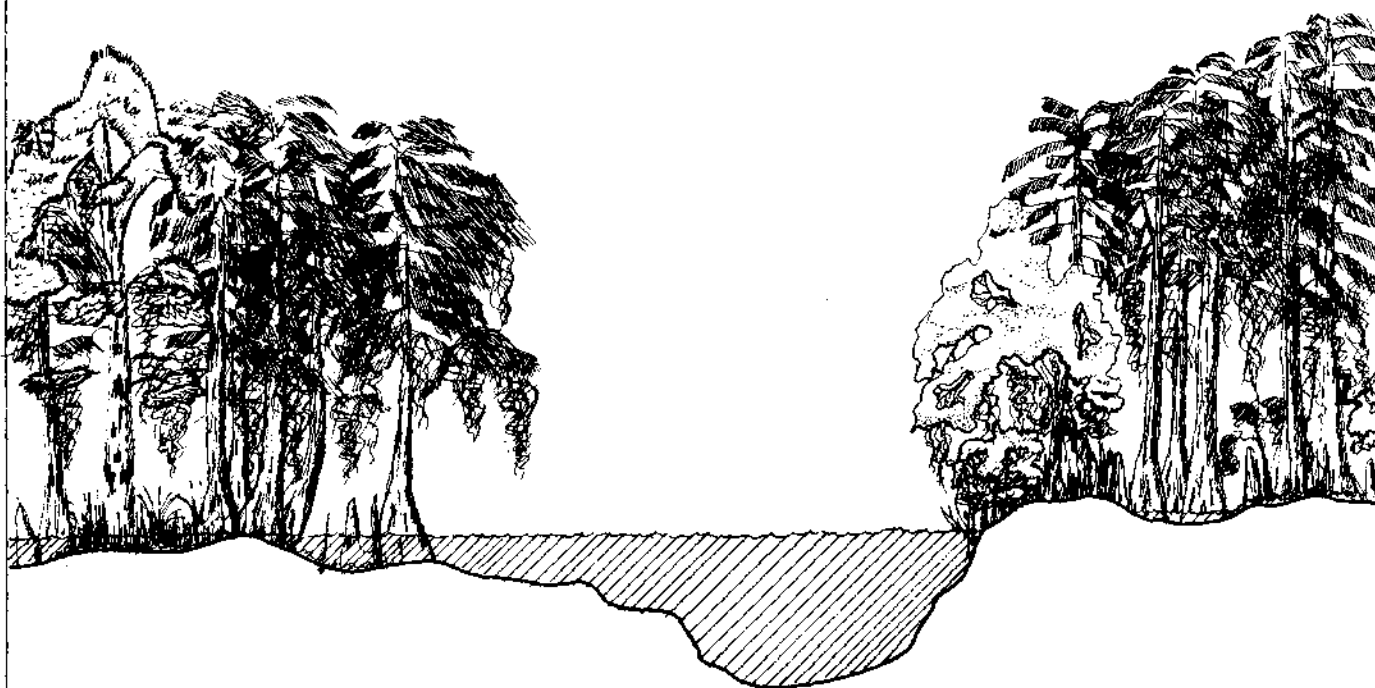
Sand is an abundant mineral resource of the study area, but due to its regional abundance, sand production is not a contributor to the economy of the basin.

Oil and Gas Potential

Oil and gas production is well established in Mobile and Baldwin Counties, Alabama, and can be expected to increase in the future. Of the presently developed fields the Citronelle oil field is Alabama's largest with 447

TYPICAL SECTION ESCATAWPA RIVER

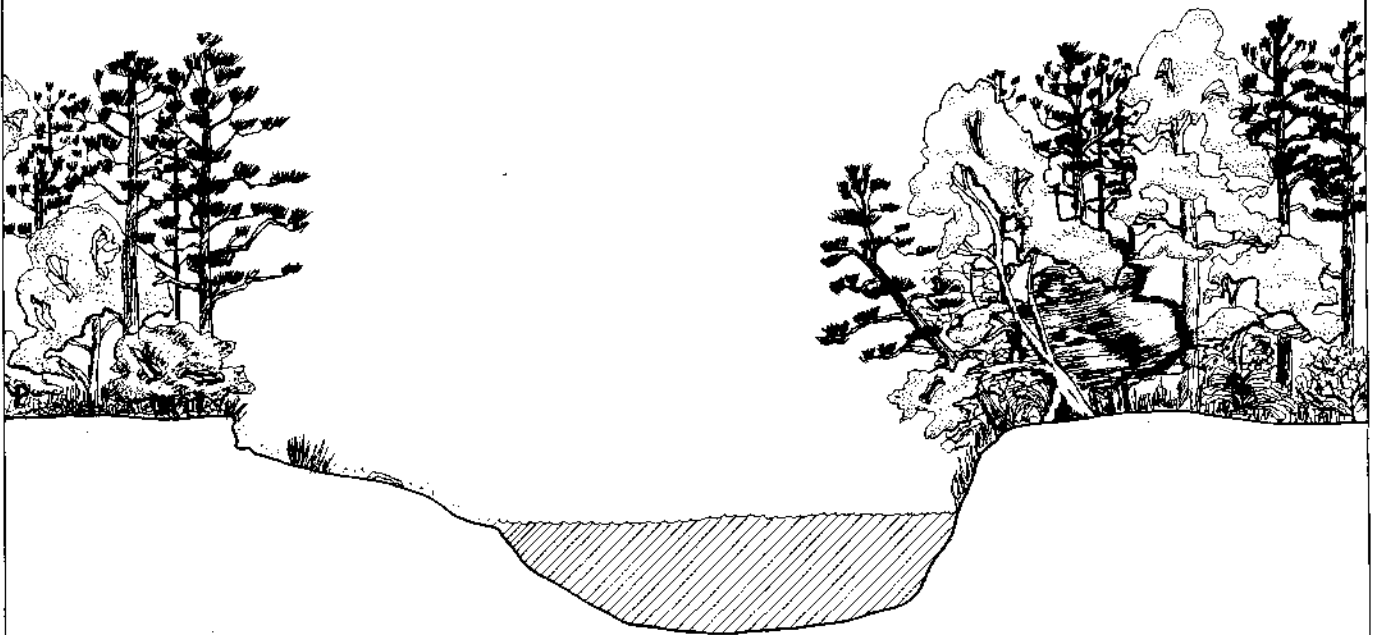
HARDWOOD/CYPRESS SWAMP	RIVER CHANNEL	HARDWOOD/CYPRESS SWAMP
CYPRESS · RIVER BIRCH LIVE OAK · GRASS		CYPRESS · GREEN BRIAR WAX MYRTLE · RIVER BIRCH



HARDWOOD/CYPRESS SWAMP
SEGMENT

TYPICAL SECTION ESCATAWPA RIVER

SOUTHERN PINE FOREST	RIVER CHANNEL	SOUTHERN PINE FOREST
PINES · DENSE UNDERGROWTH · HARDWOODS	SAND BARS FREQUENTLY OCCUR	PINES · DENSE UNDERGROWTH HARDWOODS



SOUTHERN PINE HILLS
SEGMENT

producing wells. This field, touching the northern portion of the Escatawpa study area, was discovered in 1955 and has produced approximately 130 million barrels of oil and 11.7 billion cubic feet of gas. The wells are completed in a series of sands in the Lower Cretaceous at depths ranging from 10,014 to 10,827 feet.

The geological units exposed in the Escatawpa River Basin are of Tertiary and Quaternary age and consist chiefly of sand, gravel, silt, clay, and sandstone. The units from oldest to youngest are the Miocene Series Undifferentiated, the Citronelle Formation of the Pliocene Series, the terrace deposits and alluvium in the Pleistocene and Holocene Series.

Geologic units in the Escatawpa Basin, with the exception of the Pleistocene and Holocene Series, strike northwest and dip southwest. Strata in the Miocene generally dip 10 to 45 feet per mile. Lesser dips occur in areas underlain by the Miocene and Pliocene Series. High terrace deposits gently slope southeastward, and the alluvial, low terrace and coastal deposits are relatively flat lying.

The Miocene Series overlies the Oligocene Series in the subsurface, is sedimentary in origin and ranges in thickness from 400 to 3,400 feet. The deposits consist of gray, orange and red very fine to coarse-grained sand, red ferruginous sandstone and gray, blue, and green silty clay.

The Citronelle Formation overlies the Miocene Series in the subsurface. The Citronelle Formation consists chiefly of brown, red and orange gravelly sand, ferruginous sandstone and gray, orange and brown lenses of sandy clay. This formation is relatively thin but has an estimated thickness of 200 feet immediately south of the Escatawpa Basin.

The high terrace deposits overlie the older geologic units along the Escatawpa River in the Pond Creek area. These deposits are Pleistocene in age and are usually 15 to 20 feet in thickness. They consist chiefly of white, red and orange fine to coarse-grained gravelly sand and sandy gray and orange clay.

The alluvial, low terrace and coastal deposits overlie older geologic units in many parts of the Escatawpa Basin. They consist of white, gray, orange and brown partly carbonaceous, locally fossiliferous, very fine to coarse-grained gravelly sand. Gray and orange sandy carbonaceous clay is present in a few areas. The alluvial deposits are generally less than 20 feet in thickness.

Soil associations exhibit a relatively close relationship to the underlying parent stratigraphic unit from which they are mostly derived. Soils in the study area indicate limitations for light construction as is typical of soils derived from the Miocene Series, alluvial deposits, and coastal deposits. All but the coastal deposits contain appreciable quantities of clay with the associated problems of moderate to high shrinkwell potential and poor drainage characteristics. For much of the study area poor drainage and unsuitable septic field percolation exist. Areas most suitable for cropland are underlain mainly by the Citronelle

Formation consisting of sand and gravel with minor lenticular beds of clay. Although very little of the study area falls into the Citronelle both heavier construction, better drainage, and better septic tank percolation is likely.

Climate

The climate of the region may be characterized as hot and humid. The winters are short and moderate with only occasional freezing temperatures. The area has a growing season in excess of 300 days, supporting a great variety of subtropical flora and fauna. The normal annual atmospheric temperature for the region is 67 degrees Fahrenheit, with average temperatures ranging from the low to mid 50's during January and the low to mid 80's during July. The average yearly stream temperatures are usually in the mid 60's, with low temperatures occurring in December and January and high temperatures occurring in July and August.

Rainfall in the basin averages about 65 inches a year. The wind direction is generally from the south and has a velocity of about 10 mph. Hurricanes will occasionally strike the lower part of the basin but usually do not reach the northern extremities.

The mild climate and ample rainfall of the study region result in a highly productive agriculture and rapid timber production. The mild climate also makes it possible to participate in outdoor recreation activities on a year-round basis. Floating the Escatawpa is affected periodically by the distribution of rainfall. In dry periods the upper reaches are barely floatable and during heavy rain water elevations fluctuate drastically, resulting in hazardous boating due primarily to obstructions in the river and current.

Water Quality and Hydrology

There are no storage reservoirs, hydroelectric plants or stream diversions on the Escatawpa River. Streamflow varies considerably during the year and is typically high in the winter and early spring. Flows remain generally low from summer through fall. During occasional summer droughts, the extreme northern portion of the river may become too shallow to float.

Depending on the location within the Escatawpa River Basin, approximately 30 to 50 percent of the average annual rainfall enters streams as surface runoff. The average annual local runoff for the basin ranges from about 19 inches in the northern portion of the basin to more than 34 inches in the extreme southern portion.

Water quality data for the Escatawpa River Basin have been published by the U.S. Geological Survey for the gaging stations near Agricola, Mississippi, and near Wilmer, Alabama. Data collected at these stations indicate that the river contains water of very good quality. The water is normally low in mineral content, but the iron concentration may be above drinking water limits (0.3mg/l, U.S. Public Health Department 1962) at certain times of the year. The composition indicates that the water is a

sodium chloride type at low flows. This change in water quality type is unusual because no other streams adjacent to the Escatawpa Basin nor below the confluence of the Tombigbee and Alabama Rivers have similar changes.

A reservoir on Big Creek, a major tributary to the Escatawpa, is a source of good quality water for the City of Mobile, Alabama. Puppy Creek and Beaver Pond Branch, smaller tributaries in the northern portion of the Escatawpa River Basin, have experienced water-quality problems due to saltwater spills from oil field activities in the Citronelle area.

Vegetation

Three distinct vegetative types exist within the Escatawpa River study area. Starting with a Bay, Tupelo, Cypress Swamp on the southern most 10 to 15 miles of the study area, a gradual transition through a Moist Pine Forest occurs for another 10 to 15 miles.

Continuing north in the vicinity of the Mississippi-Alabama State line, a third transition is made to a Upland Longleaf Pine-Oak forest. This third type becomes more distinct the further north the river is studied. These rather typical vegetative zones are predominant along the actual river course and for several hundred feet up to 1/2 mile or more beyond the riverbank; however, when viewed from air, the sometimes intense man-made reforestation of the fast growing slash pine disrupts these natural vegetative zones. In most areas where intensive forest management is practiced, the banks as viewed from a boat, retain their natural appearance and are not affected by the timber harvest only a short distance beyond.

The following is a brief description of vegetation which might be observed from a boat along the three zones mentioned earlier:

Bay, Tupelo, Cypress Swamp - The vegetation of these swamps varies partly due to the amount and duration of flooding. On the extreme southern end of the study area pond cypress (Taxodium distichum var. nutans) and swamp tupelo (Nyssa sylvatica var. biflora) generally dominate the canopy. In swamp areas where the river channel is normally more defined, with moderate flooding, dominant trees are sweet bay (Magnolia virginiana), red maple (Acer rubrum), swamp bay (Persea palustris), and tulip tree (Liriodendron tulipifera). White cedar (Chamaecyparis thyoides) also occur in upper reaches of the swamp.

Few plants grow under the dense shade of the swamp canopy. Several shrubs such as Virginia willow (Itea virginica), star anise (Illicium floridanum), and fetterbush (Leucothoe axillaris), as well as ferns and shade tolerant herbs provide the understory. In more open borders of these swampy woods, dense thickets of swamp cyrilla (Cyrilla racemiflora), large gallberry (Ilex coriacea), wax myrtle (Myrica cerifera) and yaupon (Ilex vomitoria) flourish.

Moist Pine Forest - This is the most common type of forested wetland in the region and is prevalent in areas of low relief and poor drainage between streams. The vegetation of moist pinelands is diverse and rich in species. The most common tree is slash pine (Pinus elliotti), although

the longleaf pine (Pinus palustris) also occurs. Slash pine will occur naturally within 2 years following timber harvest or fire, but since much of the study area is under some form of timber management, the rapid growing slash pine is usually reestablished within 6 months. The understory is normally very dense, especially if fire has been prevented. Dominant species are gallberry (Ilex glabra), wax myrtle, saw palmetto (Serenoa repens), and occasional sweet bay, swamp bay and swamp tupelo.

Upland Longleaf Pine-Oak Forest - More than one-half of the study area is of this type consisting primarily of an open pine forest intermixed with oak and other hardwoods. Since slash pine is the preferred reforestation species of the timber industry, their abundant occurrence usually indicates man-made forest practices. Conversely, presence of predominant longleaf pine indicates that an area has not been harvested. In some areas hardwoods dominate, with or without recent timbering as they are usually spared from harvest. Dominant hardwood species are cypress, southern red oak (Quercus falcata), laurel oak (Quercus homispherica), turkey oak (A. laevis), flowering dogwood (Cornus florida) and persimmon (Diospyros virginiana). Abundant shrubs such as winged sumac (Rhus copallina), sparkleberry (Vaccinium arboreum) and blueberries (Vaccinium elliotii, V. myrsinites) grow well under the tree canopy near the rivers edge. The ground cover flourishes with numerous grasses, legumes, and herbs in the sunflower, mint and spurge families.

The Escatawpa River study area is included in the range of at least 18 plant species considered endangered by either the State or Federal Government. These include:

Herbs

Large-Flowered Primrose -- Oenothera grandiflora
Scurfpea - Psoralea simplex
Green-Fly Orchid - Epidendrum Conopseum
Beak Rush - Rhynchospora crinipes
Blunt-Spine Water Clover - Marsilea mucronata
Forked Fern - Dicranopteris flexuosa
Louisiana Spikemoss - Selaginella budoviciana

Shrubs and Woody Vines

Sarvis Holly - Ilex amelanchier
Star-Vine - Schisandra glabra

Trees

None

Fish and Wildlife

Several factors influence the distribution of freshwater fish in Alabama and Mississippi. Watershed or drainage boundaries play a primary role in affecting fish distribution, and climate and water chemistry are of

secondary importance. Minnow and perch families account for approximately one-half of the freshwater fish known to occur in the region.

The Escatawpa River has a relatively small watershed, but man's activities have had very little impact on its habitat. Locally, it is a very popular fishing stream. There are no known endangered freshwater fish in the Escatawpa, nor is it considered appropriate habitat for any of numerous endangered species listed by either the States or Federal Government.

Fish species expected to occur in the Escatawpa include brook lamprey, gar, American eel, shad, minnows, chubs, numerous varieties of shiner, madtom, sunfish, and various darters. The spotted gar, longnose gar and sunfish, such as the rock bass, flier, warmouth, bluegill, and spotted and largemouth bass are the predominant sportfish of the Escatawpa.

Agricultural lands, forested lands, and wetlands typically provide habitat where birds are plentiful. The wetlands of the Lower Coastal Plain support good populations of aquatic birds. Herons and egrets are most common in spring and summer when breeding takes place. Shorebirds and shallow-water birds are common during migration and winter. The hardwood bottomlands provide excellent habitat for many woodland birds. The combination of good habitat and climate, as well as migratory paths make the Gulf Coast region one of the best areas of the country for bird watching and study. Over 300 bird species have been reported from Dauphin Island, Alabama, located approximately 50 miles southeast of the study area.

With good habitat, the Escatawpa has a rich mammal population. Many mammals are nocturnal, as well as secretive, and may, therefore, be undetected. Common species which river users may observe include gray squirrel, opossum, armadillo, cottontail rabbit, muskrat, beaver, raccoon, and white tail deer. Rodents such as chipmunks, mice and rats are also probably plentiful.

The Escatawpa region is very popular as a game hunting area, with whitetail deer serving as the most popular game species.

