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Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests



Final Environmental Impact Statement

for the
Land Management Plan

Appendix F: Wild and Scenic River Evaluation

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**Final Environmental Impact Statement
Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests
Appendix F. Wild and Scenic River Evaluation**

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Identifying and Evaluating Rivers That May Be Suitable for Inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System

This report summarizes the process to date that the Forest has completed for identifying and evaluating rivers that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System and determining whether to recommend any such rivers for wild and scenic river designation. The paper details the process used to date and next steps.

Introduction

The Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are in the required¹ process of revising the forest plan. Part of the revision process includes determining eligibility of rivers that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System (National System). A description of this process can be found in the 2012 Forest Service Planning Rule and Chapter 80 of the Forest Service Land Management Planning Handbook 1909.12. This process includes the following steps:

1. Determine eligibility.
2. Assigning potential classification (wild, scenic, or recreational).
3. Determining suitability.

Eligibility studies are completed with a finding that each river is eligible or not, and with each eligible river segment assigned a classification. A suitability study may begin following a determination of eligibility and classification, or may be deferred to a later time. The Forest has elected to defer any suitability studies.

Background

Congress enacted the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) in 1968 to preserve select river's free-flowing condition, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values. The most important provision of the WSRA is protecting rivers from the harmful effects of water resources projects. To protect free-flowing character, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (which licenses nonfederal hydropower projects) is not allowed to license construction of dams, water conduits, reservoirs, powerhouses, transmission lines, or other project works on or directly affecting wild and scenic rivers.

The WSRA also directs that each river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (National System) be administered in a manner to protect and enhance a river's outstanding natural and cultural values. It allows existing uses of a river to continue and future uses to be considered, so long as existing or proposed use does not conflict with protecting river values. The WSRA also directs building partnerships among landowners, river users, tribal nations, and all levels of government.

Rivers may be identified for suitability study by an act of Congress under Section 5(a), or through federal agency-initiated study under Section 5(d) (1). Section 5(d) (1) directs federal agencies to consider the potential of wild and scenic rivers in their planning processes, and its application has resulted in numerous individual river designations, and state and area-specific legislation.

Both Sections 5(a) and 5(d)(1) require determinations to be made regarding a river's eligibility, classification, and suitability. Eligibility and classification represent an inventory of existing conditions. Eligibility is an evaluation of whether a river is free-flowing and possesses one or more outstandingly remarkable values. If found to be eligible, a river is analyzed as to its current level of development and a

¹ National Forest Management Act of 1976

preliminary classification determination is made as to whether it should be placed into one of three classes—wild, scenic, or recreational.

The identification of a river as eligible through the Forest planning process does not trigger any protections under the WSRA. To manage the river for its potential inclusion into the National System, other authorities are cited to protect its free-flowing character, water quality, outstandingly remarkable values, and preliminary or recommended classification.

The final procedural step, a suitability study, provides the basis for determining whether to recommend a river as part of the National System. No suitability studies are being conducted with this Forest Plan revision. In this evaluation, only eligibility of rivers on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests was completed.

Suitability is deferred, pending:

- Public interest or support in wild and scenic river study, and
- Congress expresses interest in a specific river for Wild and Scenic River designation, or
- A proposed project that would alter the free-flowing character of a stream, such as by impoundment, or adversely affect outstandingly remarkable values, or the river's inventoried classification.

North Carolina currently has three designated Wild and Scenic Rivers that are managed by the Forest Service. These include the Chattooga River, Horsepasture River, and Wilson Creek. Horsepasture River and Wilson Creek are located on the Pisgah NF, and the Chattooga River is located on the Nantahala, Francis Marion-Sumter, and Chattahoochee NFs. Additionally, the 1987 Nantahala and Pisgah NFs Land and Resource Management Plan and its 1994 amendment identified 11 rivers as eligible for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. One of those, Wilson Creek, was later designated; therefore, ten eligible or suitable rivers remain from the 1987/1994 analysis. The forest plan was amended in 2004 to provide direction for the management of Wilson Creek and in 2012 to provide updated direction for the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River.

A broad and inclusive review of potential ORVs resulted in 54 rivers with the potential for eligibility, the details of which follow. This detailed review identified nine newly eligible rivers as potential additions to the National System. The eight newly eligible rivers plus ten existing eligible rivers result in a total of 18 eligible rivers on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs. Rivers found eligible need further study to determine if they meet suitability criteria and if they should be recommended to Congress for addition to the National System. Until a final determination is made regarding suitability or non-suitability, the Forest Service is obligated to protect those qualities that make the rivers eligible; therefore, the 18 potentially eligible rivers will continue to be managed as eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers until designated or released from study. Of these 18 eligible rivers, only the Nolichucky River has undergone a full suitability study resulting in a recommendation for designation.

Analysis Area

When conducting an eligibility study of Forest Service identified rivers (sec. 5(d)(1) of the Act) during land management plan development or revision, the Interdisciplinary Team shall include all potential wild, scenic, and recreational rivers flowing wholly or partially on National Forest System lands as identified in the Nationwide Rivers Inventory and by other sources. The rivers to be studied for eligibility include all rivers named on a standard U. S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle map. On the Nantahala and Pisgah, this review included more than 1300 rivers (see methodology section, below).

Region of Comparison

The Land Management Planning Directives (Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, Ch. 80) define the “Region of Comparison” for Wild and Scenic River evaluation as “the geographic area of consideration for each outstandingly remarkable value that will serve as the basis for meaningful comparative analysis”. Additionally, the planning directives state that “the Interdisciplinary Team shall identify the “region of comparison” for each outstandingly remarkable value”.

Once the region(s) of comparison is (or are) identified, a river’s values can then be analyzed in comparison with other rivers in that region. A region of comparison should be large enough to encompass similar type rivers that provide a wide representation of river values so that rivers with outstandingly remarkable values can be identified.

The Forest Planning Interdisciplinary Team has identified the region of comparison for the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests as the Southern Appalachian Region (figure 1). This region is the same comparison area for all resources within the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests.

The Southern Appalachian region covers over 37 million acres of mountain, foothills, and valleys stretching from Virginia and eastern West Virginia to northwestern South Carolina, northern Georgia, and northern Alabama (figure 1). Forests cover 70 percent of the region, it contains more than 556,000 acres of flooded river and lake surface, and six congressionally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The eastern portion of the region is dominated by the Blue Ridge Mountains which rise abruptly from the Piedmont province forming a rugged and diverse landscape. The Blue Ridge Mountains range from nearly 2,000 feet to more than 6,000 feet and contain the highest peaks in the eastern United States. The variations in elevation, aspect, rocks, and soils produce sites that support a variety of vegetation from oak and hickory forests at lower elevations to the spruce and fir forests on the mountain tops.

The wide range of climatic conditions accounts for the occurrence of many plants and animals that are at the edge of their natural range. Additionally, there is a high diversity in the region as result of the unique geological, climatological, and hydrological features. High rainfall maintains year-long flows in an unusually dense network of streams and diversity of aquatic species is high, with a rich fauna of fish, salamanders, mollusks, crayfish, and aquatic insects. Nine major rivers that rise in the region provide water supplies for foothill communities and major cities of the Eastern and southeastern United States.

Methodology and Analysis Process

Inventory

The wild and scenic river evaluation process requires determination to be made regarding a river’s eligibility, classification, and suitability. The evaluation process in determining river eligibility and classification begin with an inventory of free-flowing rivers. To be eligible, a river or river segment must be free-flowing (without major dams, diversions or channel modifications) and possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values (ORV). These values must be unique or exceptional for the area studied and must be related to the river or its immediate environment. To be considered an outstandingly remarkable value, the value must be rare, unique, or exemplary at the comparative scale of analysis.

The inventory of rivers and streams to be evaluated on the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests was developed by referencing GIS databases for rivers and streams such as the National Hydrography

Dataset, all rivers named on a standard U. S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle map, those listed on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory maintained by the National Park Service, and rivers or river segments identified in public comments. .

The Forest then determined which of the named rivers and streams were free-flowing. This determination was made by answering the question, “Is the river segment flowing in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip rapping, or other modification of the waterway?” If the river segment was not free-flowing, then it was determined to be ineligible and removed from further consideration. This initial inventory process resulted in a list of more than 1,300 rivers and streams.

The next step was to identify potential eligibility by determining which of the free-flowing rivers and streams on the inventory might have one or more potential outstandingly remarkable values (ORV). The potential ORVs were then considered within the Southern Appalachian Region of Comparison to determine if the values identified were rare, unique, or exemplary.

During May and June of 2015, the free-flowing rivers and streams named on USGS quad maps were reviewed by District personnel, Resource Specialists, and interdisciplinary team members. This list contained over 1,300 free-flowing rivers to be evaluated for potential ORVs. As part of the planning team reviews, information submitted through public comment during the assessment phase was used to inform these evaluations. The process resulted in 54 new rivers with potential eligibility (see table below), and also reviewed 9 existing eligible rivers and their classifications for potential changed conditions.

