



Benefits of designating the Neches as a Wild and Scenic River

- Wild and Scenic designation would block dam projects by prohibiting the federal government from issuing permits for them. This would benefit riverside landowners whose land would be condemned if a reservoir were built and would keep the river in its free-flowing state. It would also protect businesses downstream, such as petrochemical industries that use the river's flows to dilute their effluent.
- A Wild and Scenic River would help put Texas "on the map"! It would be a great selling point for conventions and other tourism initiatives for East Texas communities.
- Land in the Davy Crockett and Angelina Forests within a quarter mile of the river would be managed to protect the values for which the river was designated. Private landowners' rights would not be affected. Federal managers of a Wild and Scenic River *would have no ability to direct management* on private, local government, or state-owned land.
- A cooperative management plan for the river would be agreed to during the planning process, with *voluntary* agreements complementing *existing* state and local regulations. Any actions on private lands to help protect water quality or aquatic and riverside habitats would be strictly voluntary.
- Designating the Neches a Wild and Scenic River would help protect the many economic benefits the river and its bottomland forests provide:
 - sustaining the internationally-acclaimed biological diversity of the Big Thicket National Preserve, which attracts more than 100,000 visitors per year
 - providing fresh water and nutrients to the Sabine Lake estuary, which supports fishing, shrimping, waterfowl hunting, and birdwatching
 - providing flows to dilute effluent for industries on the river so they can meet water quality standards
 - filtering pollutants to improve water quality
 - retarding flood flows
 - supporting hunting, fishing, and other recreational uses
 - growing timber for mills, supporting other agricultural uses
- The Neches retains much of its wild character, with most of it in a free-flowing state. The wildlife habitat of the Neches River corridor is exceptional. Its location in the heart of the Central Flyway makes it a crucial "highway" for migrating ducks, geese, and songbirds. Its bottomland hardwood forests are among the least disturbed in Texas. Its free-flowing state provides vital habitat for fish and other aquatic animals. Wild and Scenic River designation would help protect all these attributes.