Reptiles and amphibians are common to the study area, many playing an important beneficial role in keeping rodents and insects in check. The Lower Coastal Plain, with its diverse ecology, supports a great number of reptiles and amphibians in the region. Some of the more common species which would likely occur along the Escatawpa River include flatwoods salamander, pine woods snake, river frog, oak toad, chicken turtle, southern hognose snake, coral snake, and diamondback rattlesnake. Other less common species include southern red salamander, southern dusky salamander, yellow-bellied pond slider, southern copperhead, and dusky pigmy rattlesnake.

The Escatawpa River study area is included in the ranges of at least 12 animal species considered endangered by either the States or Federal Government. These include:

Mammals

Florida Black Bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*)
Florida Panther (*Felis concolor coryi*)

Birds

American Peregrine Falcon (*Falco perigrinus anatum*)
Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*)
Ivory-Billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*)
Bachman's Warbler (*Vermivora bachmani*)
Mississippi Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis pulla*)
Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
Arctic Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*)

Reptiles

American Alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*)
Black Pine Snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus lodingi*)
Southern Hognose Snake (*Heterodon simus*)
Rainbow Snake (*Farancia erytrogramma*)
Indigo Snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*)
Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*)

Freshwater Fish

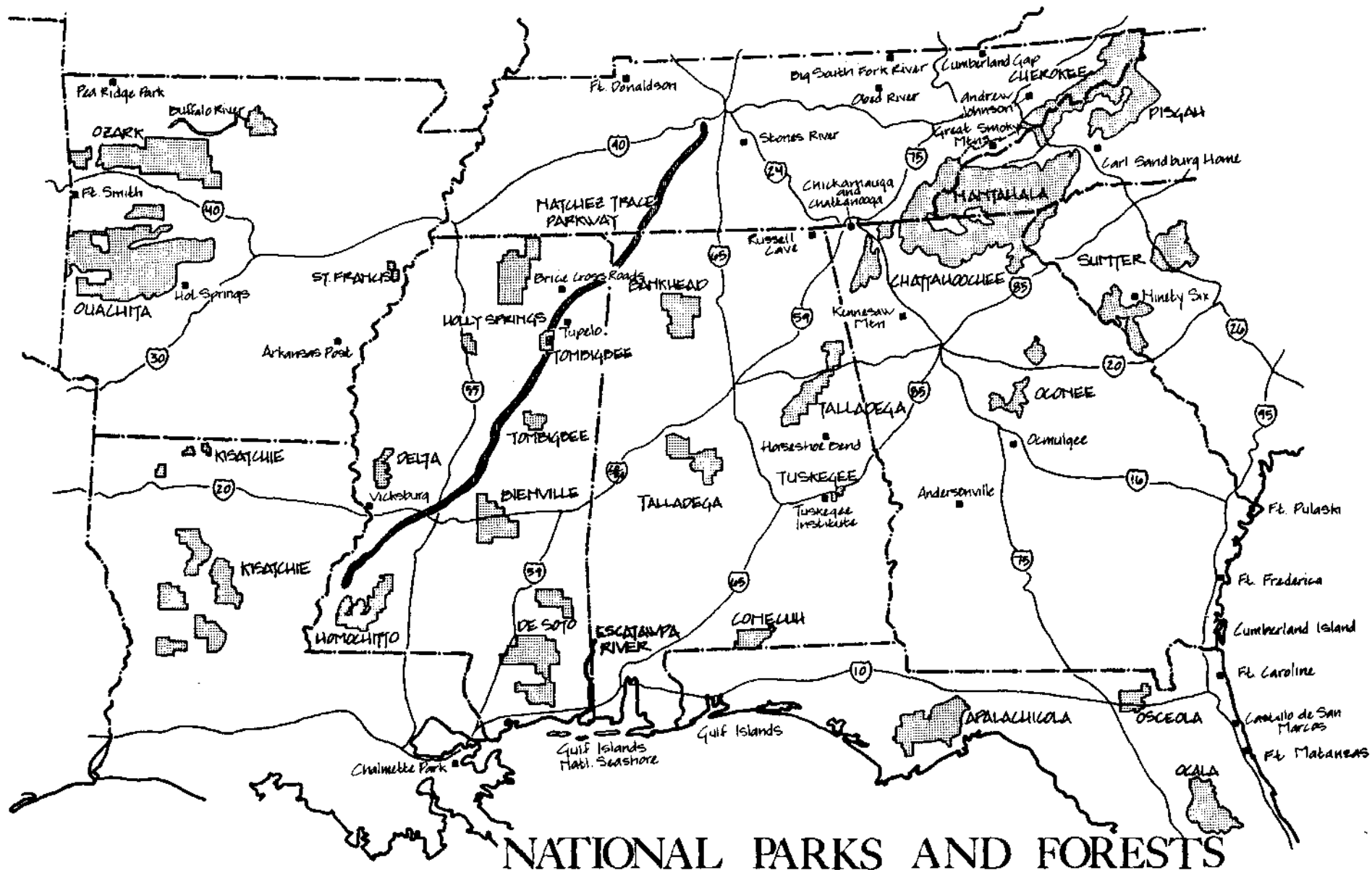
Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*)

Recreation Resources

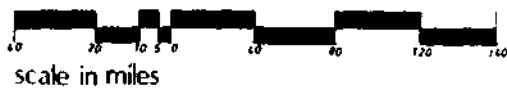
Regional recreation opportunities abound along the Gulf Coast as many residents and tourist enjoy the beautiful beaches, gulf fishing, and the historical and cultural opportunities. The Escatawpa River meets a variety of recreational needs of residents within 50 to 75 miles. Seasonal hunting and fishing opportunities are especially popular. Year-round day use and overnight float trips on the river are continuously increasing in popularity. At least three local outfitters furnish an array of rental equipment, as well as, guides for group river trips. Naturalist find the Escatawpa's abundant fauna and flora much to their liking also.

Beautiful white sand beaches offer opportunities for fishing, camping, swimming and picnicking. Because the Escatawpa is accessible from urban areas and normally not especially hazardous, many families and church groups enjoy outings on the river.

No formal developed recreation sites, boat ramps or access points currently exist within the study area with the exception of Presley's Landing at the confluence of Jackson Creek and the Escatawpa. Presley's Landing provides many commercial recreation opportunities including



ESCATAWPA RIVER
wild and scenic river study



camping, boating, picnicking and group shelters, but is outside the study segments found eligible for designation. Most recreation users gain access by entering the river at existing public road crossings or from numerous private roads and trails which either parallel the river or terminate on its banks.

Hunting opportunities are probably more limited to an "invitational" opportunity on the large privately-owned tracts. Paper companies provide limited public hunting opportunities.

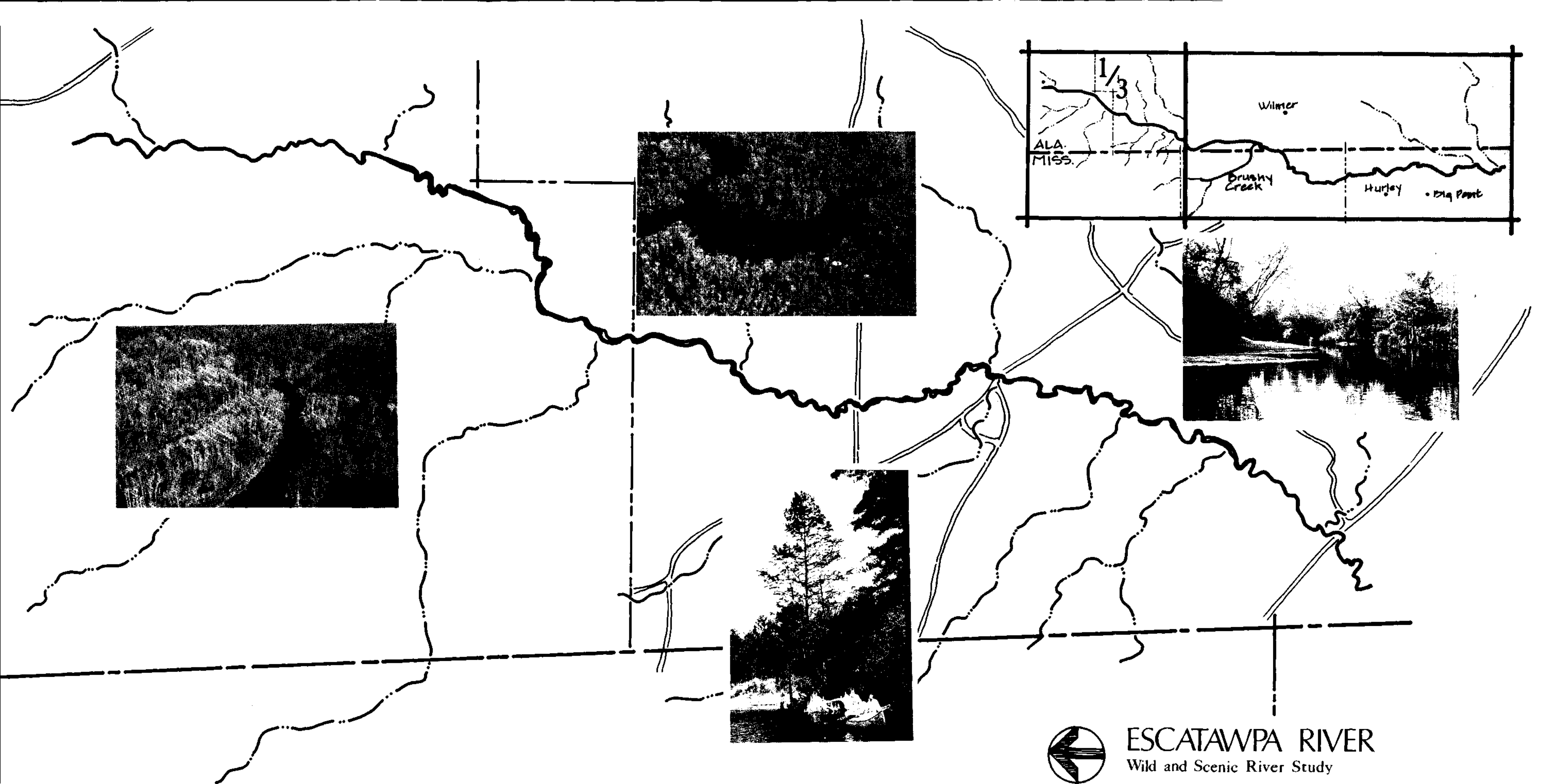
The Escatawpa serves as a natural recreation attraction which could easily reach peak day saturation in the near future as more private landowners allow access across their lands. As more users are on the river, conflicts may develop between competing interest groups.

Cultural Resources

There are no sites within the Escatawpa River study area currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places; however, the University of South Alabama Archaeology Lab is currently curating an aboriginal dugout canoe recovered from the riverbank. In addition, the University of South Alabama reports the Escatawpa area contains numerous archaeological sites and artifacts which if surveyed would probably be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

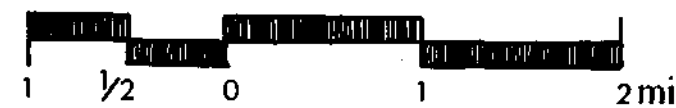
The Gulf Coastal Plain is believed to have been inhabited as early as 10,000 B.C., although no sites dating to this period, the Paleo-Indian stage, have been discovered in the region. The earliest datable artifacts in the region can be assigned to the Early Archaic Period (8000 to 6000 B.C.).

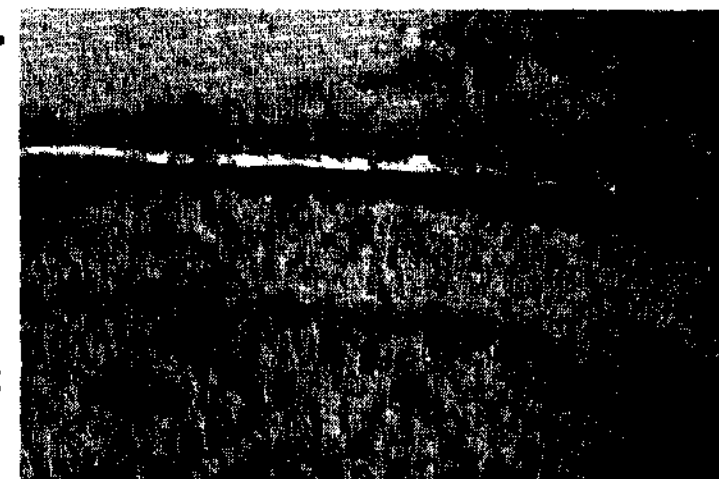
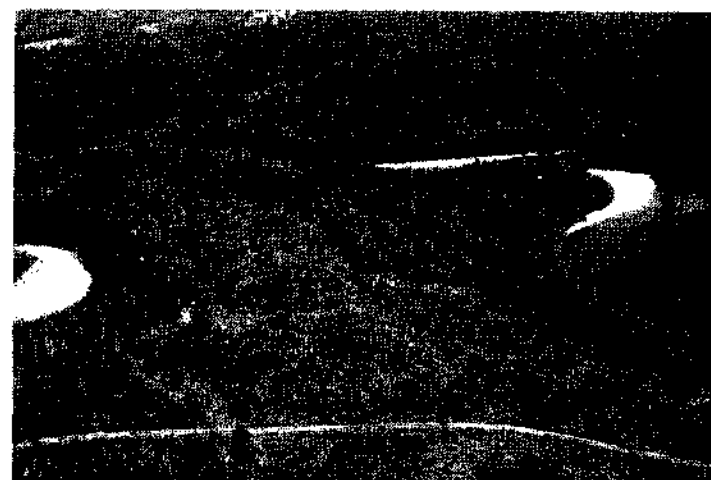
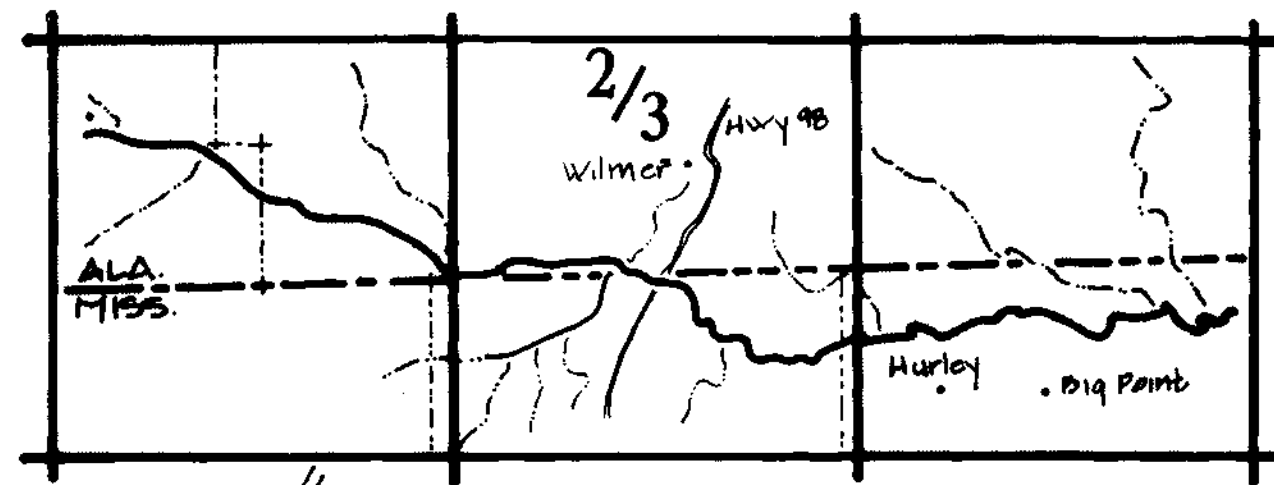
Surveys of the study area could be expected to yield "outstandingly remarkable" cultural resources. Numerous areas of archaeological significance and historic places have been surveyed in the region, particularly, Mobile, Alabama, with 248 National Register structures. In addition to the numerous recreational attractions of the Gulf Coast, its rich history, numerous cultural sites and cultural events promote an exceptional tourism industry.