River Name	Ranger District	Quad/Topo Name(s)
Elk River	Appalachian	Elk Park
Middle Creek	Appalachian	Celo
Roaring Creek	Appalachian	Carvers Gap
Rock Creek	Appalachian	Celo
South Toe River	Appalachian	Celo, Montreat, & Old Fort
Spring Creek	Appalachian	Hot Springs & Spring Creek
Waterfall Creek	Appalachian	Craggy Pinnacle
Santeetlah Creek	Cheoah	Big Junction & Santeetlah Creek
Cheoah River	Cheoah	Tapoco & Fontana Dam
Little Santeetlah Creek	Cheoah	Santeetlah Creek & Tapoco
Long Branch (or Long Creek)	Cheoah	Robbinsville
Sassafras Creek	Cheoah	Marble & Santeetlah Creek
Slickrock Creek	Cheoah	Tapoco & Whiteoak Flats
Harper Creek	Grandfather	Chestnut Mountain
Catawba River	Grandfather	Black Mountain & Moffitt Hill
Chestnut Branch	Grandfather	Moffitt Hill
Gragg Prong	Grandfather	Grandfather Mountain
Johns River	Grandfather	Collettsville & Globe
Lost Cove Creek	Grandfather	Newland
Big Choga Creek	Nantahala	Topton
Cullasaja River	Nantahala	Highlands & Scaly Mountain
East Fork Overflow Creek	Nantahala	Highlands
Frolictown Creek	Nantahala	Big Ridge

River Name	Ranger District	Quad/Topo Name(s)
Gibby Branch	Nantahala	Topton
Greenland Creek	Nantahala	Big Ridge & Lake Toxaway
Jarrett Creek	Nantahala	Topton & Wayah Bald
Overflow Creek	Nantahala	Highlands & Satolah
Panthertown Creek	Nantahala	Big Ridge
Tanasee Creek	Nantahala	Lake Toxaway & Sam Knob
Tuckasegee River	Nantahala	Big Ridge & Lake Toxaway
Wayah Creek	Nantahala	Wayah Bald
West Fork Overflow Creek	Nantahala	Highlands & Scaly Mountain
Whitewater River	Nantahala & Pisgah	Cashiers
Big Creek	Pisgah	Dunsmore Mountain
Courthouse Creek	Pisgah	Sam Knob
Flat Laurel Creek	Pisgah	Sam Knob
Greasy Cove Prong	Pisgah	Shining Rock
Little East Fork Pigeon River	Pisgah	Sam Knob, Shining Rock, & Waynesville
Looking Glass Creek	Pisgah	Shining Rock
Middle Prong of West Fork Pigeon River	Pisgah	Sam Knob
North Fork French Broad River	Pisgah	Lake Toxaway, Rosman, & Sam Knob
Shining Creek	Pisgah	Shining Rock
Thompson River	Pisgah	Cashiers & Reid
West Fork Pigeon River	Pisgah	Sam Knob & Waynesville
Fires Creek	Tusquitee	Andrews, Hayesville, & Topton
Beech Creek	Tusquitee	Hightower Bald
Britton Creek	Tusquitee	Robbinsville
Buck Creek	Tusquitee	Rainbow Springs & Shooting Creek
Chambers Creek	Tusquitee	Unaka
Hiwassee River	Tusquitee	Murphy
Little Buck Creek	Tusquitee	Rainbow Springs
Tallulah River	Tusquitee	Hightower Bald & Rainbow Springs

Eligibility

To be eligible for designation, a river must be free-flowing and possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values. Thus, the eligibility analysis consisted of an examination of the river's hydrology, including any man-made alterations, and an assessment of its natural, cultural and recreational values.

In order to be assessed as outstandingly remarkable, a river-related value must be a unique, rare or exemplary feature that is significant at a comparative regional or national scale. Dictionary definitions of the words "unique" and "rare" indicate that such a value would be one that is a conspicuous example from among a number of similar values that are themselves uncommon or extraordinary. Only one such value is needed for eligibility.

While the spectrum of resources that may be considered is broad, all values should be directly river-related. That is, they should:

- Be located in the river or on its immediate shore-lands (generally within 1/4 mile on either side of the river);
- Contribute substantially to the functioning of the river ecosystem; and/or
- Owe their location or existence to the presence of the river.

The Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest plan revision team developed an evaluation form to assess and record each of the outstandingly remarkable values in a consistent way, and to document rationale if no ORVs exist. See Appendix Figure F1.

From October to December 2015, the planning team asked for public input on these 54 potentially eligible rivers, and for information on any additional free flowing rivers with potential ORVs or changed conditions to currently eligible rivers. Comments provided by the public were used to inform discussions among planning team members, ranger district employees, and Forest leadership in determination of potentially eligible rivers or river segments.

Using the Southern Appalachian Region of Comparison as a frame of reference, the team then reviewed the 54 rivers' potential ORVs and determined whether they met criteria of being unique, rare, or exemplary features, and if the ORVs were directly related to the river (as described above). These conditions must be met in order to be considered eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Classification

Rivers found to be eligible, must be assigned a river classification. The potential classification of a river found to be eligible is based on the condition of the river and the adjacent lands as they currently exist. Section 2(b) of the WSRA (1968) specifies and defines these terms as follows:

- Wild Rivers: Rivers or sections of rivers 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 Rivers: Rivers or sections of rivers free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.
- Recreational Rivers: Rivers or sections of rivers readily accessible by roads or railroad, which may have some development along their shoreline and which may have undergone some impoundments or diversions in the past.

The evaluation forms were used by the planning team to describe river segments being reviewed, identify outstandingly remarkable values (if any), document whether a river is eligible or not, and determine the appropriate classification for those rivers found to be eligible. These discussions also considered public comments related to potential classification.

See Appendix Figure F1 example below for the template used to guide discussions and record descriptions of potentially eligible wild and scenic river free flowing condition and values. This template was used to provide consistency in the evaluation of the 54 rivers identified in the table above.

Appendix F1 – Wild and Scenic River Evaluation Form

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

*****This template evaluation form was used and applied toward all river segments discussed in this Appendix. The full descriptions and questions for consideration that were included in the draft Appendix for each river segment have been omitted from the final version for clarity and brevity. Please refer to this evaluation form template (pgs. F-10 through F-14) for additional context*****

River Name:

Additional Instructions: It is critical to describe in detail the outstandingly remarkable values and to explain how they are unique, rare, or exemplary features significant at a comparative regional or national scale. For each of the potential ORVs, include a description of the region of comparison that was used.

River Segment:

From:

To:

Evaluated By (optional):

Date:

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

A. Free – Flowing

- Is the river free-flowing?

NO ☐

(According to Section 16(b) of the Wild and Scenic River Act, free-flowing is defined as, “Existing or flowing in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip rapping, or other modification of the waterway. The existence of low dams, diversion works or other minor structures does not automatically disqualify the segment for designation. A river segment below or between impoundments may also be considered.”)

YES ☐

Consider:

- Does the river exist or flow in a natural condition?
- Where there are improvements or modifications (such as culverts, fords, fish traps, weirs, fish barriers, j-hooks, rock vanes, or other instream structures), do these structures affect the free-flowing nature of the water?
- If there is a segment of the river that is not free-flowing, should other segments be considered?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

B. Scenery

- Do the landscape elements of landform, vegetation, water, color, and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features or attractions? (When analyzing scenic values, additional factors—such as seasonal variations in vegetation, scale of cultural modifications, and the length of time negative intrusions are viewed—may be considered. Scenery and visual attractions may be highly diverse over the majority of the river or river segment. Outstandingly remarkable scenic features may occupy only a small portion of a river corridor.)

NO ☐

YES ☐

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

C. Recreation

- Are recreational opportunities high quality that attract or have the potential to attract visitors from throughout or beyond the region? (River-related opportunities could include, but are not limited to, sightseeing, interpretation, wildlife observation, camping, photography, hiking, fishing, hunting, and boating. The river may provide settings for national or regional use or competitive events.)

NO ☐

YES ☐

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

D. Geology

- Does the river or river corridor contain one or more example of a geologic feature, process or phenomenon unique or rare within the region of comparison? (The feature(s) may be in an unusually active stage or development, represent a “textbook” example and/or represent a unique or rare combination of geologic features--erosional, volcanic, glacial or other geologic structures.)

NO ☐

YES ☐

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

E. Fish

- Fish values may be judged on the relative merits of Fish populations, habitat, or a combination of these conditions.
- Populations: Is the river a nationally or regionally important producer of resident and/or anadromous fish species? (Of particular significance are a diversity of fish species or the presence of wild stocks and/or Federal or State listed or candidate threatened, endangers, or species of conservation concern.)
- Habitat: Does the river provide uniquely diverse or high quality habitat for fish species indigenous to the region of comparison? (Of particular significance is exemplary habitat for wild stocks and/or Federal or State listed or candidate threatened or endangered species or species of conservation concern. Rare and unique habitats in the corridor should also be considered.)