ESCATAWPA RIVER
Wild and Scenic River Study

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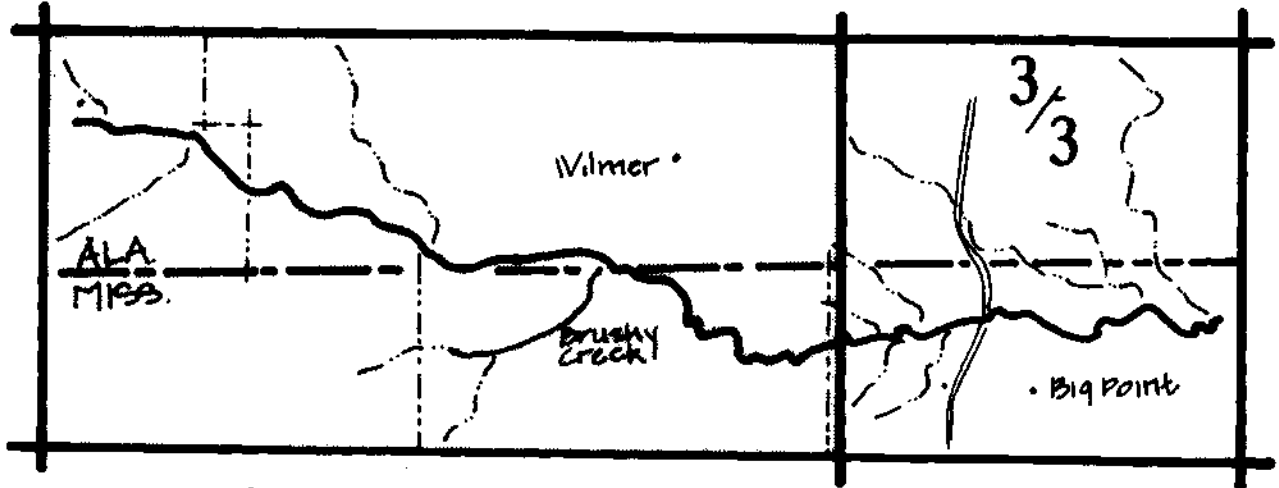
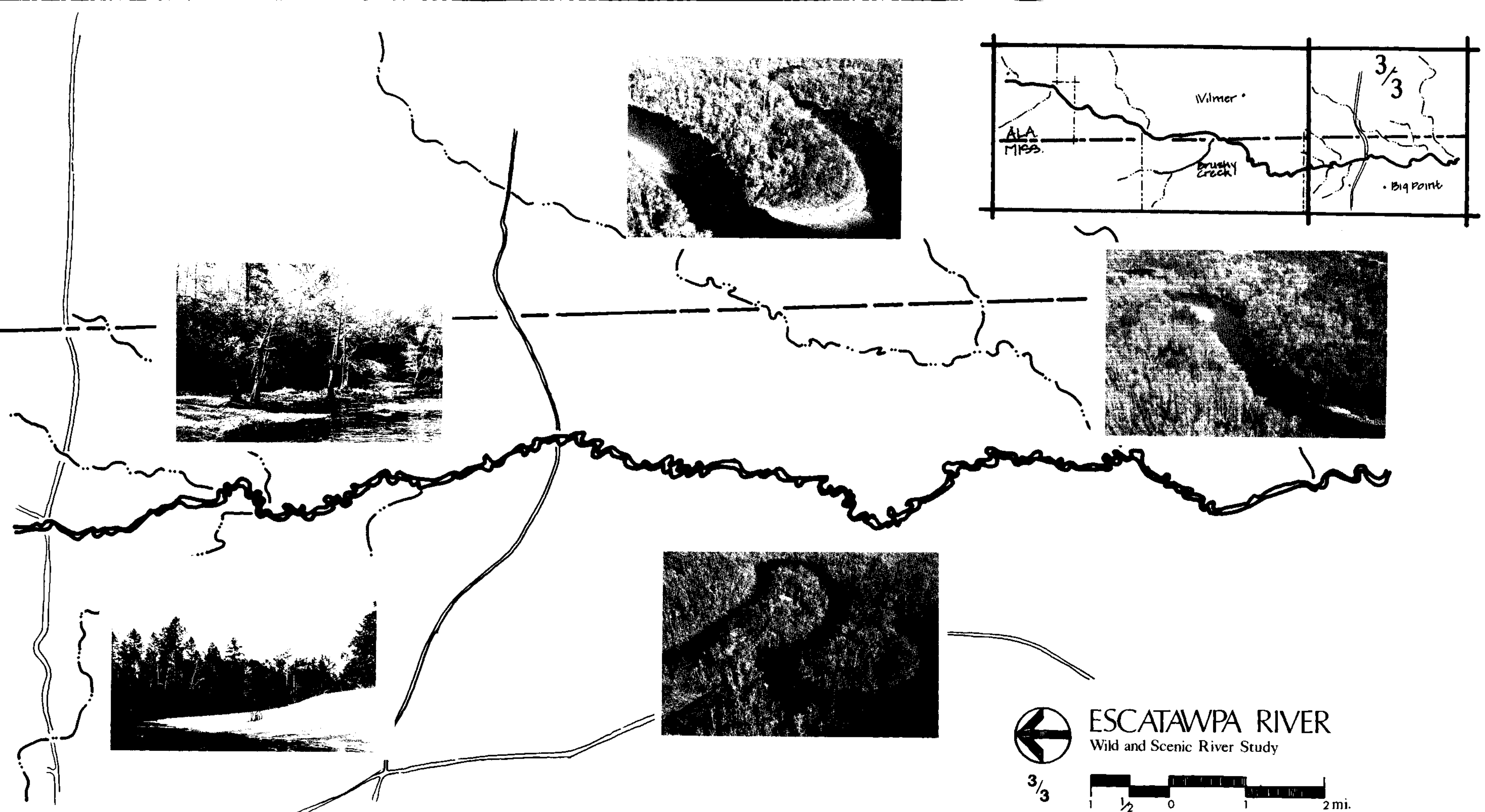




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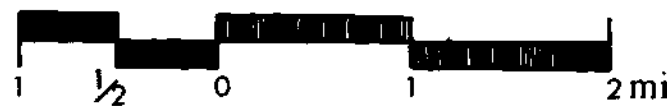
ESCATAWPA RIVER
Wild and Scenic River Study





ESCATAWPA RIVER
Wild and Scenic River Study

3/3



VI. A GUIDE FOR RIVER CORRIDOR PROTECTION

The Escatawpa River has been found by this study to possess "outstandingly remarkable" scenic and recreation values; however, local citizen and county government opposition to national designation has resulted in a determination that the Escatawpa is not suitable for federal designation. Furthermore, both the States of Alabama and Mississippi have concurred with this finding. Apparently, landowners have done a commendable job of maintaining, and perhaps enhancing the rivers values. Their comments have overwhelmingly pronounced a desire to continue to protect the river, keep it in its present state, for the enjoyment of future generations. While private protection is certainly the most cost effective means, it has rarely proven to be a lasting alternative. Therefore, a number of alternative methods of protection are suggested. These methods are not mutually exclusive but can be combined and altered to provide the best approach for the Escatawpa. Similar methods have been used throughout the country with proven results.

A. Leadership for River Corridor Protection

Public Agency - River protection could center around public agency initiative at either the State and/or local level. Existing laws could be applied as the authority for such action. Multi-county agreements could promote parallel regulations and controls, taking into account each jurisdiction's own development goals and needs, existing land use, and natural and scenic features deserving attention. Such agreement would create uniform standards for the preservation, management, prudent development, and use of the river corridor.

Interagency Authority - An intergovernmental organization, composed of a combination of concerned State or local agencies could be set up to protect the river. This could be a River Corridor Commission composed of representatives from the counties, representative private landowners, local interest groups, the regional planning and development interest, and the States of Alabama and Mississippi.

The Commission would administer the corridor and be empowered to adopt, prepare and implement a river management plan; establish a planning and zoning commission; levy taxes and/or user fees; enter into contracts and agreements and accept all funds; acquire, dispose of and encumber real and personal property; participate in federal/State loan and grant programs; operate and maintain areas and facilities to serve the purposes of the commission; appoint citizen advisory committees; control erosion and water pollution; approve, implement and enforce land use controls such as zoning and ordinances and subdivision regulations; and hire and retain employees and consultants.

Nonprofit Agency - A nonprofit agency or similar organization could serve as an open-minded mediator between the numerous diverse interest of landowners, industry and government. This approach

could be realized in the form of a River Corridor Foundation, a nongovernmental, tax-exempt, nonprofit, corporation organized and operated for the benefit of the general public. Generally a foundation is supported by donations, grants, gifts, loans, fund-raising efforts, and membership fees.

A foundation could offer permanent protection to selected areas along the river by accepting gifts of land or rights in land, offering tax benefits to those who donate land or rights in land, rendering technical assistance to landowners by helping them develop long-range plans for the conservation of part or all their property, accept gifts of land or rights in land, and then transfer them to a public managing agency, using gifts for matching purposes in obtaining grants, and setting up a revolving fund where the foundation purchases land, holds it for a time, and then sells it with certain restrictions.

Private Partnership - A compact between private interests in the river corridor would provide mutual notification of any resource protection or development actions. Concerned public officials would also be kept informed.

If there is enough interest, landowners and user groups could volunteer their time to clean up the river. Any selling of lots could have covenants designed to ensure that future development will be environmentally compatible. Homeowner associations could police development activities. Existing associations could tighten their codes and new associations could be formed.

B. Preparation of a River Management Plan

Management Objectives

Under any of the above management approaches, a management plan for the Escatawpa River would be developed with specific objectives in mind. In order to protect the river's outstandingly remarkable values the following objectives or goals for preservation, prudent development and use are suggested for inclusion in a management plan:

1. To preserve the river and its immediate environment in its natural setting.
2. To preserve the free-flowing condition of the waters.
3. To maintain and upgrade water quality.
4. To provide high quality recreational opportunities for present and future generations.
5. To provide for a level of recreation use and distribution of use that minimizes deterioration of land and water resources and safeguards the rights of private landowners.
6. To assure the preservation of geologic features.

7. To maintain and enhance fish and wildlife resources.
8. To assure landowner and local citizen participation in development of the management plan.
9. To survey and preserve potential cultural resources.

Establishing a River Corridor

A river corridor is usually determined by line-of-sight from the river, but may also include special natural or cultural features needing protection. In the case of the Escatawpa this corridor is the river itself and a relatively narrow bank (200 to 400 feet) requiring protection to preserve natural, scenic, cultural, and recreational values.

Greatest protection should encompass the river and the immediately adjacent lands. Management strategies should also consider impacts from outside the immediate river corridor to insure prudent development and encourage compatible agricultural and forest practices. Maintenance and enhancement of the current natural conditions should be encouraged.

Inventory and Analysis of Critical Resource Values

With this study as a basis, a management plan should include an inventory of natural, scenic, cultural, and recreational resource information. This information base should develop a clear picture of current river conditions, identify critical areas, and identify political actions affecting the river. The inventory should be conducted through careful study, mapping, fieldwork, and consultation with knowledgeable parties.

Critical areas would be identified as specific sites within the corridor requiring special attention and protection for their ecological, cultural, recreation, and economic values. Generally these critical areas include habitats of rare and endangered species, potential archaeological sites, fragile ecological areas, potential sites of incompatible land uses, historical sites, public use areas, pollution sources, and areas of special interest.

Protection of the River Environment

Following the inventory the managing agency should prevent the destruction or deterioration of the river's critical resource values. Generally, the Escatawpa and its immediate environment should be protected from recreational overuse, air and water pollution, incompatible land uses, excessive vehicular traffic, unacceptable noise levels, or other threats to environmental quality.

Efforts should be made to maintain only compatible land uses. The good stewardship exercised in the past by private landowners suggests that voluntary efforts might continue to be an effective tool for protecting the river corridor's aesthetic appeal.

Land Use Management

A land use management program should be designed to protect the land within the river corridor from activities that would alter its visual, ecological, and cultural values. Special attention should be given to maintaining natural conditions in the corridor, protecting critical areas from degradation, and preventing visual intrusions. Management strategies for critical areas should protect their special values, prohibit overuse and degradation of the environment, and provide guidelines to maintain and enhance their natural condition. In addition, strategies for solving problems should call upon State, regional, and local decision makers to coordinate their activities with respect to the ecological and cultural values of the river corridor.

There are several legal and administrative tools that could be incorporated in this program to effectively protect and guide land use activities in the river corridor. Many of these tools are described in the following section dealing with river preservation techniques.

Land in the corridor would normally be protected by land use controls, agreements with landowners, and other less than fee acquisition measures. Normally, there would be only two situations where it might be necessary for a managing agency to acquire real property: (1) Where a specific parcel is threatened by development which would seriously threaten the river's special values and there is no other way to prevent development, and (2) where a specific parcel of land is needed for public access or use.

It is possible that there will be some areas along a river which cannot be protected from incompatible development through land use controls, agreements, or similar techniques. In such cases it may be necessary to acquire a scenic easement or full title to the land. A priority list for acquisition of lands or interests in lands may be desirable but there may be occasions when less critical parcels of land become available for acquisition. An evaluation would then be needed to determine to what extent, if any, a parcel would help protect the river corridor.

Visitor Use

Recreational experiences are possible for canoeists, fishermen, hikers, sightseers, swimmers, and others in a manner consistent with protection of the scenic values of the river. Therefore, the plan should call for securing appropriate, but limited areas of public use and access, but prevent the deterioration of natural values through overuse. It is important that recreation use be controlled to prevent trespass on private property.

Recreation management could also include educational efforts by the managing authority through instructional brochures.

Recreation facilities should be located with primary emphasis upon retention of existing environmental conditions at selected sites and should not disrupt the scenic values of the corridor. The local managing authority would establish a code of conduct for recreation use of the corridor and promote information on river conditions, safety equipment requirements, facilities, and the location of access points.

C. Implementation of a River Management Plan

1. River Preservation Techniques

There are a number of ways to protect the river's natural values while providing for residential, agricultural, and recreational uses. Methods selected will depend on the capabilities of local and/or state government; the natural, scenic, recreational, and cultural values of the river area; and the degree of impact of proposed development within the river area. It is suggested that a variety of the following preservation techniques could be implemented by individual owners, land trusts, foundations, and local and State government.

Land Trust Foundation

A land trust foundation is a nongovernmental, nonprofit, tax-exempt, private corporation organized and operated for the benefit of the general public. A foundation can accept gifts, purchase, manage, sell or lease property. It is administered by private citizens whose interest in this instance would be river preservation. Generally a foundation is supported by donations, grants, gifts, loans, fund-raising efforts, and membership fees. The foundation could work closely with the counties, the State, the Nature Conservancy, and/or an established river commission.

Factors to be Considered - A land trust foundation could offer permanent protection of selected areas along the river by performing the following functions: accept gifts of land (fee simple) or rights in land; through the Internal Revenue Service and tax codes offer tax benefits to those who donate land or rights in land; render technical assistance to landowners by helping them develop long-range plans for the conservation of part or all of their land property; accept gifts or land or rights in land, and then transfer them to a public managing agency (county or state government, river commission, etc.); use gifts for matching purposes in obtaining grants; and set up a revolving fund whereby the foundation then purchases land, holds it for a time, and then sells it to another party with certain restrictions, preferably at a profit. In addition, it can act quickly without red tape and can work effectively to coordinate complicated transactions. A land trust foundation can help local landowners decide what types of land preservation would be most workable.

Easements

An easement is a limited or less than fee interest in property created by a conveyance. It can be acquired by purchase or donation. Easements do not affect basic ownership of the land—the owner may sell or lease land with an easement at any time, subject to the terms of the easement. Depending upon the type of easement, no changes in right of access necessarily occur. Examples of easements are giving up the right to build structures taller than a given height or the right to put structures closer than a given distance to the water.

Factors to be Considered - An easement can be extremely flexible—it may be written to particular specifications; reduce tax burdens; greatly increase the probability of long-term preservation of current use or preservation of open space; keep land under private control; and allow land to be sold, leased, or inherited and used in any manner consistent with the terms of the easement. Although an easement may restrict intense future development, it may also increase the marketability of the tract by preserving its natural and scenic values if adjacent tracts are also protected.

Donations

An outright donation occurs when the owner gives the land in fee-simple to a nonprofit organization or governmental agency for its use. Easements can also be donated outright.

A donation by the execution of a standard deed with the reservation of life estate allows the owner or member of his or her family to occupy and use the property during their lifetime with possession passing to the nonprofit organization or governmental agency at a later date.

The owner can donate land, money, or other valuables to the organization in his will.

Factors to be Considered - Donation offers potential for preserving land in a desired condition, when a donor no longer has the individual means to do so. This can be a tool for realizing substantial tax benefits. However, restrictions on the donation can limit the extent of the tax benefits. Donations can reduce estate taxes and provide significant savings if they qualify for deductions from taxable income.

Bargain Sale of Land

A bargain sale combines the advantages of a gift and a sale. Because the land is sold in fee-simple at a reduced price, the difference between the fair market value and the actual selling price to a nonprofit organization or public agency represents a charitable contribution.

Factors to be Considered - A bargain sale may allow the seller to realize a charitable tax deduction in addition to a cash return. Like donations, bargain sales can reduce estate taxes and provide other tax benefits. Restrictions written in the transaction, however, can limit the extent of the tax benefits.

Zoning

Zoning is a method of controlling the use and development of land so as to yield the greatest benefits to the people in a community. Its aim is to protect the community from haphazard and careless development that may destroy land values. A variety of zoning techniques include traditional zoning, subdivision ordinances, trailer park zoning districts, cluster zoning, performance standards, special natural area districts, and scenic view districts.

Trailer park regulations dealing with design criteria, minimum and maximum density requirements, and encouraging innovative site layouts could encourage development that would be beneficial to property values and the general welfare.

River-edge setback requirements could be useful for reducing damage from flooding and storm water runoff, as well as for providing a buffer zone from development along the river's edge. These setbacks would also ensure a certain amount of open space.

Cluster zoning is a variation of traditional zoning regulations that assigns a fixed number of dwelling units per acre in a particular land use classification. Through clustering, the same number of units is maintained, but the standard lot and yard size are reduced and sometimes eliminated; this leads to placement of dwelling units in a way that will maximize open space. The resulting open space is generally owned and shared by the homeowners. One type of clustering is the farm colony concept, intended to keep land in farming while using some for residential purposes.

Performance standards are another way to guide land use activity in environmentally sensitive areas along the river's edge and throughout a jurisdiction or watershed. They permit existing land use activities to continue up to the point at which they interfere with or begin to inhibit the functions of the natural process. Development of performance standards requires selection of natural resource areas and description of their key functions related to the public health, safety, and welfare. This approach offers greater flexibility to the landowner or developer, as long as the standards are met.

Special natural area districts can be delineated in conjunction with established zoning to protect and conserve high-value natural lands such as wetlands, woodlands, floodplains, and old fields

along the river edge. These districts could focus on a specific natural resource such as wetlands in a wetland conservancy district. The use of these areas can be regulated through ordinance, in addition to existing zoning, and can focus on the unique qualities and functions of that resource. Uses compatible with the functions of the special area could be permitted, and density transfers (see next section) would allow landowners to shift their development rights from the special resource area to a less environmentally sensitive part of their land.

Factors to be Considered - Zoning regulations are locally decided and administered, can be designed to meet local needs, and are widely known and used. However, they require consensus in development and establishment, can sometimes be rigid and inflexible, and can be used to promote undesired development if not properly administered. Zoning and subdivision regulations can be very useful in managing land along a river and provide a good basis for more complicated land management techniques.

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of development rights is based on the same idea as easements — that landownership is a bundle of separable rights. Thus it is possible to separate development rights from any given parcel of land and apply them to another parcel of land. Under transfer regulations, the piece of land that has had its development rights transferred away will remain "undeveloped" while the piece receiving the development rights becomes eligible for higher density development than it would have been without those extra rights. This transfer is noted in the deeds to the respective parcels of land.

Factors to be Considered - A transfer of development rights offers the potential for preserving open space in desired areas while allowing higher density development in more suitable areas, thereby producing benefits for everyone—the open space is protected, the landowner receives compensation for his loss of potential development, and the potential for expanded growth is allowed in another area. A transfer, however, is a rather complex concept to put into practice and requires strong public planning and zoning powers as well as a firm commitment by local officials to the objectives of the transaction. Also, a transfer may be more useful at a later stage of planning after some basic land management mechanisms are already functioning.

Agricultural District

An agricultural district, often a State-approved program, involves the creation of locally initiated districts designed to encourage agricultural operations and to discourage intensive nonfarm development, regulations hampering agriculture, and prohibitive taxation. It is designed to preserve and protect viable

agricultural land by providing special tax relief to farmers. Agricultural districts are created in response to local initiative, whereby individual landowners who collectively own substantial acreage of agricultural land submit an application to the county legislative body for approval of the district.

Factors to be Considered - Usually, an agricultural district limits nuisance ordinances that affect the right to farm, keep property taxes low, limit special service tax assessments, and restrict public funds for nonfarm development. It must be locally initiated and supported and would require an initial enabling act by State legislature and time and effort to pursue through necessary steps. Agricultural districts could help preserve farmland in large sections by reducing development pressures.

Public Education and Information

Different methods such as the following, can facilitate intelligent land use and make alternative land use preservation techniques widely known to the public:

- More informative signing concerning littering, river use, and identifying private lands;

- local land use workshops featuring topics that affect everyone;

- technical assistance consisting of advice to landowners about the value of natural, scenic, and/or cultural resources, and sound management and construction practices;

- registration program leading to formal recognition of natural or historic landmarks to encourage voluntary protection;

- cooperative agreements consisting of formal or informal contracts for cooperation in management, maintenance, or operation of valuable resources.

2. Coordination

One of the most important functions of the river area management plan would be to establish a means of coordinating planning and various regulatory activities.

The management authority would develop positions on such issues as bridge crossings, road access, road improvements, mineral extraction, timbering, and landowner rights.

D. Consideration for the National System

The State may at some future time decide to nominate all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System under Section 2(a)(ii) of

Public Law 90-542. In the procedures for adding a river to the National System under State and/or local management, the following requirements should normally be met:

1. The outstandingly remarkable values which qualify the river for inclusion in the National System must be assured of permanent protection and management by or pursuant to State statute. As a means to this end, the State must adopt a program of action which will provide permanent protection for the natural and cultural qualities of the river and adjoining lands.
2. Protective devices for the river corridor may include, but need not be limited to, fee acquisition, scenic easements or other than fee acquisition, zoning, limitations on building permits and other regulations. The intent is to provide for regulation of the uses of private lands immediately abutting or affecting the river to preclude changes in use which would substantially alter the character of the river corridor. The State must prohibit adverse impacts on the river resources by licensing requirements. If local zoning will be a major tool, it must either be in place or expressions of local intent must be included in the application.

The procedures for designation are as follows:

1. The Governor of the State must make application to the Secretary of the Interior requesting that the river be added to the National System and documenting the actions taken to comply with requirements 1 and 2 above. The application shall indicate the extent of public involvement in the decision to protect the river. The application should include sufficient environmental data to permit the Secretary to assess the environmental impact of adding the river to the National System.
2. The Secretary's determination as to whether requirements 1 and 2 above have been adequately met would be based on:
 - a. An evaluation of the program of action prepared by the State and a field reconnaissance to observe the manner in which the State is implementing its program, or
 - b. If a federal study has been completed, the extent to which the conceptual plan, as contained in that report, is being implemented.
3. The Secretary must determine that the river possesses outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values and that it qualifies for inclusion in the National System.

4. The Secretary must submit the proposal to the Secretaries of Agriculture and Army, the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the administrators of other affected federal agencies for review and comment as required in Section 4(c) of the Act.
5. Finally, if the State's request is approved by the Secretary, the river would be added to the National System by publishing a notice in the Federal Register.

VII. STUDY PARTICIPANTS AND CONSULTANTS

A. Principals

Sharon C. Keene, Chief, Rivers and Trails Division, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office.

Wallace C. Brittain, Study Manager, Rivers and Trails Division, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office.

Laura Sue Musslewhite, Student Intern (Graphics), Rivers and Trails Division, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office.

B. Consultants

Jeff Chidlaw, Division of Park Planning and Special Studies, National Park Service, Washington.

John Haubert, Division of Park Planning and Special Studies, National Park Service, Washington.

Larry Goldman, Ecological Services Field Office, Fish and Wildlife Service, Daphne, Alabama.

Sidney A. Woodson, Special Agent/Pilot, Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson, Mississippi.

Jonathan C. Strickland, Conservation, Plans and Programs, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

William Y. Quisenberry, Wildlife Heritage Program, Mississippi Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Seth Mott, Mississippi Natural Heritage Program, Mississippi Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Dr. N. Reid Stowe, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of South Alabama.

Roger Clark, Jackson County Planning Commission, Pascagoula, Mississippi.

Thomas A. Davis, Canoe Trails, Inc., Mobile, Alabama.

Walter B. Dennis, Ecologist, International Paper Company.

C. Coordination

As a part of the Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study, representatives from the National Park Service have contacted and/or gathered information from the following agencies and organizations:

State of Alabama

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Alabama Environmental Quality Association
Alabama Water Improvement Commission
Alabama Forestry Commission

State of Mississippi

Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Recreation and Parks
Department of Wildlife Conservation
Natural Heritage Program
Mississippi Forestry Commission
Pat Harrison Waterway District

Other

Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District
Jackson County Planning Commission
Gulf Region Planning Commission
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
Mobile County Administrator
Alabama Conservancy
Mobile Bay Audubon Society
International Paper Company
Scott Paper Company
Department of Defense
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District
Department of Agriculture
U.S. Forest Service
Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey, Resources Division

APPENDIX I

STUDY INFORMATION BROCHURES

ESCATAWPA RIVER STUDY INFORMATION BROCHURE

united states department of the interior/national park service



WHY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS STUDYING THE ESCATAWPA RIVER

In 1978 Congress passed an amendment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542) requiring the Secretary of the Interior to study the feasibility of designating the Escatawpa River as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The National Park Service (NPS) is preparing the study on behalf of the Secretary.

When our study is complete the Secretary will forward it to the President and the Congress for their consideration. The study report is merely advice to the Congress. Congress can accept or reject the recommendation of the study as it sees fit.



HOW THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WILL PREPARE THE STUDY

In preparing the study we have three essential steps:

1. First we must determine whether or not the river is eligible for inclusion in the National System. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires that a river have at least one outstandingly remarkable value such as scenic, recreational, cultural, fish and wildlife, or ecological values. The river area under study may be found to be eligible in whole or in part. In this case, NPS study planners will make the final eligibility determination.
2. Second, if eligible, we have to assess whether or not the river is suitable for inclusion in the National System. Suitability is a matter of judgement regarding factors such as the following:
 - a. whether or not the public and elected officials support designation;
 - b. whether suitable means can be found to protect the river and at what costs; and
 - c. whether an administering body, either Federal, State, local or a combination of same can be found to manage the river.

The NPS study planners may make a suitability recommendation, but the Secretary of the Interior makes the final determination.

3. Third, if a river is not eligible or suitable for designation as a national wild and scenic river, we must determine if there is support for other protection options which do not involve national designation.

The National Park Service will work closely with State, local governments and private citizens through every stage of study's preparation.

MECHANICS OF STUDY PROCESS

1. Information gathering.
2. Determine eligibility.
3. If eligible, determine if suitable for designation; if not eligible or suitable, determine whether there is support for protection which does not involve national designation.
4. Prepare draft for public review and comment.
5. Revise draft, as appropriate, based on comments.
6. Submit final report from the Department to the President and the Congress.

CURRENT STUDY STATUS

In August 1982 the Escatawpa River Study was officially begun. Contacts were established with numerous federal, state, and local officials as well as private citizens and organizations. Any existing plans, reports, or studies pertaining to the Escatawpa River were sought from these contacts. County maps, topographic maps, landuse and ownership maps were compiled and studied. Once research and study of existing data had been completed field surveys were made.

Based on the information gathered the Escatawpa River has been found to have outstandingly remarkable scenic and recreational values and therefore, eligible as a potential component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. That portion of the river study area found to be eligible and the classification of the eligible river miles are illustrated on the map on the following page.

Future discussions with public officials, citizens and landowners at public workshops in Mobile, Alabama, and Pascagoula, Mississippi, will be analyzed and documented in the draft study report. This will assist NPS planners in developing river protection options and provide the basis for the Secretary's decision concerning suitability of designation.

RIVER CLASSIFICATIONS

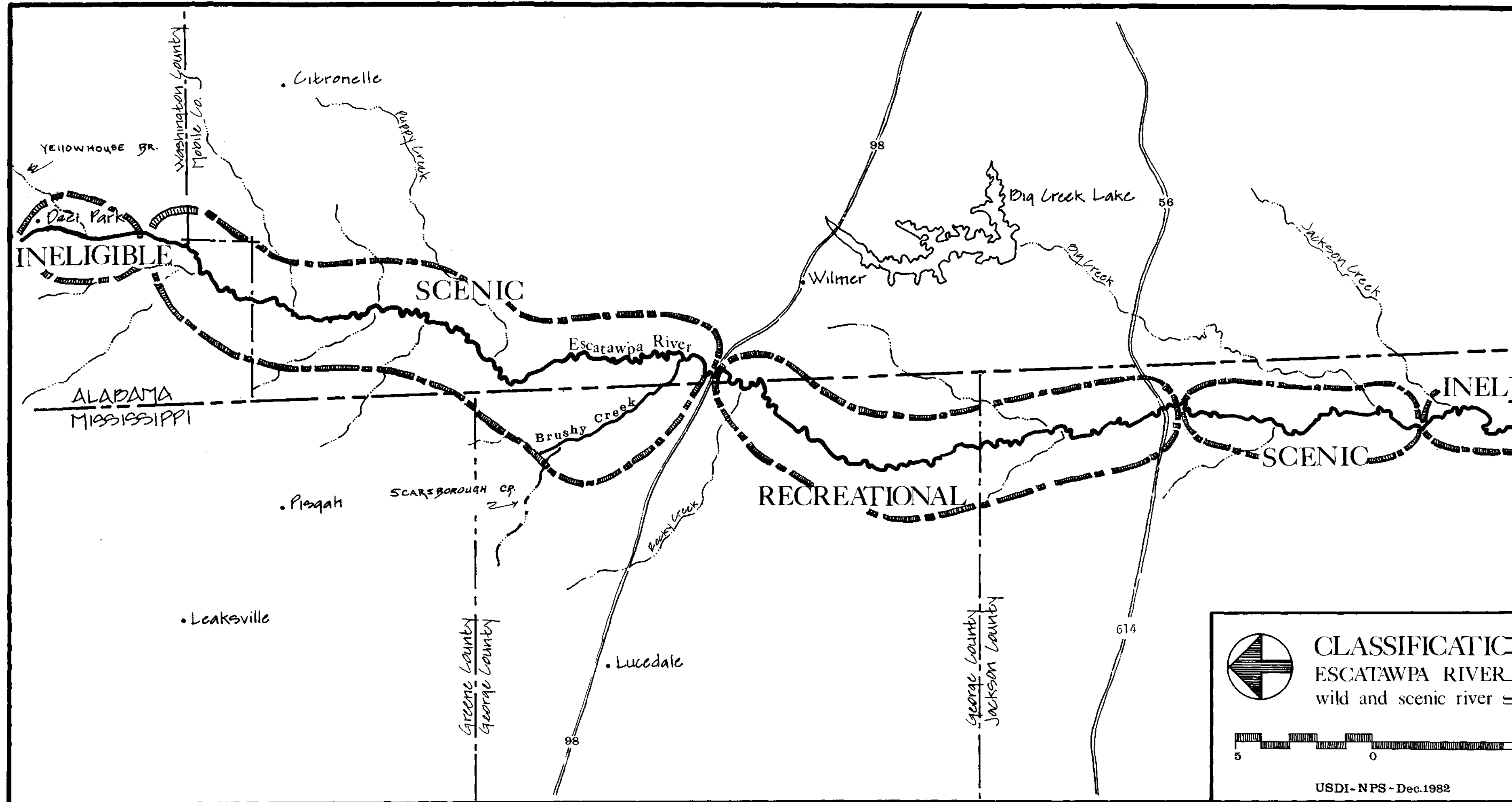
The first step the National Park Service took after beginning the study was to gather information about the resource values of the Escatawpa River. We have obtained information from a variety of sources, including published data, State and local governmental agencies, conservation groups, private citizens, and field surveys.

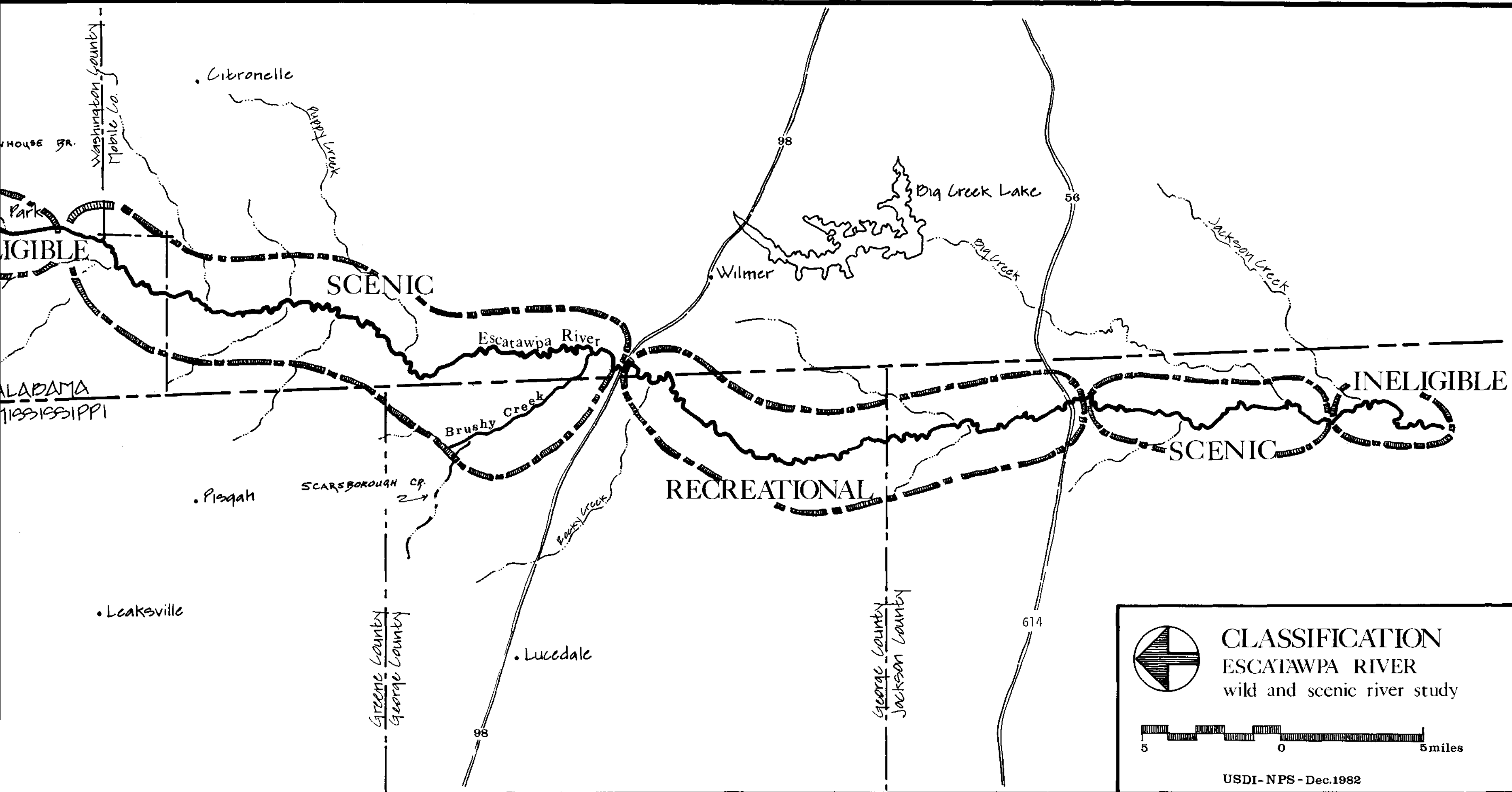
Section 2(b) of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542, as amended) specifies criteria for determining the classification of eligible river segments. These classifications are as follows:

"(1) Wild river areas--Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America."

"(2) Scenic river areas--Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads."

"(3) Recreational river areas--Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past."







CLASSIFICATION
ESCATAWPA RIVER
wild and scenic river study



USDI - NPS - Dec. 1982

Based on the information gathered we have determined that the Escatawpa River is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. As illustrated by the map on page 4 of this brochure, eligibility determinations and classifications are as follows:

- a. That portion of the authorized study river starting approximately 1 mile downstream from the confluence of the Escatawpa River and Jackson Creek; to a point approximately 1 mile upstream from the same confluence was found ineligible due to existing shoreline development. (Approximately 2 river miles are ineligible)
- b. That portion of the Escatawpa River beginning approximately 2 river miles from the start of the study area and extending upstream approximately 14 river miles to the Jackson County Route 614 bridge was found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable scenic and recreational values. (Approximately 14 river miles are eligible and classified as scenic)
- c. That portion of the Escatawpa River from the Jackson County Route 614 bridge upstream approximately 22 river miles to a point approximately 1 river mile upstream from the U.S. Highway 98 bridge were found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable recreational values. (Approximately 22 river miles are eligible and are classified as recreational)
- d. That portion of the Escatawpa River from a point approximately 1 river mile upstream from the U.S. Highway 98 bridge upstream approximately 31 river miles, and to include approximately 7 river miles of Brushy Creek upstream from its confluence with Scarsborough Creek, to a point approximately 2 river miles downstream from the Yellowhouse Branch confluence with the Escatawpa River near the town of Deer Park, Alabama, were found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable scenic and recreational values. (Approximately 38 river miles are eligible and classified as scenic)
- e. That portion of the Escatawpa River from the study area termination at the Yellowhouse Branch confluence downstream approximately 2 river miles was found ineligible due to residential development in close proximity to the river, and seasonally low flow. (Approximately 2 river miles are ineligible.)

DESIGNATION METHODS

There are two methods by which a river can be designated as a national wild and scenic river.

1. Congressional designation requires an Act of Congress and usually involves federal management or joint federal/State management.
2. The Secretary of the Interior can designate a national wild and scenic river upon application by the Governor of the State. Rivers designated by the Secretary must meet the eligibility criteria

specified in the Act, be designated as a State Wild and Scenic River, and have a suitable program of protection either proposed or in place.