NO ☐

YES ☐

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

F. Wildlife

- Wildlife values may be judged on the relative merits of either terrestrial or aquatic populations, habitat, or a combination of these conditions.
- *Populations*: Does the river or area within the river corridor contain nationally or regionally important populations of indigenous wildlife species? (Of particular significance are species diversity, species considered to be unique, and/or populations of Federal or State listed or candidate threatened or endangered species or species of conservation concern.)
- *Habitat*: Does the river or river corridor provide uniquely diverse or high quality habitat for wildlife of national or regional significance, and/or may provide a unique habitat or a critical link in habitat conditions for Federal or State listed or candidate threatened or endangered species or species of conservation concern? Contiguous habitat conditions are such that the biological needs of the species are met.

NO ☐

YES ☐

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

- Vegetative and ecological values may be judged on the relative merits of either populations or communities, or a combination of these conditions.)
- *Populations*: Does the river or river corridor contain nationally or regionally important populations of indigenous plant species? (Of importance are species considered to be unique or populations of federal or state listed or candidate threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Diversity and number of species area also important.)
- *Habitat*: Does the river or river corridor contain nationally or regionally important plant communities? (Communities are exceptionally high quality, unusual or critical communities such as old-growth.)

NO ☐

YES ☐

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

- Does the river, or area within the river corridor, contains important evidence of occupation or use by humans? Or, do sites may have national or regional importance for interpreting history?

NO ☐

YES ☐

Historic: Does the river or area within the river corridor area contain features or sites associated with a significant event, an important person, or a cultural activity of the past that is now rare or unique in the region? (A historic site or feature, in most cases, is 50 years old or older).

Pre-Historic: Does the river or area within the river corridor contain sites of prehistoric human use or occupation with unique or rare characteristics or exemplary anthropological values such as evidence of prehistoric human practices and modes of living? Or were areas within the river corridor used for unique traditional ceremonial purposes? Does the area associated with the river represent the origins of cultures or conflict of cultures?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

I. Other Similar Values

- Are other values of the river or the area within the river corridor outstandingly remarkable, containing nationally or regionally important conditions? (Consider values such as (but not limited to) botany, hydrology, paleontology, scientific resources and heritage values).

NO ☐

YES ☐

Discussion:

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO ☐

YES ☐

Conclusion:

III. CLASSIFICATION

If river is eligible, what is the classification? Refer to Table 2 in the 1982 Wild and Scenic River Interagency Guidelines for the criteria used to determine classification.

☐ Wild

☐ Scenic

☐ Recreational

Rationale:

III. CLASSIFICATION

If river is eligible, what is the classification? Refer to Table 2 in the 1982 Wild and Scenic River Interagency Guidelines for the criteria used to determine classification.

☐ Wild

☐ Scenic

☐ Recreational

Rationale:

**For all river segments that were not determined to be newly eligible for Wild and Scenic designation, the Classification discussion was omitted from their analysis, as it does not apply. **

Rivers Reviewed and Moved Forward as Newly Eligible

This report contains the evaluation summaries that the Forest has completed for identifying and evaluating rivers that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System, and determining whether to recommend any such rivers for wild and scenic river designation. Further information regarding the river review process can be found in the Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Report. Additional information regarding individual river evaluations, including public comments that were used to inform the process, is contained in the project record.

The Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are in the required process of revising the forest plan. Part of the revision process includes determining eligibility of rivers that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System. A description of this process can be found in the 2012 Forest Service Planning Rule and Chapter 80 of the Forest Service Land Management Planning Handbook 1909.12. This process includes the following steps:

1. Determining eligibility
2. Assigning potential classification (wild, scenic, or recreational)
3. Determining suitability (which can be deferred)

Evaluations were completed with a finding that each river is either eligible to be a Wild and Scenic River or not, and with each eligible river segment assigned a classification. Eligible rivers are then managed to preserve the free-flowing character and ORVs. Typically, the next step is to conduct a suitability study, which could result in a recommendation for designation or release from eligibility if found not suitable for designation. In some cases, Congress could designate an eligible river without a suitability study, but this is rare. Suitability studies can be conducted in conjunction with Plan revision and eligibility evaluation, or deferred to a later time and conducted as a standalone study. In this case the Forest has elected to defer suitability studies and manage rivers as eligible until studies are completed and rivers are designated or released.

This document contains the evaluation reports for 54 rivers reviewed in detail.

The first section of the document contains the evaluation forms for the rivers determined to be free-flowing and have one or more ORVs within the Region of Comparison, and therefore, eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System. Findings recorded in these evaluations were based on knowledge and professional experience of Forest Service personnel at the Ranger District and Forest-level, including recreation technicians and program managers, resource specialists, NEPA specialists, and leadership. Additionally, research of various government and non-government publications, databases, online data in the public domain, and river-specific public comments were used to inform the evaluation team about free-flowing conditions and potential outstandingly remarkable values.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

CULLASAJA RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Highlands and Scaly Mountain quads

From: FS property line below Lake Sequoyah Dam (Highlands quad)

To: FS property line upstream from Buck Creek confluence (Scaley Mountain quad)

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

The river gorge has a number of private in-holdings along the river, residences, and commercial businesses off HWY 64.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

YES

Discussion:

Bordered by the Scenic Byway of Highway 64 the Cullasaja offers outstanding views of a steep mountain stream laced with waterfalls.

US 64 roughly parallels the river and has been designated a USFS Scenic Byway. There are developed access sites to Bridle Vail, Dry, and Quarry Falls to view the scenic/geologic features.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

YES

Discussion:

The Upper Cullasaja has some short sections of extreme rapids for experienced kayakers; however, the gorge has limited access and egress along highway 64 between Highlands and Franklin, NC. Dry Falls and Cullasaja Falls are beautiful scenic falls for viewing but they are extremely dangerous for boating. Other recreational values of the Cullasaja include hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking, and sight-seeing. The river is a NC Class B trout stream.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	YES

Discussion:

The gorge has been recognized as geologically unique in the Southern Blue Ridge. The geology of the run produces many waterfalls that are within an easy walking distance from the road providing spectacular views as well as many secluded and beautiful swimming holes. The Cullasaja Gorge has three well-known waterfalls and the unique geological setting provides visitors access to numerous large waterfalls and cascades.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports salamander and darter species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. The darters are found below gorge off Forest Service property by Franklin.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	YES

Discussion:

The gorge has been recognized as botanically diverse and geologically unique in the Southern Blue Ridge. There is one gametophytic fern found at Dry Falls which is the only example found in the United States.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	YES

Discussion:

There are two historical Civilian Conservation Corps built recreation areas associated with Cullasaja Gorge and the river. These areas are eligible as a National Register Historic Recreation Area.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

YES

Conclusion:

Scenery, Recreation, Geology, Vegetation, Historical/Cultural ORVs.
From the Forest Service property line below Lake Sequoyah Dam to the Forest Service property line upstream from Buck Creek confluence on the Scaley Mountain quad (7.8 miles).

III. CLASSIFICATION

**Wild/Scenic/or
Recreational**

If river is eligible, what is the classification?

Recreational

Rationale:

Recreational classification due to proximity of Hwy 64 (7.8 miles).

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

FIRES CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Andrews, Hayesville, and Tipton quads

From: Headwaters

To: Forest Service property line downstream from Fires Creek Recreation Area (Hayesville quad)

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Scenery along Fires Creek and throughout the Fires Creek watershed is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province and contains no outstandingly remarkable scenic values.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	
<p>The primary river-related recreational opportunities associated with Fires Creek include recreational fishing, camping, hiking, horseback riding, and hunting. None of these opportunities are considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison. Hunting opportunities consist primarily of turkey and deer hunting within the watershed, generally by people local to the Clay County and Cherokee County vicinities.</p> <p>Fires Creek does not offer unique, rare, or exemplary boating opportunities. Some visitors attempt tubing during times of higher water in spring, but cool water temperatures and shallow water limit this activity. There are many other areas across the Cheoah and Tusquitee Ranger District, and the neighboring Nantahala Ranger District and Cherokee National Forest, that offer better and more widely utilized water-based recreation opportunities including the Chattooga River, Nantahala River, and Ocoee River.</p> <p>Additionally, there are a variety of motor-boating opportunities provided at Lake Chatuge, Fontana Lake, Hiwassee Lake, and Appalachia Lake.</p> <p>Additionally, Fires Creek has little potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a destination location for these types of activities.</p>	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
<p>The number and magnitude of waterfalls/cascades on Fires Creek are not unique when compared to similar streams within the Southern Appalachians. The geologic features of Fires Creek are common to other Southern Appalachian streams.</p>	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	YES

Discussion:

Fires Creek provides a range of high quality habitat for aquatic species. Although Fires Creek supports high aquatic diversity, it is lacking some species such as brook trout that are found in other streams throughout the Southern Appalachian region.