Actions placing rivers into the National System by an Act of Congress normally provide authorization and funding to acquire lands within the designated boundary. Designation by the Secretary of the Interior provides no acquisition authority or funds. State and local agencies would retain only the acquisition authority prescribed by existing State and local statutes.

WHAT NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATION MEANS

National wild and scenic river designation would provide two primary protections. Upon designation a river would be protected from federally assisted water resource projects which would adversely affect the values for which the river was designated. Water resource projects include:

1. dams;
2. channelization; and
3. other modifications of the river which would affect its free-flowing character.

Protection would apply only if a federal loan, grant, permit, etc., was required.

The second protection afforded by national designation would be the development of a program of non-degradation to insure a river's protection through any of a variety of means:

1. fee acquisition;
2. easements;
3. zoning;
4. donations of land or easements; and
5. leases.

Private landownership could continue under national wild and scenic river designation. The managing agency develops the specific protection mechanisms to be applied during the preparation of a management plan. The protection program would seek to maintain the river in the same condition that existed at the time of designation.

HOW MUCH LAND WOULD BE AFFECTED BY NATIONAL DESIGNATION

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act limits the amount of land to be included within the boundary of a Congressionally designated river to 320 acres per mile on both sides of the river. There is no such limitation on State-administered rivers designated by the Secretary of the Interior. The 320 acres per mile limitation roughly averages 1/4 mile from each river bank as a maximum boundary for a Congressionally designated river. However, the amount of land necessary to protect a river's values can vary considerably depending on the particular river. Much less than 1/4 mile may be sufficient, depending on the physical characteristics of the river and the resource values which need protection.

There is no minimum length requirement for a component of the National System. One river segment measuring 7.5 miles has been recommended for inclusion in the System.

HOW WOULD ACTIVITIES SUCH AS TIMBERING, HUNTING, AND FISHING BE AFFECTED BY DESIGNATION

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act directs that national wild and scenic rivers be managed to protect a river's values without limiting other uses that do not interfere with public use and enjoyment or conflict with the Act. Land uses and developments on private lands in existence when a river is designated may be permitted to continue. New land uses must be evaluated for their compatibility with the Act.

Agriculture and forestry practices should be similar in nature and intensity to those present in the area at the time of designation. Timber harvest in any river area will be conducted so as to avoid adverse impacts on the river area's values.

Hunting and fishing are permitted on lands and waters administered as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System under applicable State and federal laws and regulations.

PROTECTION METHODS

A variety of means can be used to protect a river whether at the federal, State, local or private level.

Fee Acquisition

Generally, fee acquisition would be confined to land needed to provide access to facilities for the general public and to protect the river and resource values which would otherwise be in jeopardy from less-than-fee control.

Easement

With an easement, the managing entity buys or receives a donation of the right to certain uses on selected portions of the owner's land. For example, for a scenic easement, a managing agency could acquire the right to cut trees or shrubbery, put up buildings or any other use which would detract from the beauty of the land. The landowner retains all other rights to this land except those which are purchased. The owner may, of course, sell his rights or leave them to his heirs.

The rights to be acquired through an easement depend on the degree and type of protection needed. Easements do not grant the public the right of access, unless that is a stated condition of the easement.

Zoning

Local zoning authority could be used to protect a river by specifying the types and amounts of development allowed in the river area.

Cooperative Agreements

Landowners could enter into cooperative agreements either among themselves or with State or local governments agreeing not to allow certain types or amounts of developments on their lands. While such agreements would not be legally binding, they would serve to focus attention on the need to protect a river area, and would provide an expression of the landowners' intention to do so.

Other

Other options which can be used to protect a river include sale and either resale or leaseback to the original owner with restrictions. Donations of land and/or easements can be especially important in view of governmental fiscal constraints.

FEEDBACK

Your answers to the questions included in the attached questionnaire will help us determine whether or not the Escatawpa should become a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, or if the river should be protected by other means. A postpaid sheet is attached to the back of the questionnaire. Just fold, staple and return to us. If you wish to be placed on our mailing list so that you receive further updates on the progress of the study, please include your name and address.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you feel that the Escatawpa River is in need of any special protection and, if so, who should be responsible for this protection?
2. The Escatawpa River Study report will include a number of options or alternatives for consideration by the Secretary of the Interior and ultimately the Congress. The alternatives described below may receive future consideration in developing the study report. Please give us your comments on each alternative and briefly explain your reasons for supporting or opposing them.

Alternative A - No Action/Existing Trends

Under this alternative no action would be taken by Federal, State, local governments or private organizations to provide any special protection for the Escatawpa. Existing conditions and trends would determine the future of the river.

Comments:

Alternative B - Congressional designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa as a national wild and scenic river with Federal or Federal/State management

Currently, budgetary constraints are imposing severe limitations on Federal parkland acquisition. Unless there is already substantial federal ownership in a potential national wild and scenic river area, Congressional designation and federal management of a proposed national wild and scenic river is not considered to be a feasible option. Federal management would be considered only where there was overwhelming public interest and strong support in the Congress.

Comments:

Alternative C - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River within the State of Mississippi (only) with State or joint State/local management

If there is sufficient interest and support from the public and elected officials the State of Mississippi could propose a program of protection and apply to the Secretary of the Interior for designation of the Escatawpa as a national wild and scenic river. Before Secretarial designation could occur, the State of Mississippi would have to legislatively protect the Escatawpa. The Governor could then outline a proposed river protection program (management plan) and apply to the Secretary of the Interior for federal designation.

Comments:

Alternative D - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River within the State of Alabama (only) with State or joint State/local management

Requirements of this alternative are the same as for Alternative C.

Comments:

Alternative E - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River within the States of Alabama and Mississippi with cooperative management between Alabama and Mississippi

Requirements of this alternative are the same as for Alternatives C and Alternative D

Comments:

Alternative F - Protection at the local level

Another option which could be used to protect the river would be for local governments to restrict the quantity and quality of development occurring in the river corridor through their zoning and permitting authorities. This could be done by each county separately, or jointly by multicounty agreement. Another possibility would be the establishment of a River Corridor Commission covering all or part of the Escatawpa. The Commission could be comprised of representatives from counties, towns, landowners, area planning councils and local interest groups. The Commission could define a river corridor and be empowered through applicable State laws to protect that corridor through a variety of means such as planning, implementing zoning and subdivision regulations, acquiring property through donation or acquisition, or developing and operating facilities.

Comments:

Other suggested alternatives

Please pass this information on to anyone you believe might be interested. During the course of the study, any inquiries should be addressed to: National Park Service, Rivers and Trails Division, 75 Spring Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30303 (404/221-5838; FTS 242-5838).

FOLD

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ESCATAWPA RIVER STUDY

INFORMATION BROCHURE

united states department of the interior/national park service



PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY

National Park Service (NPS) public meetings were held in April in Mobile, Alabama, and Pascagoula, Mississippi. These workshops were the first official NPS contact with landowners and the general public concerning the Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study. Public comments were solicited concerning the NPS determination of the Escatawpa's eligibility as a potential wild and scenic river and the current evaluation of the Escatawpa's suitability for possible designation. A tabulation of written comments summarizing the general position of various interested groups and individuals is attached.



The meetings were emotionally charged and elicited overwhelming local opposition to wild and scenic river designation for the Escatawpa. Landowners perceive even the study as a threat to private ownership and turned out in large numbers to oppose any federal involvement along the river. The fact that no federal acquisition was proposed was lost in the confusion and misunderstanding.

In addition to the opposition from landowners, three county governments in the area--Jackson and George Counties, Mississippi, and Washington County, Alabama--passed resolutions against designation. The Sheriff and the Tax Assessor from George County both spoke against wild and scenic status for the river. Representatives of forest products companies owning land along the river were solidly opposed to designation. The National Park Service did not hear from either the States of Alabama or Mississippi. Mobile County, Alabama, submitted a resolution supporting designation and conservation groups also supplied statements in favor of making the Escatawpa a wild and scenic river.

Comments from the two public meetings, as well as written comments mailed in, will be considered as the National Park Service prepares its study report, due to be completed in July. The report and recommendations ultimately will be sent to Congress for a decision.

Based on the information gathered so far, a preliminary determination has been made that the Escatawpa is eligible for wild and scenic river status, though probably not suitable because of extreme local opposition.

For those people who attended the April meetings we apologize for the crowded conditions in Mobile, Alabama, and the inconvenience of moving the meeting location in Pascagoula, Mississippi, to a larger, more comfortable space. If you were unable to voice your opinion at these meetings please feel free to call or write us at anytime throughout the study.

For further information contact:

Wallace C. Brittain
Study Coordinator
Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 221-5838

NUMERIC SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED AND STATEMENTS
PRESENTED (PUBLIC WORKSHOPS) THROUGH APRIL 25, 1983

NOTE: "Pro"-responses indicate support for some type of special
protection of the Escatawpa River.

"Con"-responses indicate support for a "no action/existing trends"
alternative.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

PRO

2

CON

1

STATE GOVERNMENT - No statements or comments

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

PRO

1

CON

5

CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

PRO

5

CON

0

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

PRO

1

CON

10

QUESTIONNAIRE (NPS) RESPONDENTS

PRO

5

CON

284

INDIVIDUAL LETTERS/STATEMENTS

PRO

5

CON

89

CITIZEN PETITIONS

	<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
	0	417
TOTAL	<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
	19	806

NOTE: Duplicate letters, statements, etc., were counted only once.

Based on the information gathered we have determined that the Escatawpa River is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. As illustrated by the map on page 4 of this brochure, eligibility determinations and classifications are as follows:

- a. That portion of the authorized study river starting approximately 1 mile downstream from the confluence of the Escatawpa River and Jackson Creek; to a point approximately 1 mile upstream from the same confluence was found ineligible due to existing shoreline development. (Approximately 2 river miles are ineligible)
- b. That portion of the Escatawpa River beginning approximately 2 river miles from the start of the study area and extending upstream approximately 14 river miles to the Jackson County Route 614 bridge was found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable scenic and recreational values. (Approximately 14 river miles are eligible and classified as scenic)
- c. That portion of the Escatawpa River from the Jackson County Route 614 bridge upstream approximately 22 river miles to a point approximately 1 river mile upstream from the U.S. Highway 98 bridge were found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable recreational values. (Approximately 22 river miles are eligible and are classified as recreational)
- d. That portion of the Escatawpa River from a point approximately 1 river mile upstream from the U.S. Highway 98 bridge upstream approximately 31 river miles, and to include approximately 7 river miles of Brushy Creek upstream from its confluence with Scarsborough Creek, to a point approximately 2 river miles downstream from the Yellowhouse Branch confluence with the Escatawpa River near the town of Deer Park, Alabama, were found eligible based on outstandingly remarkable scenic and recreational values. (Approximately 38 river miles are eligible and classified as scenic)
- e. That portion of the Escatawpa River from the study area termination at the Yellowhouse Branch confluence downstream approximately 2 river miles was found ineligible due to residential development in close proximity to the river, and seasonally low flow. (Approximately 2 river miles are ineligible.)

DESIGNATION METHODS

There are two methods by which a river can be designated as a national wild and scenic river.

1. Congressional designation requires an Act of Congress and usually involves federal management or joint federal/State management.
2. The Secretary of the Interior can designate a national wild and scenic river upon application by the Governor of the State. Rivers designated by the Secretary must meet the eligibility criteria

specified in the Act, be designated as a State Wild and Scenic River, and have a suitable program of protection either proposed or in place.

Actions placing rivers into the National System by an Act of Congress normally provide authorization and funding to acquire lands within the designated boundary. Designation by the Secretary of the Interior provides no acquisition authority or funds. State and local agencies would retain only the acquisition authority prescribed by existing State and local statutes.

WHAT NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATION MEANS

National wild and scenic river designation would provide two primary protections. Upon designation a river would be protected from federally assisted water resource projects which would adversely affect the values for which the river was designated. Water resource projects include:

1. dams;
2. channelization; and
3. other modifications of the river which would affect its free-flowing character.

Protection would apply only if a federal loan, grant, permit, etc., was required.

The second protection afforded by national designation would be the development of a program of non-degradation to insure a river's protection through any of a variety of means:

1. fee acquisition;
2. easements;
3. zoning;
4. donations of land or easements; and
5. leases.

Private landownership could continue under national wild and scenic river designation. The managing agency develops the specific protection mechanisms to be applied during the preparation of a management plan. The protection program would seek to maintain the river in the same condition that existed at the time of designation.

HOW MUCH LAND WOULD BE AFFECTED BY NATIONAL DESIGNATION

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act limits the amount of land to be included within the boundary of a Congressionally designated river to 320 acres per mile on both sides of the river. There is no such limitation on State-administered rivers designated by the Secretary of the Interior. The 320 acres per mile limitation roughly averages 1/4 mile from each river bank as a maximum boundary for a Congressionally designated river. However, the amount of land necessary to protect a river's values can vary considerably depending on the particular river. Much less than 1/4 mile may be sufficient, depending on the physical characteristics of the river and the resource values which need protection.

There is no minimum length requirement for a component of the National System. One river segment measuring 7.5 miles has been recommended for inclusion in the System.

HOW WOULD ACTIVITIES SUCH AS TIMBERING, HUNTING, AND FISHING BE AFFECTED BY DESIGNATION

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act directs that national wild and scenic rivers be managed to protect a river's values without limiting other uses that do not interfere with public use and enjoyment or conflict with the Act. Land uses and developments on private lands in existence when a river is designated may be permitted to continue. New land uses must be evaluated for their compatibility with the Act.

Agriculture and forestry practices should be similar in nature and intensity to those present in the area at the time of designation. Timber harvest in any river area will be conducted so as to avoid adverse impacts on the river area's values.

Hunting and fishing are permitted on lands and waters administered as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System under applicable State and federal laws and regulations.

PROTECTION METHODS

A variety of means can be used to protect a river whether at the federal, State, local or private level.

Fee Acquisition

Generally, fee acquisition would be confined to land needed to provide access to facilities for the general public and to protect the river and resource values which would otherwise be in jeopardy from less-than-fee control.

Easement

With an easement, the managing entity buys or receives a donation of the right to certain uses on selected portions of the owner's land. For example, for a scenic easement, a managing agency could acquire the right to cut trees or shrubbery, put up buildings or any other use which would detract from the beauty of the land. The landowner retains all other rights to this land except those which are purchased. The owner may, of course, sell his rights or leave them to his heirs.

The rights to be acquired through an easement depend on the degree and type of protection needed. Easements do not grant the public the right of access, unless that is a stated condition of the easement.

Zoning

Local zoning authority could be used to protect a river by specifying the types and amounts of development allowed in the river area.

Cooperative Agreements

Landowners could enter into cooperative agreements either among themselves or with State or local governments agreeing not to allow certain types or amounts of developments on their lands. While such agreements would not be legally binding, they would serve to focus attention on the need to protect a river area, and would provide an expression of the landowners' intention to do so.

Other

Other options which can be used to protect a river include sale and either resale or leaseback to the original owner with restrictions. Donations of land and/or easements can be especially important in view of governmental fiscal constraints.

FEEDBACK

Your answers to the questions included in the attached questionnaire will help us determine whether or not the Escatawpa should become a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, or if the river should be protected by other means. A postpaid sheet is attached to the back of the questionnaire. Just fold, staple and return to us. If you wish to be placed on our mailing list so that you receive further updates on the progress of the study, please include your name and address.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you feel that the Escatawpa River is in need of any special protection and, if so, who should be responsible for this protection?

2. The Escatawpa River Study report will include a number of options or alternatives for consideration by the Secretary of the Interior and ultimately the Congress. The alternatives described below may receive future consideration in developing the study report. Please give us your comments on each alternative and briefly explain your reasons for supporting or opposing them.

Alternative A - No Action/Existing Trends

Under this alternative no action would be taken by Federal, State, local governments or private organizations to provide any special protection for the Escatawpa. Existing conditions and trends would determine the future of the river.

Comments:

Alternative B - Congressional designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa as a national wild and scenic river with Federal or Federal/State management

Currently, budgetary constraints are imposing severe limitations on Federal parkland acquisition. Unless there is already substantial federal ownership in a potential national wild and scenic river area, Congressional designation and federal management of a proposed national wild and scenic river is not considered to be a feasible option. Federal management would be considered only where there was overwhelming public interest and strong support in the Congress.

Comments:

Alternative C - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River within the State of Mississippi (only) with State or joint State/local management

If there is sufficient interest and support from the public and elected officials the State of Mississippi could propose a program of protection and apply to the Secretary of the Interior for designation of the Escatawpa as a national wild and scenic river. Before Secretarial designation could occur, the State of Mississippi would have to legislatively protect the Escatawpa. The Governor could then outline a proposed river protection program (management plan) and apply to the Secretary of the Interior for federal designation.

Comments:

Alternative D - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River within the State of Alabama (only) with State or joint State/local management

Requirements of this alternative are the same as for Alternative C.

Comments:

Alternative E - Secretary of the Interior designation of all or part of the eligible portion of the Escatawpa River within the States of Alabama and Mississippi with cooperative management between Alabama and Mississippi

Requirements of this alternative are the same as for Alternatives C and Alternative D

Comments:

Alternative F - Protection at the local level

Another option which could be used to protect the river would be for local governments to restrict the quantity and quality of development occurring in the river corridor through their zoning and permitting authorities. This could be done by each county separately, or jointly by multicounty agreement. Another possibility would be the establishment of a River Corridor Commission covering all or part of the Escatawpa. The Commission could be comprised of representatives from counties, towns, landowners, area planning councils and local interest groups. The Commission could define a river corridor and be empowered through applicable State laws to protect that corridor through a variety of means such as planning, implementing zoning and subdivision regulations, acquiring property through donation or acquisition, or developing and operating facilities.

Comments:

Other suggested alternatives

Please pass this information on to anyone you believe might be interested. During the course of the study, any inquiries should be addressed to: National Park Service, Rivers and Trails Division, 75 Spring Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30303 (404/221-5838; FTS 242-5838).

FOLD

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SOUTHEAST REGION
75 SPRING STREET, S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INT 417



National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

ESCATAWPA RIVER STUDY INFORMATION BROCHURE

united states department of the interior/national park service



PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY

National Park Service (NPS) public meetings were held in April in Mobile, Alabama, and Pascagoula, Mississippi. These workshops were the first official NPS contact with landowners and the general public concerning the Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study. Public comments were solicited concerning the NPS determination of the Escatawpa's eligibility as a potential wild and scenic river and the current evaluation of the Escatawpa's suitability for possible designation. A tabulation of written comments summarizing the general position of various interested groups and individuals is attached.



The meetings were emotionally charged and elicited overwhelming local opposition to wild and scenic river designation for the Escatawpa. Landowners perceive even the study as a threat to private ownership and turned out in large numbers to oppose any federal involvement along the river. The fact that no federal acquisition was proposed was lost in the confusion and misunderstanding.

In addition to the opposition from landowners, three county governments in the area—Jackson and George Counties, Mississippi, and Washington County, Alabama—passed resolutions against designation. The Sheriff and the Tax Assessor from George County both spoke against wild and scenic status for the river. Representatives of forest products companies owning land along the river were solidly opposed to designation. The National Park Service did not hear from either the States of Alabama or Mississippi. Mobile County, Alabama, submitted a resolution supporting designation and conservation groups also supplied statements in favor of making the Escatawpa a wild and scenic river.

Comments from the two public meetings, as well as written comments mailed in, will be considered as the National Park Service prepares its study report, due to be completed in July. The report and recommendations ultimately will be sent to Congress for a decision.

Based on the information gathered so far, a preliminary determination has been made that the Escatawpa is eligible for wild and scenic river status, though probably not suitable because of extreme local opposition.

For those people who attended the April meetings we apologize for the crowded conditions in Mobile, Alabama, and the inconvenience of moving the meeting location in Pascagoula, Mississippi, to a larger, more comfortable space. If you were unable to voice your opinion at these meetings please feel free to call or write us at anytime throughout the study.

For further information contact:

Wallace C. Brittain
Study Coordinator
Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 221-5838

NUMERIC SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED AND STATEMENTS
PRESENTED (PUBLIC WORKSHOPS) THROUGH APRIL 25, 1983

NOTE: "Pro"-responses indicate support for some type of special
protection of the Escatawpa River.

"Con"-responses indicate support for a "no action/existing trends"
alternative.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
2	1

STATE GOVERNMENT - No statements or comments

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
1	5

CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
5	0

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
1	10

QUESTIONNAIRE (NPS) RESPONDENTS

<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
5	284

INDIVIDUAL LETTERS/STATEMENTS

<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
5	89

CITIZEN PETITIONS

	<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
	0	417
TOTAL	<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
	19	806

NOTE: Duplicate letters, statements, etc., were counted only once.

ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS MATRIX

<u>Alternatives</u>	<u>Major Issues Considered</u>					
	<u>Federal</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Local Government</u>	<u>River Protection Interest</u>	<u>Landowners</u>	<u>Forest Industry</u>
Alternative A:						
Congressional designation with federal or federal/State management.	No existing federal ownership and budgetary constraints on new park land acquisition. No imminent threat.	No existing ownership. No proposed acquisition. No proposed management.	Opposed to designation, except Mobile County.	Preferred alternative of organized river protection groups.	Adamantly opposed to federal presence to include designation and management.	Opposed to any possible land controls or loss of land.
Alternative B:						
Secretarial designation with State management (Section 2(a)(ii) designation).	Requires State initiative. Could receive federal planning and assistance through existing programs.	No existing or pending State legislation as required for Section 2(a)(ii) designation.	Same as above.	Considered to be less desirable than Alternative A, but would support.	Adamantly opposed.	Oppose - same as above.
Alternative C:						
Local protection (no federal designation).	Would support and cooperate. Would not be sufficient for federal designation.	Would support and cooperate.	Protection efforts to date are varied.	Considered inadequate protection alternative but would support in lieu of Alternative A or B.	Considered adequate at present.	Considered to be adequate at present.
Alternative D:						
No action/existing trends.	Preliminary preferred alternative in lieu of another feasible alternative at the present time.	Would continue current programs such as fire control, etc.	Would continue to enforce current standards and policies relating to the river resource.	Considered to be unacceptable alternative.	Preferred alternative.	Preferred alternative.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

If you have not commented on the study and wish to do so, a prepaid mailer is attached. Just fold, staple or tape, and return to us. No postage is needed.

FOLD

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SOUTHEAST REGION
75 SPRING STREET, S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
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INT 417



National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

APPENDIX II

LETTERS OF REVIEW AND COMMENT

LETTERS OF REVIEW AND COMMENT

Written comments on the Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study were received from the following agencies, organizations, and individuals:

United States Congress

Senator Thad Cochran

Federal Agencies

Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

Department of the Army

Office of the Assistant Secretary
Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

State Agencies

Governor, State of Alabama

Mississippi Department of Wildlife Conservation

Mississippi Department of Natural Resources

Bureau of Recreation and Parks

State of Mississippi

Gulf Coast Research Laboratory

Local Governments

None

Industry and Business

Alabama Forestry Commission

First National Bank

Mobile, Alabama

Gulf Lumber Company, Inc.

Industry and Business (Cont'd)

International Paper Company

Mississippi Forestry Association, Inc.

Conservation and Recreation Organizations

Birmingham Audubon Society

The Alabama Conservancy

The Mobile Bay Audubon Society

Citizens

John H. Bowen

Mark, Brent and Elvis Cumbest

James E. Davis, Jr.

Larry D. Godfrey

Lawrence J. Hallet, Jr.

Darryl A. Hurt, Jr.

Ted H. Meredith

James and Ina Mae Miller

H. L., Vera, Henry and Sharon Pierce

John Howard Wilson

J. H. Wilson, Jr.

J. T. Woodall

THAD COCHRAN
MISSISSIPPI

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,
AND FORESTRY
COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 3, 1984

Ms. Sharon Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
United States Department of Interior
National Park Service
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

I have been contacted by several of my constituents regarding the Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study which is currently under formal review.

The local residents and the city and county officials seem to be uniformly opposed to the designation of the Escatawpa River to wild and scenic river status.

I would appreciate your consideration of their opinion as you review the Escatawpa River study. I would also appreciate your notifying me of the outcome of your review process.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,



THAD COCHRAN
U. S. Senator

TC/bk



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

June 1 1984

Honorable G. Ray Arnett
Assistant Secretary for Fish
and Wildlife and Parks
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Arnett:

We have reviewed your draft Wild and Scenic River Study Report for the Escatawpa River in Mississippi and Alabama, and find that it adequately describes the resources and evaluates the alternatives properly.

We agree with the Study findings that the Escatawpa River possesses outstandingly remarkable values which make it eligible for the National Wild and Scenic River System for 74 miles of the 78 miles within the Study corridor.

However, at the present time, there appears to be little support for designation from State and local groups. As the report indicates, approximately 60 percent of the land is owned and managed by forest product companies and much of the remaining 40 percent is under long-term lease to the forest product industry. The lack of publicly-owned lands along the river would make implementation of a protection program by a Federal or State agency administratively difficult and expensive. For these reasons, we agree with the study recommendations that the river is not suitable for congressional designation at this time.

The study report has also been reviewed by the SCS State Conservationist offices in Jackson, Mississippi and Auburn, Alabama. Their response is enclosed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard E. Lyng".

Richard E. Lyng
Deputy Secretary

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, DC 20310

23 JUN 1964

Honorable G. Ray Arnett
Assistant Secretary for Fish
and Wildlife and Parks
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Arnett:

This is in response to your recent letter, requesting Department of the Army views on the draft report on the Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study, Alabama and Mississippi.

We have reviewed this document and conclude that if any sections of the river identified in the report as eligible are included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, such action will not conflict nor adversely affect flood control, navigation, or other programs or projects of the Corps of Engineers.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this draft report.

Sincerely,

W. R. Gianelli
William R. Gianelli
Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Civil Works)



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

MOBILE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 2288
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36628

REPLY TO

January 20, 1984

ATTENTION OF:

Environmental Quality Section

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
Southeast Region
National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
75 Spring Street, S. W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

With regard to your December 19, 1983, letter concerning the Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study, we appreciate the opportunity to review this report. Previous planning studies on the river by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers are addressed accurately on Page 3 of your report.

If we may be of further assistance, please contact us, and we would appreciate being kept informed on the progress of your study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Willis E. Ruland".

Willis E. Ruland
Chief, Environment and Resources
Branch



GEORGE C. WALLACE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF ALABAMA

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
MONTGOMERY 36130

April 5, 1984

Mr. G. Ray Arnett
Assistant Secretary
Fish and Wildlife and Parks
United States Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Arnett:

It is an honor to have the Escatawpa nominated and considered eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River system. Alabama's natural and human resources are two of its most valued assets. The present and future use of this resource must be balanced with the interests and rights of the river landowners and as stated in the report, the landowners have done "a remarkable job preserving the river's outstanding scenic, natural and recreational characteristics".

In view of the above, I concur with your conclusion that there be a continuation of existing management trends for the foreseeable future.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, along with other state agencies, will continue to monitor the Escatawpa for changes in its current status. In the event of any substantial change, the alternatives and options presented in the Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River study will be assessed.

If I may be of further assistance to you in the future, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

With kind personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

George C. Wallace

GCW:ta

December 29, 1983

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service, SE Regional Office
75 Spring St., SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Re: L58 (SER-PT)

Dear Ms Keene:

As you requested, we have reviewed the Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study. We offer the following suggestions:

Page 26, paragraph 7, line 2:
change Illecium to Illicium

Page 27, paragraph 3:
Of the 18 plant species listed most are not known to occur near the study area. The following species should be deleted from consideration unless valid records in the vicinity are found.

Aster eryngiifolius - known from Covington, Geneva, & Houston Co.'s, Alabama

Cyclodon alabamense - known from Dale Co. Alabama

Gentiana elliottii - known from Covington, Dale, Geneva, Houston, Lee(?) and Tuscaloosa Co.'s Alabama

Trillium reliquum - Henry Co. Alabama

Lilium iridollae - Baldwin, Covington, & Escambia Co.'s, Alabama

Lilium superbum - very doubtful in that area

Rhododendron chapmanii - Henry Co. Alabama

Lindera melissaefolium - extremely doubtful in the study area

Also underlining the family name as done on your list is not accepted practice and by putting it within parenthesis with the Scientific name it appears to be a trinomial. I would suggest this form:

Scarlet Mallow - Malvaceae - Hibiscus coccineus

Some species of plants you might wish to consider listing include:

Pinguicula planifolia

Platanthera integra

Lindera subcoriacea

Sarracenia rubra ssp wherryi

Schwalbea americana

Xyris drummondii

Xyris scabrifolia



WILLIAM WINTER
Governor

MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT
OF WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION

Commissioners:

Joseph W. Gex
Bay St. Louis, MS

Dr. Edmund Keiser
Oxford, MS

Jim Hunter McCaleb
Cleveland, MS

Lonnie E. Tadlock
Morton, MS

A. G. Williams
Osyka, MS

LON STRONG
Executive Director

Mississippi
Museum of
Natural Science
The Fanny A. Cook
Memorial
111 N. Jefferson St.
Jackson, MS
39201-2897
(601) 354-7303

B. E. GANDY
Museum Director

Page 28, paragraph 3, line 4:

The flier and the warmouth are common names for two species of sunfish. There is no "flierwarmouth".

Page 28, paragraph 4, line 7:

The statement that very few birds are year round permanent residents is inaccurate. A substantial number of species occurring in the area are permanent residents.

Page 28, paragraph 5, line 5:

Pocket gophers do not occur in Mississippi nor in Alabama west of the Alabama River system.

Page 28, paragraph 7, line 5 and 6, and Page 29, first four lines:

The reptiles and amphibians characterized as common along the Escatawpa are anything but common. The flatwoods salamander is rare throughout its range and its presence in Mississippi is problematical. The indigo snake has not been collected in Mississippi nor Alabama in the last 30 years. The pine woods snake, river frog, oak toad, chicken turtle, coral snake, southern hognose snake, and eastern diamondback rattlesnake are all uncommon species. Those reptiles and amphibians described as less common are decidedly more so than are those listed as common.

Page 29, line 12:

The osprey is not considered to be threatened or endangered by either the Federal Government nor the State of Mississippi. Alabama does not have an official state list, although the osprey does appear on their unofficial list.

Page 29, line 13: Peregrine is misspelled.

Page 29, line 20: Mississippi lists the black pine snake (Pituophis melanoleucus lodingi), the southern hognose snake (Heterodon simus), and the rainbow snake (Farancia erytrogramma) as endangered species. All should occur in the Escatawpa area. The indigo snake (Drymarchon corais couperi) is listed as threatened by the Federal Government and endangered by the State of Mississippi. Although its presence in the area has not been recently confirmed, it occurred in the area historically and should be included in the list. In addition, the gopher tortoise (Gopherus polyphemus) is officially listed as a threatened species in Mississippi and occurs in the dry upland pine forests along the upper Escatawpa.

Page 29, line 23: See comments for line 12.

Page 29, line 25:

The Gulf sturgeon (Acipenser oxyrhynchus desotoi) is listed as an endangered species in Mississippi. This fish probably occurs in the lower part of the Escatawpa, as it has been collected in both the Pascagoula River to the west and in the Alabama River system to the east. The Escatawpa is relatively small compared to these other two rivers, but the Gulf sturgeon has been collected in the Strong River in south central Mississippi, which is not much larger than the Escatawpa.

Page 46, section B, lines 13-14:

Change Mississippi Department of Natural Resources to Mississippi Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Page 47, Section C, line 11:

The Natural Heritage Program is not a part of the Department of Natural Resources but the Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft study. If we can be of further assistance, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Kenneth L. Gordon

Kenneth L. Gordon
Program Coordinator
Mississippi Natural Heritage Program

lh

P.S. Mr. Seth Mott is now Chief of Game for the Department of Wildlife Conservation. He no longer works for the Natural Heritage Program.



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of Recreation and Parks
P. O. Box 10600
Jackson, Mississippi 39209
(601) 961-5240



March 6, 1984

Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

I apologize for the delay in responding to your request to review the draft Escatawpa Wild & Scenic River Study.

My review reveals a very comprehensive study on the part of the Region; however, due to the apparant adamant opposition of the Mississippi land owners and local governments, I would have to assume that alternative D (No Action/ Existing Trends), is preferred by the majority of the people.

Consequently, I have no pertinent comments pro or con relative to the study.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jimmy Graves".

Jimmy Graves, Chief
Outdoor Recreation Grants
Division

JG:jac



BOTANY SECTION

Gulf Coast Research Laboratory

EAST BEACH DRIVE
OCEAN SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI 39564

CONTROLLED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

January 17, 1984

Ref: L58 (SER-PT)

Dr. Sharon C. Keene
Chief, Rivers and Trails Division
Southeast Region
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Dr. Keene:

The upper Escatawpa is indeed a wild and scenic river. The flora of that region of the river within your study area is not well known. Only recently, I discovered extensive stands of white cedar (Chamaecyparis thyoides) occurs in the river swamps. I do not wish to disclose locations at this time, because I do not know their extent. We are presently working in the area. Because of the lack of road, the area is relatively pristine and we do most of our surveys by boat. I plan on presenting a paper on the distribution of white cedar in Mississippi (including the Escatawpa River) next fall at a special conference at Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

Since no thorough botanical surveys have been made in the area, it is difficult to predict what may be found. However, I predict the results will be very interesting. The area is rich in plant species. The largest stand of white cedar occurs in the upper Escatawpa River Swamp, but you must walk a considerable distance into the swamp (several miles). You would not believe the uniqueness there. It is a virtual paradise and it is very easy to get lost - indeed.

I would be happy to work with you in anyway that I can and I support your general plan.

With my best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Lionel N. Eleuterius, Ph.D.
Head, Botany Section

LNE:hg

P.S. I am enclosing some reprints and a book which may be of interest to you.



ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION

513 Madison Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0601

February 3, 1984

C. W. MOODY
STATE FORESTER
CHARLES A. PIGG
ASST. STATE FORESTER

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
U.S. Department of the Interior
Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Escatawpa River wild and scenic river report. The report has been reviewed by the AFC staff and is considered to be a thorough and accurate presentation.

The State of Alabama implements a program called the Silvicultural Runoff Management Plan. This is our voluntary response to Section 208 of the Clean Water Act. It is a young program, but we are very much committed to protecting water quality from potential nonpoint pollution generated by silvicultural practices. Forest industries in the State are in fact the leaders in water quality protection as is being demonstrated by International Paper Company and Scott Paper Company on their lands in the study area.

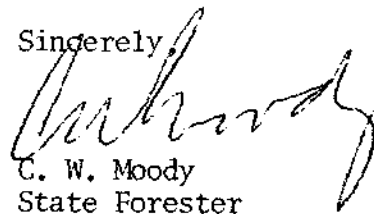
The Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers administer a permit program to protect water quality.

The Alabama Forestry Commission prefers to continue to provide non-regulatory assistance to the public in maintaining environmental quality. The funding and bureaucratic requirements of a truly effective state or federal project on the Escatawpa would be truly immense. It is not reasonable to expect such a project to receive support when we are hard pressed to fund and support the assistance to the more reasonable voluntary approach which we use statewide.

The AFC will, however, provide technical assistance to any private or public organization which wishes to manage the lands and water under its jurisdiction for any beneficial purpose.

Please let me know if the AFC may provide further assistance in this regard.

Sincerely,



C. W. Moody
State Forester

FIRST NATIONAL BANK
MOBILE ALABAMA

NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION
Land, Timber, Minerals

Trust and Estate Management
Estate Planning Assistance
Tax Information
Loans

P. O. Box 1467
Mobile, Alabama 36621
205-438-8467

December 30, 1983

Ms. Sharon Keene
National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, N. E.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Re: Escatawpa River Wild & Scenic River Study

Dear Ms. Keene:

The First National Bank of Mobile, in its capacity as Executor Trustee and/or Agent, but not in its individual capacity, urges the adoption of "Alternative D, No Action/Existing Trends." We note that in your Draft Study dated December 1983, you list this as a "Preliminary preferred alternative in lieu of another feasible alternative at the present time." We feel this should be your preferred alternative, based on the Study and on the testimony at the public hearings.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. Gause

Thomas H. Gause
Vice President and
Natural Resources Officer

THG/eb

Gulf Lumber Company, Inc.

POST OFFICE BOX 1663 • TELEPHONE 205/457-6872

Mobile, Alabama

36633

January 10, 1984



PRODUCERS OF
PRESSURE TREATED LUMBER



SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trail Division
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Southeast Regional office
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

We (Gulf Lumber Company, Inc.) would like to go on record as being opposed to any possible Federal infringement on the Escatawpa River. We recommend that no action be taken at this time by the Federal Government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred T. Stimpson".