The lower elevations/lower reaches provide habitat for two aquatic species of conservation concern, hellbenders and Smoky Dace. These species have broad distribution and occur in multiple locations across the Southern Appalachians. However, the lower reaches of Fires Creek support one of the best populations of hellbenders within the species' range including excellent hellbender habitat for all life stages---from nesting to larval to sub-adult to adulthood.

Fires Creek also supports an additional aquatic species of conservation concern, Hiwassee headwaters crayfish; however it is limited in distribution within the Fires Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

Fires Creek supports a wildlife community that is considered typical for riparian zones and mid-elevation valleys in the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province. Portions of the floodplain and surrounding uplands have been surveyed and evaluated for effects to wildlife resources for recent projects in the watershed.

The Fires Creek area supports two federally-listed wildlife species, the Indiana bat (endangered) and the northern long-eared bat (threatened), and one species of conservation concern, the Eastern Small-footed bat. However, the presence of these species is not outstanding within the region of comparison and the distribution of these species overlaps throughout the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

Two plant species of conservation concerns, *Megaceros aenigmaticus*, a hornwort, and *Cardamine clematitis*, mountain bittercress, occur within the mesic habitats associated with the streams and creeks, however, larger and higher quality populations of the two species occur within Santeetlah Creek and across the Great Smoky Mountains National Park drainages for the hornwort and within numerous drainages across Roan Mountain for the bittersweet.

A population of mountain Camellia (*Stewartia ovata*) occurs along Fires Creek; however, larger populations of this species of conservation concern shrub are present in drainages across southwestern Virginia and northern Georgia in the southern Appalachians.

There are no rare plant communities present in Fires Creek watershed. The area is dominated by acidic cove forest and mesic oak at mid elevations and high elevation red oak forest at higher elevations. None of these common forests are exemplary for the southern Appalachians.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

The river corridor contains known pre-historic sites and one tribal ceremonial location. However, most areas within the geographic region of comparison have higher concentration of sites within the river corridor.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	YES
Conclusion: Fish (aquatics) ORV for Hellbenders population and habitat. The eligible river segment is from the confluence of Bee Branch with Fires Creek downstream to the FS property line downstream of Fires Creek Picnic Area – 2.8 miles.	
III. <u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	Wild/Scenic/or Recreational
If river is eligible, what is the classification? Rationale: The eligible river segment contains a parallel road as well as a bridge crossing. Additionally, the segment contains development near the river including a parking lots, restrooms, a developed camping area, and picnic area.	Recreational

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

FLAT LAUREL CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Sam Knob quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence of West Fork Pigeon River

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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A. <u>Free – Flowing</u>	
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YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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B. <u>Scenery</u>	
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NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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C. <u>Recreation</u>	
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NO

Discussion:

Recreation activities include hiking and fishing. However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they have the potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a destination location for these types of activities. Additionally, higher quality recreation experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

The area supports the flying squirrel; however, the population does not owe its existence to the river.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

YES

Discussion:

Contains one of the best Rock Gnome lichen (endangered) populations in the region.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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I. Other Similar Values

NO

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

YES

Conclusion:

Vegetation ORV.

2 classifications for a total of 1.7 miles:

Scenic classification from headwaters to eligible West Fork Pigeon River corridor (1.4 miles).

Recreational classification from the corridor of eligible West Fork Pigeon River to the confluence with that river (0.3 miles).

III. CLASSIFICATION

**Wild/Scenic/or
Recreational**

If river is eligible, what is the classification?

Scenic

Rationale:

Recreational

The upper segment has moderate evidence of human modification with adjacent trails which follow historic railroad grades. The segment which overlaps the eligible West Fork Pigeon River corridor is adjacent to NC215 and warrants the same Recreational classification as that river.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

NORTH FORK FRENCH BROAD RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Lake Toxaway, Rosman, and Sam Knob quads

From: Headwaters at confluence of Kieseek Creek and Courthouse Creek (Sam Knob quad)

To: FS property line near State Route 215 (Rosman quad)

The headwaters of the river begin on FS property; however, the river travels in and out of private land, back onto Forest Service (Rosman quad).

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public at multiple stages in the evaluation and plan revision process. A site visit was conducted in September 2022 with the Deputy Forest Supervisor, District Ranger, Forest Planner, Forest Dispersed Recreation Program Manager, and District Recreation Technician.

Date: May 02, 2017; Updated October 21, 2022

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion: No impoundments or in-stream structures were identified on river segments evaluated on NFS lands.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Scenery along the river is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province. The river is located near the Forest Heritage Scenic Byway; however, it's only visible from the byway in certain locations. Although waterfalls and rapids can be found along the entire river segment, most of them have scenic attributes similar to those of numerous other rivers within the region of comparison. A relatively short segment of the river flows through a narrow gorge which has higher quality scenic attributes and a concentration of waterfalls, but this segment is less than 10% of river miles evaluated and does not represent scenic characteristics overall.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	YES

Discussion:

The primary recreational opportunities associated with the river include fishing and non-motorized boating (whitewater paddling).

Recreational fishing is an attraction on the river, but there are many other mountain creeks and rivers that offer similar sport fishing opportunities. Therefore, fishing opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary within the region of comparison.

However, the river is popular with whitewater paddlers during high flow events. A series of Class IV+ rapids and waterfalls offer unique recreational opportunities in a remote setting, situated in a narrow gorge with no roads or NFS trails. This setting and paddling opportunity is similar to segments of the upper Chattooga River or Linville River (in Linville Gorge), both of which are designated or eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers. Although North Fork French Broad River paddling opportunities are comparable to segments of these other rivers, each of them possesses unique and outstanding recreational values within the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal or public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or within the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports a population of pink shell azalea; however, they are not directly associated with the river or dependent on riparian habitats.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal or public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal or public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

YES

Conclusion: Because of the outstanding whitewater paddling opportunity in a remote river gorge and the unique recreational experience the North Fork French Broad River provides, a 3.2 mile segment of the river was determined to be eligible based on detailed public input, agency reconnaissance, and review of publicly available information. The eligible segment is from the confluence of Big Mountain Branch, downstream to the USFS boundary near the NC215/SR1329 intersection in Rosman.

III. CLASSIFICATION

Wild/Scenic/or
Recreational

If river is eligible, what is the classification? Refer to Table 2 in the 1982 Wild and Scenic River Interagency Guidelines for the criteria used to determine classification.

Recreational

Rationale: The classification of this 3.2 mile river segment is Recreational due to the outstandingly remarkable values of the whitewater paddling opportunities.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

SANTEETLAH CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Big Junction and Santeetlah quads

From: Headwaters (Santeetlah quad)

To: Lake Santeetlah

Evaluated By: Cheoah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Santeetlah Creek recently contained a fish barrier; however, the fish barrier removal project was completed on May 27, 2016.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Scenery along Santeetlah Creek and throughout the Santeetlah Creek watershed is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province. Santeetlah Creek has a moderately sized floodplain that supports a riparian forest vegetation community, including dense thickets of *Rhododendron maximum*. This forest type limits the field of view for persons engaged in recreation at many locations near the main stem of the creek.

Additionally, the Eastern Hemlock forest has been extensively damaged in the drainage with the majority dead. This provides a visual background of less visually pleasing large dead trees across the drainage.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Santeetlah Creek provides a variety of recreation opportunities such as dispersed camping, fishing, hunting, and recreational boating (kayaking). However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Additionally, Santeetlah Creek has very little potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a “destination location” for these types of activities.

Recreational fishing does occur on Santeetlah Creek, but there are many other mountain creeks that offer similar recreational fishing opportunities. Thick vegetation, narrow stream width, steep topography, fallen logs, and overhanging branches make recreational fishing within most of the proposed river corridor difficult. Therefore, nearby better fishing opportunities are available in the vicinity of the Rattler Ford Campground. Additionally, fishing harvest success depends primarily on stocking efforts that occur during a short timeframe in the early summer season.

Boating opportunities on Santeetlah Creek consist primarily of creek boating (kayaking). While considered to be exceptional by a small group of highly skilled whitewater enthusiasts, it is very rare to see visitors boating on Santeetlah Creek. Boating is primarily associated with periods of high water events due to increased rainfall. In the entire region of comparison, there are other kayaking opportunities much closer to large population centers that do attract visitors from within and beyond the region of comparison, such as the Chattooga River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and the Ocoee River. Due to the limited access to the headwaters, potential for dangerous deadfall in the creek, and other available opportunities for similar creek boating experiences in other areas, it is not likely that boating use on Santeetlah Creek will grow beyond the current intermittent, low level of use.