Fred T. Stimpson

FTS/sat



INTERNATIONAL PAPER COMPANY

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION
NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI 39120

WOOD PRODUCTS AND RESOURCES GROUP

December 29, 1983

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trail Division
U. S. Dept. of the Interior
Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

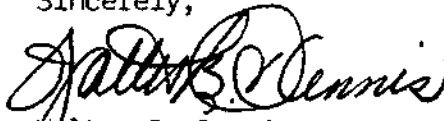
Dear Ms. Keene:

We have reviewed the Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study proposed by your Division dated December 19, 1983.

Our position on any possible Federal infringement on the Escatawpa River remains unchanged and was presented for the record in public hearings on April 12 in Mobile, Alabama and on April 13, in Pascagoula, Mississippi. A copy of this position statement is attached.

We strongly recommend that no action be taken at this time and that a continuation of currently existing trends be validated.

Sincerely,


Walter B. Dennis
Manager-Forest Ecology

WBD/pa
Attachment
cc: Mr. J. Nugent
Mr. F. Kelly

Statement presented in
Mobile, Alabama and
Pascagoula, Miss. on
April 12 and 13

International Paper Co.
South Central Region
Natchez, MS 39120
(601) 442-7421 Ext. 569

- POSITION STATEMENT -

Escatawpa River

As a principal landowner along the Escatawpa River in Mississippi and Alabama, International Paper is concerned about possible designations by the Federal Government that would preclude multiple-use management of forestlands.

Our nation is already facing potential timber shortages. Federal actions which further reduce the land base for commercial forest management can adversely affect all Americans.

IP has a solid record of land stewardship that provides a reasonable balance between environmental protection and economic and resource needs. The company questions the justification and wisdom of efforts that would pursue these objectives through withdrawal of land from multiple-purpose management.

IP opposes imposition of unwarranted, regulatory restrictions upon the Escatawpa River and adjoining lands. Designation of the river as part of the National and Scenic River System will not enhance its present recreational use. The aesthetics and abundant recreational opportunities that the public currently enjoys, are directly attributed to the private landowners who wisely manage and use the natural resources of the area.

IP believes that the protection of economic, social, recreational and environmental values of the Escatawpa can best be accomplished by working with private landowners and state and local governments.

/pa:0873I

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY ASSOCIATION, INC.

TEL. (601) 354-4938 • 620 NORTH STATE STREET • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI — 39202-3398



BRYCE GRIFFIS
PRESIDENT
JOHN G. GUTHRIE, SR.
VICE PRESIDENT
GEORGE FAURE
TREASURER
BOB IZLAR
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

March 16, 1984

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
Southeast Division
National Parks Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
75 Spring Street, S. W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

The Mississippi Forestry Association, Inc. Environmental Affairs and Wildlife committee has reviewed the Escatawpa River Basin Wild and Scenic River study proposal. The position statement which our past president, D. O. Thoms, presented last year is attached for your review.

We do not think that you have given adequate coverage in your proposal document to opposing points of view (for example, those of the Mississippi and Alabama Forestry Associations).

I will be glad to talk or meet with you to discuss this. Please keep us informed on the progress of this project.

Sincerely,

Bob Izlar
Executive Vice President

BI:al

cc: Environmental Affairs and Wildlife Committee

STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE
ESCATAWPA RIVER STUDY
Pascagoula, Mississippi
April 13, 1983

My name is D. O. Thoms, and I am a resident of Richton.

I appear here tonight as a representative of Mississippi Forestry Association, of which I am president for 1983.

Mississippi Forestry Association is composed of approximately 2200 members from all sections of the state. Our largest single group of members is private landowners.

We oppose inclusion of the Escatawpa River in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System because it amounts to an unjust interference with the traditional rights that accrue to an individual landowner, with no provision for adequate compensation. The Constitution of the United States clearly intends to protect the rights of private land ownership from being taken without adequate compensation to meet a necessary public need.

No such public need has been established. Clearly, the current landowners along and near the Escatawpa are doing an adequate job of managing their lands for the benefit of the stream, or it would not be such an enticing plum for federal bureaucrats.

A person who invests in property at the currently prevailing prices in Mississippi is going to manage it well. Even if good stewardship were not a part of the landowner's philosophy, good economics would dictate such an attitude. The individual landowner is in a better position to determine the best use for his land, without being hamstrung by a whole lot of government regulations.

The basic attitude of the bureaucrats who are proposing this designation appears to be that they are better able to determine the use of land and resources and have a superior insight into such intricate matters. This attitude is totally unacceptable to people who purchase land with money earned by their own hard work rather than public monies. It is also repugnant to the entire American free enterprise system which has as one of its basic tenets the respect of the rights of ownership of private property.

I would be negligent if I did not also point out that this proposed action is particularly repulsive in light of current economic conditions. We do not need to be committing federal personnel and money to projects that are designed for the use and enjoyment of an elite few. There should be a compulsion in federal spending today to consider the common good of the entire population.

Wild and Scenic designation in its ultimate effect does nothing more than limit the way private owners may manage their property. The history of our country is that we have been at our best as a nation when there was as little government interference as possible in our daily lives.

Land along the Escatawpa River obviously is being managed currently in a manner to minimize stream degradation; if this were not so it would not be so enticing to this federal agency. We also think it is obvious that owners who have invested their own money, time, and effort in land are better able to determine how best to protect the quality of the land they love.



BIRMINGHAM AUDUBON SOCIETY

Natural Area Preservation Office 703 Frank Nelson Building • Birmingham, Alabama 35203

(205) 322-0087

John N. Randolph
DIRECTOR OF NATURAL AREA
PRESERVATION

January 24, 1984

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

CERTIFIED MAIL -- RETURN RECEIPT
REQUESTED

Dear Ms. Keene:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the 1,300-member Birmingham Audubon Society in response to your request for review and public comment with respect to your Draft Escatawpa River Wild and Scenic River Study.

1. Eligibility. The Society wholeheartedly concurs in your finding that the Escatawpa River is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System pursuant to PL 90-542, and urges you to retain that finding in your final Study Report.

2. Suitability. Recognizing that the expressions of local opposition you have gathered merit strong consideration, we nevertheless feel that your Draft inaccurately reflects public sentiment with regard to preservation of the Escatawpa, and may have disproportionately influenced the "no action" conclusion of your study. For example, the bulk of Alabama's population lies north of the city of Montgomery, yet no apparent effort was made by your Office to meaningfully include the citizens of these population centers in the development of your study. The Birmingham Audubon Society, which is the largest single conservation group in the state of Alabama, was not included in your coordination activities (Draft, p. 47), nor was the Alabama Chapter of the Sierra Club, which has some 1,000 members (ibid.), nor, according to your Draft, were any Mississippi conservation groups consulted (ibid.). No apparent efforts were made to involve citizens in Jackson, Mississippi's largest city. If you had scheduled hearings in such cities as Birmingham, Jackson and Huntsville, you might have encountered just as strong a sentiment for preservation as the opposing expressions you heard in Mobile and Pascagoula. While such supporting sentiments may not have been sufficient to overcome the "suitability" problems created by the extreme nature of the local opposition, the fact that you did not bother to identify those sentiments renders suspect the validity of your proposed alternative, particularly in light of the considerations that follow.

3. NPS Has An Affirmative Duty to Encourage Preservation of the Escatawpa. The Society is deeply disturbed that your proposed adoption of the "no action" alternative (Draft, p. 14) reflects an attitude that NPS has no further responsibility with respect to the Escatawpa. Section 1(b) of PL 90-542 clearly states that,

"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 outstand-

Thank you for your willingness to hear me tonight. Let me assure you that we hope that the agency conducting these hearings will seriously consider and agree with our viewpoint. We also are committed to serious follow-up on this issue with the Congress of the United States, which would ultimately have to approve Wild and Scenic designation, if it is proposed.

###

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
January 24, 1984
Page 2.

ingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other 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."

That your Draft has found the Escatawpa to possess "outstandingly remarkable" values qualifying it for inclusion in the National System (Draft, pp. 8, et seq.), invokes the above provision, making it "the policy of the United States" to insure that the Escatawpa "shall be preserved" and "shall be protected" (emphasis added). While the primary mechanism for implementing this national policy is the System created by the Act, it is not the only mechanism.

Section 11(a) of PL 90-542 imposes a specific duty:

"The Secretary of the Interior shall encourage and assist the States to consider * * * needs and opportunities for establishing State and local wild, scenic and recreational river areas. He shall also * * * provide technical assistance and advice to, and cooperate with, States, political subdivisions, and private interests, including nonprofit organizations, with respect to establishing such wild, scenic and recreational river areas" (emphasis added).

It is our position that, in light of your specific finding of eligibility, and your conclusion that the "Escatawpa River is probably the finest undeveloped black water stream in the nation" (Draft, p. 8), the Department of Interior is under an affirmative obligation to "encourage and assist" in the eventual protection of the River, regardless of your finding of "unsuitability".

4. Recommendations. The Birmingham Audubon Society strongly urges you to formally adopt in your final Study Report an alternative providing for active monitoring of the Escatawpa's condition and for consultation with state, local and private entities to encourage the actual implementation of an eventual acceptable method for protection. An announced policy of continuing federal interest in the River, which can be accomplished with a minimum of budgetary demands upon the Regional Office, can provide an excellent inducement for opposing interests to cooperate in development of an acceptable alternative. Meanwhile, there is a promising effort now underway for State protection of central Alabama's Cahaba River, in which some of the Escatawpa's major opponents are actively participating, which may create a prototype for the Escatawpa's Alabama segment. There are also local opportunities which NPS can encourage for creation of a River Trust in which presently objecting landowners can meaningfully participate. Whatever ultimate alternative may prove appropriate, NPS is under a clear duty to help identify it, not to abandon an obviously qualifying river by means of the "no action" alternative currently proposed.

Respectfully submitted,

THE BIRMINGHAM AUDUBON SOCIETY



By John N. Randolph, Director
of Natural Area Preservation

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
January 24, 1984
Page 3.

c.c.: U.S. Representative Jack Edwards
Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
National Audubon Society, Southeast Regional Office
The Sierra Club, Southeast Regional Office
American Rivers Conservation Council
Friends of the Earth
Birmingham Audubon Society
Mobile Bay Audubon Society
Alabama Conservancy
Alabama Chapter of the Sierra Club
Escatawpa River Preservation Committee



THE ALABAMA CONSERVANCY

1818-A 28th Avenue, South
Birmingham, Alabama 35209
(205) 871-0389

February 17, 1984

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

The Alabama Conservancy, representing approximately 14,000 citizens of Alabama, thanks you for this opportunity to comment on the Escatawpa Wild and Scenic Study Draft. The Conservancy is pleased to submit the following:

1. Eligibility.

The Alabama Conservancy agrees with your finding that the Escatawpa River is eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. We urge that your final Study Report support this eligibility.

2. Suitability.

It is our position that, while local opposition exists, an insufficient sampling of public sentiment from other areas was taken. The Escatawpa River is a popular recreational resource for citizens statewide. Furthermore, it is our belief that local opposition from landowners is partly based on misinformation as to the meaning of this designation and its impact on their ownership.

3. Conclusion.

We strongly disagree with your proposed adoption of the "no-action alternative". Your Draft finds that the Escatawpa probably represents "the finest undeveloped black water stream in the nation", provides "exceptional recreational opportunities", and has a "unique naturalness". These and other findings meet the qualifications for inclusion, and must not be overlooked.

We further contend that any finding to continue existing trends does not take into consideration a future change in ownership of adjacent lands. However well-maintained the conservation practices of existing landowners may be, a future change in ownership or land use could drastically alter the situation. The change could be immediate, impacting the river before further studies could be undertaken.

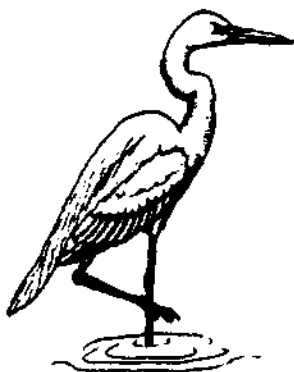
The Alabama Conservancy therefore urges the National Park Service not to abandon the Escatawpa with the "no-action alternative", but rather that you adopt an alternative calling for continual monitoring of the river's condition until an acceptable method of protection is found.

Thank you again for providing the Conservancy an opportunity to have input.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Hutcherson

Carolyn Hutcherson, Chairman
River Conservation Committee
The Alabama Conservancy



THE MOBILE BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY

BOX 9903
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36609

January 31, 1984

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street SW
Atlanta, Ga. 30303

Dear Ms. Keene,

As has been stated through the past several years the Escatawpa River should be receiving top priority for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

The Department of Interior is under national public obligation to "encourage and assist" in the eventual protection of the River, regardless of your unbelievable finding of "unsuitability", because of short-sighted property owners.

The Escatawpa River is a National asset and should be reviewed in that light. The point made in the Jan. 24th letter from the Birmingham Audubon Society-"no apparent effort was made by your office to meaningfully include the citizens of these population centers in the development of your study." The BAS, Sierra Club, Boy and Girl Scout Troups, Church Groups, etc. throughout the State and Nation spend a great deal of time canoeing, camping and in general enjoy the beauty, solitude, recreational aspects of the river. Congressman Jack Edwards and his staff celebrated his re-election on the Escatawpa.

The DEIS should be up-graded to properly present to Congress the need to protect in some positive way this last free-flowing, undeveloped river in our coastal area. Active monitoring of the condition and threats to the river system should be undertaken by the National Parks System until a properly made-up citizen or states group undertakes this vital action. It is our understanding protection for a period of three years is in place while the study is on-going. Is this correct? If so, why hasn't the Park Service been undertaking this requirement?

An announced firm policy of continuing federal interest in the River can be accomplished with a minimum of budgetary demands upon the Regional Office and this will in



THE MOBILE BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY

BOX 9903

MOBILE, ALABAMA 36609

2

turn provide an excellent inducement for opposing interests to co-operate in developing an acceptable alternative.

Sincerely,

Maryt Jones
Mrs. Myrt Jones
President

P.S. Regarding Soldier's Creek. We have never understood how this small stream was even considered. Let's put the efforts toward protecting a truly wild, scenic and recreational river-the Escatawpa.

2200 Fremont Drive
Mobile, Al 36609
December 20, 1983

Rivers and Trails Division
National Park Service
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Ga 30303

Attention: Mr Wallace C. Brittain

Dear Mr Brittain:

This is in response to an article in last evening's paper inviting comments concerning your study of the Escatawpa River. I would like to state that I fully support the designation of the Escatawpa River for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. It is imperative that this resource be protected. Certainly the response you have received to date at public meetings, letters, etc. in opposition to designation to the system does not represent all of the public's concern and understanding of the proposal. Your response certainly represents the vested interests of some property

owners along certain stretches
of the river.

As part of a neighborhood group, I
have canoed the river from a
point in Alabama into Mississippi.
It is a popular river in this part
of the country for canoeing, tubing,
rafting along with swimming, fishing,
picnicking and camping. Use is
made by individuals, families,
organized groups including youth
and adults, particularly scouts,
church, school, 4-H, neighborhood
groups, etc. Conservation and environ-
mental organizations use this
resource as an outdoor classroom for
enrichment sessions, etc. I am sure
there are other uses and interests
I have not addressed. Certainly
adjoining land owners enjoy
the benefits of this natural
resource.

Hopefully, future generations of
all the general public can do the
same. Without some protective
covenant or designation, how can
this be assured? I would hope

There would be some method
to reach and document the
views of the majority of the
general public which I have far
too failed to respond.

I appreciate the opportunity to
respond to your notice.

Sincerely,

John H Bower

1 Inclosure:

Newspaper Article
from Mobile Press 12/19/82

17725 Highway 63
Pascagoula, MS 39567
December 28, 1983

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

In response to the report we received from you dated December 19 in reference to the Escatawpa Wild & Scenic River Study, we want to register with you our comments regarding that report.

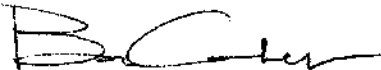
As owners of 320 acres on the Escatawpa River in Jackson and George Counties, Mississippi, we are vehemently opposed to any government intervention into our private property rights. We are in one hundred percent agreement with the alternative of "No action/existing trends" as mentioned in the report.

We will continue to fight for our position on this issue and we intend to personally discuss this issue at length with Mississippi Governor - Elect Allain and Congressman Lott at our earliest opportunity as to insure our and our neighbors' private property rights are not to be imposed upon now or at any time in the future.

Sincerely yours,



Mark Cumbest



Brent Cumbest



Elvis Cumbest

JAMES E. DAVIS, JR.

1166 Harvard Drive • Mobile, Alabama 36618
Phone: (205) 344-6319

National Park Service
Mr. Wallace C. Brittain
75 Spring Street S. W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Re: Comments on Draft Escatawpa River Study

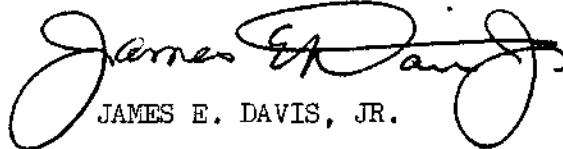
Dear Mr. Brittain:

I recieved the news letter asking for public comments on the Escatawpa River Study on December 21, 1983. You state in the news letter that "comments should be mailed to the Park Service within 45 days." The letter is dated November 29, 1983. Hence I begin to wonder if the Postal system is almost a month late, the Park Service dilatory, or a combination of the two? Prehaps other reasons exist? Does the Park Service want a 45 day or 15 day public comment period?

The people of South Alabama and South Mississippi do not want any more government intervention in the Escatawpa River System or their lives. This was apparent at the ill-planned Park Service meetings held in Mobile and Pascagoula. Seating for 100 people was not adaqueate with 350 in attendance. When Park Service representatives were inundated with standing room only crowds at Mobile it showed poor judgement at best and flagrant incompetence at worst for them to pull the same trick at Pascagoula. To make matters worse, the movement of the Pascagoula meeting, after packing the initial building with healthy and infirm alike, was unjust to the wheelchair and crutch victoms who missed the opening of the meeting because of Park Service haste and indifference.

I seek the "NO ACTION" option. Stop wasting our money on this "dead horse."