Hunting opportunities consist primarily of wild boar, turkey, and bear hunting within the creek corridor. Although this activity does occur to some degree, it is primarily a generational family experience that does not attract high volumes of casual hunters from outside the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	

The geologic features of Santeetlah Creek are common to other Southern Appalachian streams. The number and magnitude of waterfalls/cascades on Santeetlah Creek are not unique when compared to similar streams within the Southern Appalachians. Other rivers such as the Chattooga River provide unique geology in the shape of the river channel which affects the stream flow as well as cascading waterfalls and bedrock chutes that are not present in Santeetlah Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	YES
Discussion:	

Santeetlah Creek provides high quality habitat and refugia for many native species such as hellbenders, Smoky Dace, Tangerine, and Tuckasegee Darters due to its free-flowing character and high water quality. However, these species are not unique to Santeetlah Creek and are found within numerous other streams throughout the Southern Appalachian region including (i.e. Big Laurel Creek).

Santeetlah Creek has a breeding population of hellbenders and Junaluska salamanders. One species of conservation concern is unique to Santeetlah Creek. One of the best populations of Junaluska salamander within North Carolina occurs in Santeetlah Creek, and the species are found throughout the system.

Additionally, Santeetlah Creek provides high-quality and uniformly distributed habitat for hellbenders. Hellbenders have been found to be present from the cove waters of the lake up to about the confluence with Wright Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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F. Wildlife

YES

Discussion:

Santeetlah Creek supports a wildlife community that is considered typical for riparian zones and mid- to high-elevation valleys in the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province. However, the river corridor supports one federally listed/endangered species, Carolina Northern flying squirrel; two federally listed bats, Northern long-eared bat and Indiana bat; and one species of bat conservation concern, the Eastern small footed bat. The diversity of these four federally listed species result (including some vegetation/habitat) make the river corridor a unique combination of habitats.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

YES

Discussion:

Santeetlah Creek drainage contains high elevation seeps; smaller spray cliff communities, a moderate population of rock gnome lichen, a federally endangered species, and one of the most diverse bryophyte floras across the southern Appalachians. In addition to the federally listed species, ten species of conservation concern mosses and liverworts have been documented.

Santeetlah Creek watershed, including John's and Whigg Branches, has the largest documented population of *Megaceros aenigmaticus*. The diversity of these bryophyte species result makes the river corridor a unique combination of habitats.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

YES

Discussion:

There are many prehistoric and historic sites within the corridor, some of which are very rare across the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. The density of sites with continuous use represents some of the highest in the region. Some sites have national and regional importance for interpreting history. Several sites are associated with important Cherokee who lived here and used this area. Some of the sites are associated with significant cultural practices. Traditional Cultural Properties of regional significance are located with the corridor. Areas within the corridor were used for ceremonial purposes and traditional use continues into the present.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	YES
Conclusion:	
Fish (aquatics) ORV for Hellbenders and Junaluska salamanders populations and habitat; Wildlife ORV for Carolina Northern flying squirrel, Northern long-eared bat, Indiana bat, and Eastern small footed bat populations and habitat;	
Vegetation ORV for <i>Megaceros aenigmaticus</i> population and habitat and several bryophyte floras, mosses, liverworts habitat; and	
Historical/Cultural ORVs Traditional Cultural properties as well as many prehistoric and historic sites.	
The eligible river segment is from the headwaters to an unnamed tributary upstream of Rattler Ford Campground (12.5 miles).	
III. <u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	Wild/Scenic/or Recreational
If river is eligible, what is the classification?	Scenic
Rationale:	
The corridor of this river segment is largely undeveloped, except for an adjacent FS road and dispersed campsites.	

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

SOUTH TOE RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Celo, Montreat, and Old Fort quads; including Left and Right Prongs on FS property in Montreat quad

From: FS property line with Blue Ridge Parkway (Montreat quad)

To: FS property line south of Laurel Branch (Celo quad)

Evaluated By: Appalachian Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

The South Toe River flows through multi-jurisdictional ownership primarily federal government and private property. The river exits national forest to the north bordering a highly developed resort housing community and golf course. There is a developed forest system road that is open year round and provides access to the Blue Ridge Parkway, private property, and other developed forest roads that are managed seasonally. A scenic value would include the seasonal variation in vegetation with the high elevation Spruce Fir forest and motorized access to vistas. The landscape and surrounding vegetation, water, and scenic features in the South Toe River corridor are similar to the other areas except in the higher elevation headwaters.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	YES

Discussion:

The river corridor offers a wide array of recreation opportunities including sightseeing, interpretation, dispersed, and developed camping for individuals or groups, photography, and hiking on more than 25 miles of developed trails reaching high elevations like Mt. Mitchell (highest peak in the eastern United States), Green Knob fire tower (historic fire tower), premier fishing in native trout waters with accessible pier, and small and big game hunting. The area contains a highly developed camp ground and a group campground as well as over 25 miles of multi-use trails. Water activities include wading, tubing and kayaking during high water events. In addition, two other waterfalls are in close proximity and Set Rock and Roaring Fork Falls. There are two developed camp grounds that are managed under a concessionaire permit for eight months of the year and seven dispersed recreation sites that border the South Toe River.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

Public input: The river contains habitat for southern brook trout, Appalachian elktoe mussel, wavy-rayed lampshell mussel, eastern hellbender, blotchside logperch, olive darter, northern pygmy salamander.

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. There are Southern brook trout in the headwaters; however, not the best population. Hellbenders are present, but are not the best population.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

Public input: Habitat along the corridor provides for magnolia warbler; northern pygmy salamander; northern long-eared bat, and river otters.

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

NO

Discussion:

Public input: The river and its corridor support rare wildflowers, old growth. The river is also home to *Virginia spirea*.

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Additionally, the *Virginia spirea* population identified by public comments is not on FS property.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

YES

Conclusion:

Recreation ORV.

The eligible river segment is from the confluence of Left Prong South Toe River to the bridge at Black Mountain Campground (3.7 miles).

III. CLASSIFICATION

**Wild/Scenic/or
Recreational**

If river is eligible, what is the classification?

Recreational

Rationale:

The eligible river segment contains a parallel road as well as a bridge crossing. Additionally, the segment contains development near the river including a parking lots, restrooms, a developed camping areas, and picnic areas.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

THOMPSON RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Cashiers and Reid quads

From: The headwaters west of SR1152

To: The Forest Service property line east of Long Spur Ridge

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

YES

Discussion:

The main section analyzed has eight waterfalls including Thompson High Falls. The nearby tributaries and main part of Thompson River are dramatic and visually spectacular. Recent land acquisitions have increased the amount of Forest Service ownership.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

YES

Discussion:

The primary recreational opportunities associated with the river include hiking, fishing, and non-motorized boating (rafting and kayaking). The Thompson River is accessed by walking on a Forest Service road. The road fords the river and provides hikers with access to the river and falls for sight- seeing and fishing. The Thompson is recognized as a high quality Brown trout fishing stream.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

YES

Conclusion:

Scenery and Recreation ORVs.

Eligible river segments are on National Forest lands and from the headwaters to FS property line east of Long Spur Ridge (3.7 miles total).

III. CLASSIFICATION

Wild/Scenic/or Recreational

If river is eligible, what is the classification?

Scenic

Rationale:

Recreational

From the headwaters to FS property line west of SR1152 is classified as Scenic because it is largely undeveloped, but is close to development on adjacent private lands (0.4 miles).

From FS property line west of NC281 to FS property line east of NC281 is classified as recreational due to proximity to NC281 (1.0 miles).

From FS property line east of NC281 to the FS property line east of Long Spur Ridge is classified as Scenic due to a parallel FS road (2.3 miles).

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

WEST FORK PIGEON RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Sam Knob and Waynesville quads

From: Confluence of Bubbling Spring Branch

To: Confluence of Queen Creek

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

YES

Discussion:

Ten scenic waterfalls and the “Garden of the Gods” qualifies this river as outstanding in terms of scenic value. Additionally, the river is bounded by both the Shining Rock Wilderness and Middle Prong Wilderness which provides scenic views from the river.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

YES

Discussion:

This river does support a wide range of recreational opportunities. The Forest Heritage Scenic Byway (Hwy 215) provides easy access and dramatic views of the river. Several waterfalls can be accessed. Paddlers enjoy Class IV to V high water adventures featuring the scenic “Garden of the Gods”. Most of the area is hatchery supported for fishing and the area is recognized for one of the best Yellow Drake hatches. A popular swimming hole is located near Sunburst Campground and both developed and primitive camping experiences are found nearby. The

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
river is not well known, but has the potential to become a featured destination.	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	YES
Discussion:	
The area contains one of the best Rock Gnome lichen (endangered) populations within the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

YES

Conclusion:

Scenery, Recreation, Vegetation ORVs.

From the confluence of Bubbling Branch to the confluence of Queen Creek (7.0 miles).

III. CLASSIFICATION

**Wild/Scenic/or
Recreational**

If river is eligible, what is the classification?

Recreational

Rationale:

Recreation classification due to proximity to NC215 (7.0 miles).

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

WHITEWATER RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: The upper section on FS runs for 1.5 miles from just above the confluence of Silver Run Creek down to just above the confluence of Happy Hollow Creek. The private ownership in the middle was not reviewed. The lower section runs through FS ownership for 3.5 miles from the USFS boundary above the confluence of Democrat Creek down river to the NC/SC border. (Cashiers quad). Although the lower and upper sections were reviewed separately, they're ultimately considered one river segment.

From: Headwaters on private land

To: NC/SC border with the exception of private lands between the upper section and the lower section. Whitewater River is not a designated or eligible river in South Carolina.

Evaluated By: Nantahala and Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Upper segment: The upper section of the river on FS is roughly 1.5 miles, running from just above the confluence of Silver run creek down to just above the confluence of Happy Hollow Creek. This section runs along S.R.

107. The Upper section of river flows through National Forest Land in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, riprapping, or other modification of the waterway.

Lower segment: The lower section of the river on FS runs roughly 3.5 river miles from the USFS boundary above the confluence of Democrat Creek down river to the South Carolina state line. The lower section of the river flows in a natural condition through the Forest. This section has one major road crossing (Bridge) on S.R. 281; no culvert and the bridge has concrete pillars which do not affect river flow.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Upper segment: The upper section of the river does not contain Outstanding Remarkable Scenic Values. The upper section is characterized with the same elements and features as any other Appalachian stream or stream on the Nantahala and Pisgah Ranger Districts. The visual scenery is also affected by the road edge and guard rail funning along the streams edge. There are no major geographic features are in this area.

Lower segment: The lower section of the river does contain unique features that are not found anywhere else in the Southern Appalachians, or in the Eastern United States. The highest waterfalls east of the Mississippi River are located in this section of the Whitewater River. The Whitewater Falls recreation area brings in 35,000 visitors each year to view these falls. This river corridor is in its natural state with no visible development except for the nearby recreation area. A platform was constructed in the 1990s to accommodate the large number of waterfall viewing visitors. The steep side slopes in the gorge provide a visually appealing stair-step experience along the Foothills Trail to the base of Whitewater Falls.

YES

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Upper segment: The upper section of Whitewater River has values that attract visitors and the upper section contains Silver Run Falls. However, Silver Run, while in close proximity to the road, the waterfall is very similar to other scenic and accessible falls, such as Glen Falls, Secret Falls, and Turtleback Falls and many others on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs and within the region of comparison.

Lower segment: The lower section has the Whitewater Falls Recreation Area which draws people from across the U.S. The Foothills Trail is located along about 1/3 of the lower section where many visitors view the waterway. There is a spanned trail bridge along the Foothills trail path, crossing the river at the bottom of the Waterfall. The Foothills trail accesses the river corridor from N.C. as well as the S.C. section. Hiking, hunting, photography, fishing, camping, etc. take place throughout the river corridor.

YES

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

Upper segment: The geology of the upper section is very common to most of our Southern Appalachian Streams and the streams on the Nantahala and Pisgah Ranger districts and in the region of comparison. Thick rhododendron and mountain laurel cover the banks of this section with gradual fall in elevation. The river is often slow moving and difficult to see through the vegetation.

Lower segment: The geology of the lower section does have a rapid change in elevation when the river passes below S.R. 281 and plummets downward ending in Lake Jocassee. Upper Whitewater Falls, located in North Carolina and Lower Whitewater Falls, located in South Carolina, both showcase these features. The Upper Whitewater Falls is the highest waterfall east of the Rocky Mountains, plunging 411 feet. Steep walls and rock formations are readily visible from both the trail and the developed recreation area and are unique to the region due to the size and scale.

YES

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

Upper and lower segments:

Whitewater River provides high quality habitat and refugia for many native species due to its free-flowing character and high water quality. The area does support Chauga crayfish and green salamander populations, which are species of conservation concern; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Additionally, these species are fairly widespread across the Whitewater, Chattooga, Horsepasture, and Toxoway River drainages. There are no other aquatic species or habitats unique to the Whitewater River.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
Upper and lower segments:	
<p>Whitewater River supports a wildlife community that is considered typical for riparian zones and mid-elevation valleys in the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province. Portions of the floodplain and surrounding uplands have been surveyed and evaluated for effects to wildlife resources for recent projects in the watershed.</p> <p>The Whitewater River area is not known to support any federally- or state- listed wildlife species. The area does support the eastern small-footed bat, which is species of conservation concern; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.</p>	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	See segment discussion below
Discussion:	
<p>The area contains one of the best Rock Gnome lichen (endangered) populations within the region of comparison.</p>	
Discussion:	NO
<p>Upper segment: The upper section supports communities that is considered typical for riparian zones and mid-elevation valleys in the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province.</p>	
<p>Lower segment: The lower section contains the largest spray cliff community in the eastern United States. It also contains one of the most diverse bryophyte species assemblages of any spray cliff within the southern Appalachian region as well as one of the most diverse bryophyte flora across the southern Appalachians, in comparison to the Chattooga River and Santeetlah Creek. Additionally, within the corridor there is a population of rock gnome lichen, a federally listed species, 17 species of conservation concern mosses and liverworts, and 10 vascular plant species of conservation concern. This diversity of these species in the river corridor make it unique.</p>	YES

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
--	------------------

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

YES

Conclusion:

Scenery, Recreation, Geology, Vegetation

Scenery, Recreation, Geology, and Vegetation ORVs on the lower section of the river from the Forest Service property line above the confluence of Democrat Creek to the South Carolina line (3.6 miles).

III. <u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	Wild/Scenic/or Recreational
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If river is eligible, what is the classification?

Scenic

Rationale:

Scenic classification for the entire 3.6 mile segment (both the lower and upper segments reviewed) due to proximity to NC281 highway, Forest Service roads, adjacent private lands, and the Whitewater Falls developed recreation site, which is located within the ¼ mile river corridor.

Other Rivers Reviewed for Potential Eligibility:

The following section of this document contains the evaluation forms for rivers reviewed in detail and determined to have no outstandingly remarkable values within the Region of Comparison and therefore, are not eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System. The Forest planning team identified the region of comparison for the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests as the Southern Appalachian Region. Like the evaluation of rivers found to have outstandingly remarkable values, information reviewed for this group of rivers also considered river-specific comments provided by the public.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

BEECH CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Hightower Bald quad; (Southern Nantahala Wilderness)

From: Headwaters

To: North Carolina/Georgia border

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

The primary river-related recreational opportunities associated with Beech Creek include hiking and hunting. None of these opportunities are considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
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Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

BIG CHOGA CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Tipton quad

From: Headwaters

To: Nantahala Lake

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

There is one river crossing for the Trail of Tears; however, no specific feature for crossing and no current use.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

BIG CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Dunsmore Mountain quad

From: Henderson –Transylvania County line near Blue Ridge Parkway

To: Confluence with Mills River

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

None

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Hiking and mountain biking are the primary recreational uses of this creek. References to fishing or boating opportunities can be categorized as average or below average in the area and has been described as “difficult to fish” and “not a destination” from angling perspective. Additionally, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area contains a historic splash dam; however, it is not unique or rare at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

BRITTON CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Andrews and Robbinsville quads

From: Headwaters

To: Forest service boundary on the Andrews quad

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

None

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

The area supports Eastern Hellbenders; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

The area contains the Trail of Tears; however, no specific feature for crossing and no current use.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

BUCK CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Rainbow Springs quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with Buck Creek

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

None

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports salamander species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports wildlife species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

CATAWBA RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Black Mountain and Moffitt Hill quads

From: FS property line (Black Mountain quad)

To: FS property line (Moffitt Hill quad)

Evaluated By: Grandfather Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

NO

Discussion:

The Catawba historic complex/dam remnants impound the flow. However, the segment after the complex is free-flowing and therefore does not prevent the further review of this river.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, much of the river is not on FS property and their population abundance are not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

The Catawba historic complex/dam remnants impound the flow of the river and therefore would be outside any eligible river segments. Additionally, there are no other unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

CHAMBERS CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Unaka quad

From: Forest service property boundary Unaka quad

To: Hiawassee Lake

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

Discussion:

None

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area contains the Trail of Tears; however, there is no specific feature for crossing and no current use.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

CHEOAH RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Fontana Dam and Tapoco quads

From: Santeetlah Dam

To: Calderwood Lake

Evaluated By: Cheoah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

NO

Discussion:

Water in this reach is diverted for hydroelectric energy production and river flow patterns are dependent on intermittent releases from Santeetlah Dam.

Since the Cheoah River is not free flowing, no further analysis was performed.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

CHESTNUT BRANCH

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Black Mountain and Moffitt Hill quads

From: Forest service property boundary

To: Confluence with Catawba River

Evaluated By: Grandfather Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

None

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

COURTHOUSE CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Sam Knob quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence of North Fork French Broad River

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

There are two waterfalls on Courthouse Creek, with the most notable being Courthouse Falls. It is a significant local waterfall that gets a large amount of visitation. However, it is not considered unique, rare, or exemplary at the region of comparison. Wilson Creek and Linville River have larger gorges.