Very truly yours,



JAMES E. DAVIS, JR.

Larry D. Godfrey
Rt. 8, Box 511
Mobile, Alabama 36608

Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
Southeast Region
Atlanta, Georgia 30305

Dear Ms. Keene,

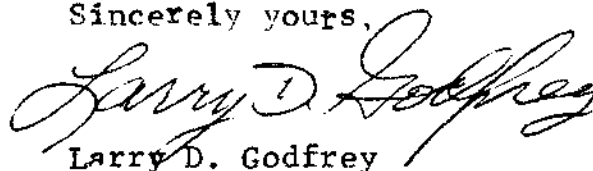
In reply to your draft study report, I was overjoyed in reading the conclusions of the report.

Although I do not agree with the steps taken prior to the workshops, I will agree as a private landowner there should be certain guidelines imposed on a local level to prevent dumping or polluting. I am also firm in my beliefs that the river should stay in a natural state as it is now.

I also thank you for your statement in alternative D, about the landowners job of preserving the rivers outstanding values.

If there is anymore information or correspondence on this subject please notify me.

Sincerely yours,


Larry D. Godfrey

LAWRENCE J. HALLETT, JR.

LAWYER

503 GOVERNMENT STREET
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36602

TELEPHONE:
(205) 438-3700

MAIL:
503 GOVERNMENT ST.
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36602

December 29, 1983

The National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, Southwest
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

RE: The Escatawpa River Study

Gentlemen;

I have received in todays mail copies of the draft Escatawpa Wild Scenic River Study dated December, 1983, which was prepared by the United State Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office in Atlanta, Georgia.

As you know this law firm represents the Altmayer family. We have carefully studied the draft and are most disturbed by the tone and bias of that document. We very strongly believe that the draft, as submitted, not only does not accurately reflect the public hearings held here in Mobile, Alabama and Pascagoula, Mississippi, but is positively biased in a direction not taken in those meetings. First, the draft does not reflect the fact that of the several hundred people who attended the meeting in Mobile, Alabama, I believe the record will reflect that only four individuals expressed any support for any governmental control of the Escatawpa River.

The draft report neglects entirely to mention the fact that the Escatawpa River system now contains abundant wild life, especially deer and wild turkey, all stocked and nurtured by land owners such as the Altmayer family.

The report neglects entirely to mention that the Altmayer family has permitted the Alabama Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit in Auburn, Alabama to release a threatened species, the Eastern Indigo Snake on their property along the Escatawpa River. Fifty specimens of this threatened species were released as part of a long term study to determine the feasibility of reestablishment of the species in good protective habitat. One of the major attraction of the Indigo Snake research area along the Escatawpa River is not only the good habitat but the restricted public excess necessary for the establishment of this threatened species. In addition, the Altmayer family and the Wildlife Research Unit have had a local

The National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, Southwest
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Page Two

biologist, David Schwartz, who is employed by the Army Corp of Engineers monitoring the research interests of the Wildlife Research Unit. It was abundantly clear to everyone who attended the public hearings in Mobile and in Pascagoula that the public is finally realizing that government control of our rivers is not desired by the people who live in this area. It is abundantly clear that the consensus at those meetings was that all that could be accomplished by the nationalization of land along the Escatawpa River would be a transfer of wealth in the form of real estate to government bureaucracies and their favored special interest.

The draft report fails to point out it is only through the work of dedicated conservationists such as the Altmayer family who have preserved the wildlife habitat along the Escatawpa, restocked wildlife, and maintained and improved the entire Ecosystem of the Escatawpa River.

The record of Government versus private environmental management in the United States leaves no doubt that prudent resource management can be achieved only by privatization of natural resources. Private ownership guarantees a proprietary interest in the environment. We should not have to remind the National Park Service that private ownership of streams and rivers has kept Scottish waterways free of pollution for centuries. Private ownership along the Escatawpa has achieved substantially identical results.

It is our opinion that a careful reading of the draft report is an experience in a kind of intellectual pollution. The report neglects entirely to record the splendid restoration and preservation accomplished by private ownership on the Escatawpa River since World War II. The report gives little more than a mention of the deleterious effects on environmental values of increased usage by the public on this delicate and fragile river system.

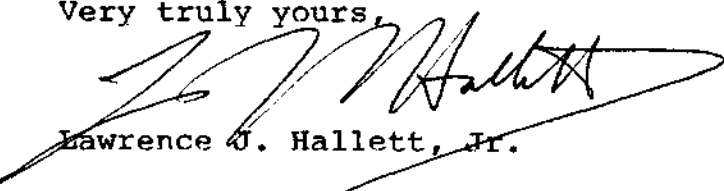
A system of private property rights ties authority to responsibility. The land owners along the Escatawpa River have controlled public access and have restored and preserved one of the finest black water rivers along the Gulf Coast. It is precisely this arrangement that should be encouraged by the National Park Service if this Nation is to meet successfully the challenges of economic productivity and ecological quality.

The National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, Southwest
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
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It is our fervent desire that the draft report be substantially rewritten not only to include the factual omissions pointed out in this letter, but to properly place in perspective the history of the Escatawpa and the present public feeling of the residents of this area.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,



Lawrence J. Hallett, Jr.

LJH/nls

cc: Austin Rainwater
Harry Saranthus
Donnie Stallworth
Daryll Hurt

HURT AND HURT, LTD.
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW
BRADLEY-HURT BUILDING
206 SOUTH MANILLA STREET
LUCEDALE, MISSISSIPPI 39452

DARRYL A. HURT
DARRYL A. HURT, JR.

January 6, 1984

(601) 947-4261

National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, Southwest
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Re: The Escatawpa River Study

Gentlemen:

I am in receipt of the Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study dated December 19, 1983, which was prepared by the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office in Atlanta, Georgia.

I represent myself and my family as land owners on Brushy Creek, a tributary of the Escatawpa River, which is included in the Escatawpa River Study.

After having carefully studied the Draft, I was appalled at the bias and prejudice exhibited by those who compiled the Draft. The Draft is nothing more than a sham, which is indicative of the underhanded manner in which the United States Government has undertaken this project. The Draft presents a tone indicative of the desire of a great many people to wrest control of the river corridor from private land owners. However, the Draft fails to correctly show that there was only token support shown at the public meetings for such a proposition.

I, and many other persons directly affected by this project, was under the impression that the public meetings were held in order to allow the citizens to express their feelings on the project. The Draft wholly failed to reflect the tremendous opposition to this project, and, if anything, the Draft should have been written as the facts presented themselves, and not as how the Drafters wished them to be.

The Draft stated that approximately 450 people attended the public meetings held in Mobile, Alabama, and Pascagoula, Mississippi, in April, 1983. However, the Draft neatly neglected to mention the fact that of that 450 people attending said meetings, only 4 expressed support for inclusion of the Escatawpa River into the National System. All of the remaining persons were intensely and adamantly opposed to any governmental control of the Escatawpa River. The will of the majority could not

have been made more abundantly clear.

However, despite the overwhelming opposition exhibited at the public meetings, the Draft stated that "citizens support for designation has been indicated primarily via correspondence." There is and has been no evidence substantiating this statement, and I submit that the record from the public meetings bear this out. I contend that this is representative of the gross manipulation of the facts in this matter, and is a base example of the bias of the Draft. Support for inclusion of the Escatawpa River into the National System seems to lie almost entirely in government representatives and their local cohorts who may feel that they may profit from inclusion of the River into the National System.

The Draft is replete with suggestions for change in the present status of the Escatawpa River ownership. However, the Draft sparingly mentions the fact that the laudable restoration and preservation efforts exhibited by the conservation-minded private land owners have placed the Escatawpa River and its tributary, Brushy Creek, in its uncommonly beautiful state. In fact, were it not for these efforts, the land in the river corridor would not be so desirable for the tentacles of the Government.

A careful review of the Draft reflects that the Government favors the establishment of a recreational area under the guise of preservation and conservation. In fact, the Draft mentions recreation some twenty times in support of designation of the Escatawpa River into the National System. Such a course of action would ultimately destroy rather than preserve the Escatawpa River and its tributaries.

A review of the Draft indicates that the current management of the River by private land owners is the least desirable mode of river management. However, there has been no evidence presented in the Draft, nor at the public meetings that the Escatawpa River and Brushy Creek are in imminent danger of development or destruction. Instead, the Draft wholly fails to point out that the outstanding management practices exercised by the private land owners have dramatically increased the economic as well as aesthetic value of the land during the past several decades.

Rather than elaborating on the success of the private land owners, the Draft presents a tone suggestive of the Government's proposition that the Escatawpa River and its Brushy Creek tribu-

tary are not being properly managed and that the land should be taken from the private land owners through acquisition, easements, or other methods of governmental control. To even suggest that the United States Government should undertake more financial responsibility in the face of the greatest deficits in the history of our country is reflective of the inept, near-sighted philosophy of the United States Government's fiscal management. The Draft actually favors removing control of this beautifully managed property and placing it in the hands of the United States Government in the face of it's dismal record of resource management.

The Draft's paradoxical alternatives present several theoretical alternatives to the current management of the river corridor even though the property is currently being used to its highest and best use. All of the alternatives presented smack of governmental control and are destined to failure. To accept the proposals presented by the Draft and place the reins of resource management either partially or completely in the hands of governmental officials and open the area to the general public would be the most regressionary and destructive proposals which could be imagined.

It has taken some two decades of carefully controlled access and resource management to cure the abuses created by the general public before access was restricted. The Draft does not mention the greivous state the entire area was in prior to the time the private land owners exercised the management procedures currently in place. The Draft fails to mention that during the time the general public was allowed access to the river corridor, the wild life was depleted, dumping was common place, destruction of private property was rampant, and the entire area was generally unsafe. The Draft apparently was not researched to the degree necessary to present these facts. The great success of the current management procedures exhibited by the private land owners cannot be properly measured without a knowledge and study of the river corridor prior to the implimentation of the current management procedures practiced by the land owners.

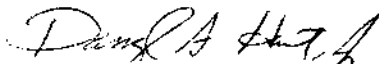
It should be obvious that the only viable system of management and preservation of the Escatawpa River and its Brushy Creek tributary is that which is currently being practiced by the private land owners. The United States Government should encourage rather than attempt to destroy private ownership of property, especially in the face of the tremendous success attained by the tireless efforts of the land owners on the Escatawpa River and Brushy Creek.

National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
January 6, 1984
Page 4

It is my heart felt desire that the Draft be re-written in accordance with the ommissions pointed out in this letter. The Draft should be re-written in an objective fashion, with proper credence given to the current management practices of the land owners, and the tremendous success they have obtained.

Awaiting your reply, with kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,


Darryl A. Hurt, Jr.

6960 Airport Blvd.
Apartment #101
Mobile, AL 36608
January 9, 1984

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
U. S. Department of Interior
75 Spring St., S. W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

Reference is made to the National Park Service request for comments on inclusion of the Escatawpa River in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Advocates of government intrusion into management and ownership of the Escatawpa River and adjacent land base their case on two false assumptions.

One of the false assumptions is that the sky is falling on the Escatawpa and something must, therefore, be done. This is far from true! Private landowners along the river are excellent stewards who have improved the river and adjacent lands.

The second false assumption is that big brother government knows best for everything and everybody and must control the river and adjacent land even if no problem exists. This is again false. Government is the problem, not private landowners. There is more mismanagement in government with much waste of taxpayers money than anywhere else. The private enterprise system manages resources far better than government bureaucrats and at no cost to taxpayers.

No government action is needed or desirable for the Escatawpa River.

Sincerely,


Ted H. Meredith

mt

National Park Service
Rivers and Trails Division
75 Spring Street, Southwest
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

January 16, 1984

Re: The Escatawpa River Study

Dear Sirs:

We have just received in the mail the Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study of December 19, 1983.

I am unalterably opposed to the taking of the control of the River from private land owners.

There is an overwhelming opposition to this project in this area. I have carefully read the draft which you prepared and it does not state this but it is a fact.

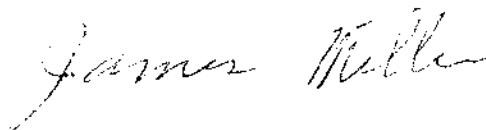
I very much am against the inclusion of the Escatawpa River into the National System. It is my belief that if this is done it will in time destroy the Escatawpa River as we presently know it. I believe that the present owners of the property contiguous to the Escatawpa River and on Brushy Creek as well are doing an outstanding job of preserving this property and a much better job than the United States Government could do. In fact, at the meeting that was held in Mobile, Alabama in April of 1983, the representative from your department admitted that he did not know of any way in which the Federal Government could do a better job than the present owners are doing to preserve this property.

I also do not believe that the Draft which has been sent to me is correct and has many errors in it and I really believe it should be re-prepared and re-done to state the truth of this matter.

I urge that the Draft be re-written and I wish to go on record to show my opposition to this project.

Sincerely yours,

James Miller



NOTE: IDENTICAL LETTER RECEIVED FROM INA MAE MILLER

To the wild and Scenic River Study
of the Escatawpa:

We the Pierce Family do not
want or Desire to have you the
wild and scenic river study to
do anything with our River. we
Love it just as it is. we are
opposed to any involvement with
the wild and scenic River study.
as we have 55 acres deep
Land along this River. We would
appreciate you just doing nothing
with the Escatawpa River.

Thank you.

H. L. Pierce
Vera Pierce
Hervey Pierce
Shaun Pierce

JOHN HOWARD WILSON

FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING

P. O. BOX 185

MOBILE, ALABAMA 36601

January 12, 1984

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trail Division
Southeast Region
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Keene:

I am in receipt of your letter and the Draft Study of December 10, 1983. And to tell you the truth, I was very surprised to see that this project was still being considered. I opposed this project in my letter to Congressman Jack Edwards dated April 18, 1983 (copy enclosed for your file) and I am opposed to it now!

According to your own surveys you have no support from any of the local landowners or elected officials, no feasible plan to protect the river and no Government Agency to manage this so called "Wild and Scenic River".

This is a very costly and irresponsible project, which I strongly feel should be abandoned.

Sincerely,



John Howard Wilson

JHW/mm
Enclosure

cc: Mr. Joseph Meaher

100-102

JOHN HOWARD WILSON
FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING
P. O. BOX 185
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36601

April 18, 1983

COPY

Honorable Jack Edwards
Congressional Representative
from the State of Alabama
137 House of Congress Bldg.
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Jack,

As a landowner in Mobile County, I attended the Public Meeting at the Red Cross Center on the evening of April 12th to voice my opposition to the Escatawpa River being made a part of the National Wild and Scenic River Systems. The Mobile Register of April 13th, 1983, said "several hundred persons voiced loud opposition to designating the Escatawpa River part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems".

My reason for writing you is that I was told this project has your complete blessing. I find this hard to believe, however if it is true I am terribly disappointed in you. I just cannot believe that you would be a part of such a ridiculous, 'hair brained' idea.

I can show you or anyone you might suggest, facts and figures that will show that our land now has more game, roads, timber and scenic beauty than it had in 1943 when my family acquired our land in Mobile County. This is because of our good management and concern for the land. I am very proud of the way we have looked after our land and I resent a few misguided, misinformed individuals trying to tell me that we have not managed our land properly, and are therefore proposing that the Federal Government step-in and take over our land and show us how to manage it. If you believe that, Jack, I think you have been in Washington, D. C. too long and need to come home.

Sincerely,

John Howard Wilson

JHW/mm

cc: Mr. Joseph Meaher
Mr. Jay Altmayer

COPY

J. H. Wilson Jr.

Box 55

Montrose Alabama 36559

February 5, 1984

Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
Southeast Region
re: Escataumpa River Study

Dear Sharon,

Having recently read the draft for the
Escataumpa River Wild and Scenic River Study
(dated December, 1983), I find it necessary
to let you know my opinion on the matter.
I hold a B.S. degree in Natural Resources
from the University of the South in Seville,
Tennessee, and am presently employed as
a forestry consultant in Mobile. Might you

choose to read further, knowing now that I am capable of offering an unbiased, non-corporate opinion?

The Escotampa is, and has been for quite some time an area of unsurpassed scenic beauty. Indeed no one will reasonably dispute that. As was noted in the December 1983 draft, public opinion was not in your favor. The large landholding corporations, that is Scott and I.P., together with local small landowners remain vehemently opposed to any sort of governmental involvement and I believe they have good reason.

First of all,
the landowners resent the fact that

anyone, much less the U. S. government, could be a more able and fitting custodian of their land. If you look closely at the river's banks, you will notice only two isolated spots within the study area that have had timber removed within sight of the river.

I believe both cases involved timber theft, rather than selfish forestry practices. To the best of my knowledge, the local landowners believe much the same as you do, that is the Escatawpa should be preserved in its natural pristine state. Certainly, aerial photographs show timber removal within $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile of the river, but one must expect common sense

at times to exceed its own nonsensical boundaries.

Secondly, the Escatempa is used now by canoeists and pleasure seekers more than it could be under governmental control. I believe that there would not be any benefit derived from a greater push to attract visitors. all who are interested in seeing the river, do so. Those who don't make an effort, evidently are not that interested, unless of course they are only on a more comfortable level of their own, in which case there are plenty of alternative pursuits. I can't

help but thinking that an increase in river traffic would be detrimental to the area, this taking its manifestation in trash, noise and friction between visitors and local residents.

I realize that the Wild and Scenic River Act was created to preserve such fine places as the ~~Great~~ Escatawpa for as yet unborn generations to come, however I think governmental involvement in the Escatawpa would be a grave mistake.

If the ~~Great~~ Escatawpa is included in this act, especially under Alternative C, Protection at the Local

Well, I must denounce your action
as a mindless socialistic injustice.

Thank you for your time.

Howard Wilson

P. O. Box 54
Spanish Fort, AL 36527
December 29, 1983

Ms. Sharon C. Keene, Chief
Rivers and Trails Division
Southeast Region
U. S. Dept. of the Interior
75 Spring Street, S. W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

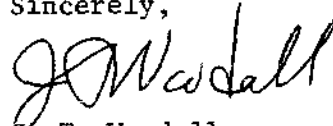
Dear Ms. Keene:

The draft report, "Draft Escatawpa Wild and Scenic River Study" is well prepared and factual.

My opposition to governmental control is the same....please leave it alone.

I vote for Alternative D - no action/existing trends.

Sincerely,



J. T. Woodall

JTW:stl