Comparable scenery and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	
Courthouse Creek has some non-motorized boating use. Also, some small pocket-water fishing opportunities occur and developed trails and roads access the creek. However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they have the potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and are not considered a destination location for these types of activities. Additionally, higher quality recreation experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

DOCKERY CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – McDaniel Bald quad

From: Headwaters

To: FS property

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Scenery along Dockery Creek is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

The primary river-related recreational opportunities associated with Dockery Creek is recreational fishing. None of these opportunities are considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison. Dockery Creek has little potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a destination location for these types of activities.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports native trout; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

EAST FORK OVERFLOW CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Highlands quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with Overflow Creek

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public. Reviewed again by interdisciplinary team in November 2022, which confirmed original findings.

Date: May 02, 2017; updated November 1, 2022

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to this resource were identified during internal reviews in May 2017 and again in November 2022. There was public input suggesting this stream possessed scenic ORVs, but the planning team did not agree. This is a popular area with a scenic waterfall, Glen Falls. However, this waterfall is not considered remarkable within the Region of Comparison (ROC) and has similar scenic characteristics to other waterfalls in the area. The scenery is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

ELK RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Elk River; entire reach on NFs in North Carolina; approximately 1 mile; Elk Park quad

From: Forest Service ownership boundary

To: Tennessee border (Elk River from the TN/NC state line to Watauga Reservoir is currently eligible in the Cherokee National Forest)

Evaluated By: Appalachian Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Big Falls (aka Elk Falls) and the adjacent river channel are scenic within the local area but they do not offer a variety of scenic features nor are they remarkable in comparison to other areas in the forest such as Yellowstone Falls/Lower Falls, Rainbow Falls, Linville Falls, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Recreation opportunities at Big Falls (aka Elk Falls) include sightseeing, wading, boating fishing, and hunting. The pool at the bottom of the falls contains large hydraulic and is an attraction for local swimmers. The falls are used by extreme boaters; however, the collective recreation setting is not outstandingly remarkable at the region of comparison. Higher quality experiences can be found on other rivers on the forest such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

Geological features in the river corridor are representative within the region of comparison and are not rare or unique. Big Falls (aka Elk Falls) and the adjacent river channel are not remarkable in comparison to other areas in the forest such as Yellowstone Falls/Lower Falls, Rainbow Falls, Linville Falls, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

Biologic diversity is less than average and there is nothing outstandingly remarkable about the aquatic fauna of the Elk River. There are no federally or state listed aquatic species in the segment and there no outstanding habitat for native aquatic species. Higher quality examples can be found on other rivers on the forest such as the Lower French Broad River and the Nolichucky River.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

There is one federally listed species in the area – Northern Long-Eared Bat, but the presence is not outstanding at the region of comparison. There is nothing outstandingly remarkable about the native wildlife populations or habitat on the Elk River at the region of comparison. Higher quality examples can be found on other rivers on the forest such as Big Laurel Creek and Lower French Broad River.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

Although 80 to 100 year old examples of trees are present they do not represent high quality examples of acidic cove, eastern hemlock, and mesic oak forests. Other rivers in the area including Horsepasture River and Nolichucky River have larger size trees; contain greater plant diversity; and greater structural diversity and heterogeneity. There are no federal or state listed plant species in the segment and there is no outstanding remarkable habitat for rare plant species. In addition, there are no known sensitive or forest concern plant species documented in the river corridor.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

FROLICTOWN CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Big Ridge quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence of Panthertown Creek

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017; updated November 1, 2022

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to this resource were identified during internal review. Although public comment indicated existence of ORVs related to the tannic-stained waters, the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area; therefore, a finding of no scenic ORV was confirmed as related to this characteristic.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO

Discussion:

Recreation activities include camping, hiking, rock climbing, swimming, and fishing. However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison. Additionally, Frolictown Creek has very little potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a destination location for these types of activities.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values of this resource were identified during internal review. Public comment suggested waterfalls may constitute an ORV, but waterfalls and other river-related geologic features on this segment are similar to many rivers and streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area and in other parts of the ROC. Other geologic features in the greater Panthertown area are not directly related to the river segment.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to other resources were identified during internal review. Although public comment claimed ORVs related to tannic-stained waters, data from the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
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Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

GIBBY BRANCH

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Topton quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with Big Choga Creek

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area contains the Trail of Tears; however, no specific feature for crossing and no current use.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

GRAGG PRONG

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Grandfather Mountain quad

From: FS property line south of Blue Ridge Parkway

To: Confluence with Lost Cove Creek

Evaluated By: Grandfather Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Gragg Prong is a beautiful mountain stream surrounded by cove hardwood forests and the stream highlights a 100-ft rock slide waterfall through a narrow gorge. However, these features are not unique or rare on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison and comparable scenery and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

The Mountains-to-Sea trail follows Gragg Prong for a portion of the stream, and the area offers a primitive backcountry experience with camping and good swimming holes. Additionally, the stream is wild trout waters and provides a good backcountry fishing experience. The primary recreational opportunities associated with the river include hiking and fishing; however, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context. Non-motorized boating is associated with high water events and is for highly skilled paddlers; normal water flows do not support paddling. Comparable hiking, fishing, and paddling experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

The area contains geologic/waterfalls; however, these features are not unique or rare on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison and comparable geological features can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

GREASY COVE PRONG

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Shining Rock quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with East Fork Pigeon River

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.	

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

GREENLAND CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Big Ridge quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence of Panthertown Creek

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public. The stream was evaluated for potential ORVs in May 2017 and again in September 2022 with a site visit by the Deputy Forest Supervisor, District Ranger, and Forest Planner, and evaluated with specialist input from the forest botanist, forest recreation specialist and district aquatic biologist.

Date: May 02, 2017; updated November 1, 2022

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
A. <u>Free – Flowing</u>	YES
• Is the river free-flowing?	
Discussion:	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
B. <u>Scenery</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to this resource were identified during internal review. Although public comment claimed ORVs related to tannic-stained waters, the conclusion of a site visit in September 2022 and data from the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area; therefore, the original finding of no scenic ORV was confirmed.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The Panthertown Area is recognized as having high quality recreation activities for visitors engaged in sightseeing, camping, swimming, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, fishing and climbing. These recreation	

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

related values are not specific to the river or river corridors being evaluated. These opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison. Additionally, Greenland Creek has very little potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a destination location for these types of activities.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values of this resource were identified during internal review. Public comment suggested waterfalls may constitute an ORV, but waterfalls and other river-related geologic features on this segment are similar to many rivers and streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area and in other parts of the ROC. Other geologic features in the greater Panthertown area are not directly related to the river segment.

Yes / No

Evaluation Step

E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

While the Panthertown streams do exhibit excellent fish habitat, this is also not unique in the region of comparison. Within the Highland Domes geographic area of the forest there are at least 18 other streams with segments of low gradient, meandering channels with sandy substrate and tannic stained waters that support wild brook trout populations: Slatten Branch, Robinson Creek, Flat Creek, Cedar Creek, Silver Run Creek, Little Whitewater River, Jacks Creek, Nicolson Licklog Creek, Bad Creek, Scotsman Creek, Glade Creek, Little Creek, Edwards Creek, Blackrock Branch, Unnamed tributary of Chattooga River, Big Creek, Turtle Pond Creek, and Henson Branch.

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to other resources were identified during internal review. Although public comment claimed ORVs related to tannic-stained waters, the conclusion of a site visit in September 2022 and data from the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area.

Public comments raised that the presence of NC Outstanding Resource Waters as reason for eligibility, however, this does not equate to eligible status for National Wild and Scenic Rivers. The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality identifies ORWs as a subset of High Quality Waters, all across the state. There are several across the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest, including the following other streams on the Nantahala NF, which include both eligible and ineligible WSR streams: Buck Creek, upper Nantahala River, Overflow Creek, Fires Creek, Big Creek, Scotsmans Creek, Panthertown Creek, Greenland Creek, Little Green Creek and the Upper Tuckasegee River. Recognition as a state-identified ORW for the purposes of managing surface water quality does not equate to being recognized as a having and outstanding remarkable characteristics across the Southern Appalachians in the context of the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.	

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

HARPER CREEK/NORTH HARPER CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Chestnut Mountain and Grandfather Mountain quads; excluding Harper Creek west of Kawanas inholding on Chestnut Mountain quad

From/To: Headwaters of North Harper Creek to Confluence of Harper Creek on to Confluence with Wilson Creek

Evaluated By: Grandfather Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

The stream highlights Harper Creek and South Harper Creek Falls. Lower sections of the Harper Creek Trail (260/440) follow the edge of Harper Creeks gorge, providing views of the creek and gorge as openings in the forest canopy and topography allow. While Harper Creek provides beautiful scenery, Wilson Creek and Linville River have larger gorges. Likewise, waterfalls along Harper Creek are impressive; however, waterfalls are common throughout the region of comparison and comparable scenery and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Harper Creek is most popular for water-play, fishing, hiking, backpacking, and non-motorized boating. The Harper Creek and Mountains-to-Sea Trail follow Harper Creek. This along with a network of trails throughout the Harper Creek area, provides a host of loop potentials highlighting waterfalls in the area. Harper Creek provides wild trout fishing opportunities that are comparable with the surrounding creeks. During periods of high water, Harper Creek does see some use from extreme kayakers, as do a handful of surrounding streams.

The primary recreational opportunities associated with the river include fishing and non-motorized boating (rafting and kayaking); however, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context. Additionally, comparable hiking, fishing, and paddling experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

The geology, including waterfalls, steep walls, and rock formations of Harper Creek, is common throughout the Harper Creek and Lost Cove Wilderness Study Areas. By comparison, the geology of Linville River and Wilson Creek is stunning where the unique geology gives form to the rocky creeks, waterfalls, and gorges.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

One rare community, a spray cliff, is present at Harper Creek Falls in the lower portion of the drainage. This spray cliff has no associated rare species.

There are no rare plant species present in the drainage associated with any of the mesic habitats or streams.

High quality examples of acidic cove, rich cove, mesic oak, dry-mesic oak, and dry oak forests are present in the drainage. However these do not represent the best examples of these types such as located within Linville Gorge, Blackrock Mountain, Terrapin Mountain, Chimney Rock, and Standing Indian.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

HIWASSEE RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Murphy and Hayesville quads

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

NO

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

The Hiwassee River is impounded.

Since the Hiwassee is not free-flowing, no further analysis was performed.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

JARRETT CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Topton and Wayah Bald quads

From: Headwaters (Wayah Bald quad)

To: Nantahala Lake

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	

The area contains the Trail of Tears and Rutherford Trace; however, there is no specific feature for crossing and no current use.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
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Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

JOHNS RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Collettsville and Globe quads

From: Headwaters (Globe quad)

To: Confluence with Reids Creek and Sally Creek (Collettsville quad)

The river travels in and out of private land, with few sections on FS property.

Evaluated By: Grandfather Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Additionally, the rare mussel population is downstream of most Forest Service ownership.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
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Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

LITTLE BUCK CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Rainbow Springs quad;

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with Buck Creek

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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A. <u>Free – Flowing</u>	
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- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| • Is the river free-flowing? | YES |
|------------------------------|-----|

Discussion:

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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B. <u>Scenery</u>	
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Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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C. <u>Recreation</u>	
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Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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D. <u>Geology</u>	
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Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
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Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
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Discussion:

The area supports wildlife species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
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Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
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Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
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Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
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Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

LITTLE EAST FORK PIGEON RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Sam Knob, Shining Rock and Waynesville quads

From: Headwaters

To: Forest Service property boundary near scout camp

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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A. <u>Free – Flowing</u>	
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	YES
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- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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B. <u>Scenery</u>	
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	NO
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Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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C. <u>Recreation</u>	
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	NO
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Discussion:

Forest Service trail #107 parallels this creek for a substantial portion of its reach. Hiking would be considered light to moderate for the Shining Rock Wilderness. It is not considered a fly-casting destination, and it is not frequently paddled. Also, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they have the potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events. The region is not considered a destination location for these types of activities. Additionally, higher quality recreation experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

LITTLE SANTEETLAH CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Santeetlah and Tapoco quads

From: Headwaters (Tapoco quad)

To: Confluence with Santeetlah Lake

Evaluated By: Cheoah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Scenery along Little Santeetlah Creek and throughout the Little Santeetlah Creek watershed is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province. Little Santeetlah Creek supports a riparian forest vegetative community, including dense thickets of *Rhododendron maximum*, which limits the field of view for persons engaged in recreation along the creek. The primary access to the creek is provided by the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Loop Trail. The trail has limited fields of view due to dense vegetation along both sides of the trail and contains few open access points that provide a visitor with expansive vistas.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO

Discussion:

The primary river-related recreational opportunities associated with Little Santeetlah Creek include recreational fishing, hiking and hunting. However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Additionally, Little Santeetlah Creek has very little potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a destination location for these types of activities.

Additionally, hunting opportunities consist primarily of wild boar, turkey, and bear hunting within the creek corridor; however, it is primarily a generational family experience that does not attract high volumes of casual hunters from outside the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

The seepage salamander is an upland seeps species and does not owe its existence to the river. The area supports Hellbender populations, and there is a Southern Brook trout population in the headwaters; however, the presence of these species in this area is not outstanding within the region of comparison. Also, these species are not the best populations within the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports the Indiana bat (endangered) and one species of conservation concern, the Eastern Small-footed bat. However, the presence of these species here is not unique or outstanding within the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
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Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

LONG CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Robbinsville quad

From: Headwaters

To: Forest service boundary

Evaluated By: Cheoah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
A. <u>Free – Flowing</u>	YES
• Is the river free-flowing?	

Discussion:

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
B. <u>Scenery</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area contains the Trail of Tears; however, there is no specific feature for crossing and no current use.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

LOOKING GLASS CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Shining Rock quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with Davidson River

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Looking Glass Falls and Sliding Rock are both considered iconic attractions for the Pisgah Ranger District; however, except for these two features, the large majority of the creek can be characterized as unexceptional and/or routine in character. A sewage settling pond from Sliding Rock, excessive road noise, and numerous road construction support structures limit recreational appeal.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO

Discussion:

Looking Glass Creek features two iconic recreational destinations. Between 500,000 and 1 million visitors visit Looking Glass Falls, and Sliding Rock attracts between 200,000 and 400,000 visitors each year. Summer overflow crowds are common and visitation can be considered national, and frequently international. Large recreational developments with constructed access to the creek facilitates the high recreational use. The Forest Heritage Scenic Byway parallels the creek. Fishing and general water play is common. Paddling at Sliding Rock is prohibited by Supervisor Order.

With the exception of the two marquee features, the large majority of the creek can be characterized as unexceptional and/or routine in character. A sewage settling pond from Sliding Rock, excessive road noise, and numerous road construction support structures limit recreational appeal. In conclusion, while the two isolated features are noteworthy, the creek in its entirety or in segments does not meet the ORV threshold.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. The hellbender population in proximity to the area is located on a small section and is within the corridor of the currently eligible Davidson River Wild and Scenic river.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Additionally, the Rock gnome lichen is associated with rock outcrops not with the river itself.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

LOST COVE CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Grandfather Mountain and Newland quads

From: Headwaters (Newland quad)

To: Confluence of Gragg Prong (Grandfather Mountain quad)

Evaluated By: Grandfather Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Lost Cove Creek is a beautiful rocky mountain stream surrounded by cove hardwood forests. The stream highlights Hunt Fish Falls, however, the scenery is not unique or rare at the region of comparison and is similar to other locations in the Wilson Creek Watershed, including Upper Wilson Creek, Linville Gorge, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Lost Cove Creek area provides a back country experience but is only open for fly fishing. Lost Cove Creek provides swimming and hiking trails and campsites are available along the stream. Boating is limited to high water events only. Lost Cove Creek offers waterfall viewing and swimming for hikers at Hunt Fish Falls. However, the recreation is not unique or rare at the region of comparison and is similar to experiences on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Additionally, the Heller's blazing star is on a rock outcrop and not associated with the river.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the river, or area within the river corridor, contains important evidence of occupation or use by humans? Or, do sites may have national or regional importance for interpreting history? 	
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.	

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

MIDDLE CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC.

From: Headwaters

To: FS property line

Evaluated By: Appalachian Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Middle Creek flows in a natural condition with one armored trail crossing.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Middle Creek is managed in the Black Mountain Research Natural Area. However, the scenery is not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor does it consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	
There is a gated developed forest system road that serves as a trail head parking for the Buncombe Horse Trail that traverses the eastern section of Middle Creek. Other river related activities such as the use of small water craft, rafts, and kayaks are limited due to access, the river size and continuous high water flow. Recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, sightseeing, wildlife viewing and photography are available with seasonal variations. However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

MIDDLE PRONG OF WEST FORK PIGEON RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Sam Knob quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with West Fork Pigeon River

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Short segment of river that does not have outstanding scenic qualities and is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province.

The scenery is not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor is it considered a destination location. Wilson Creek and Linville River have larger gorges and comparable scenery and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The primary recreational opportunities associated with the river include fishing and non-motorized boating (rafting and kayaking). However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison. Additionally, higher quality paddling experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.	

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

OVERFLOW CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Highlands and Satolah quads

From: Confluence with East and West Forks of Overflow Creek (Highlands quad)

To: NC/GA state line (Satolah quad)

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public. Potential ORVs were reevaluated with a site visit in July 2021, which included the Forest Supervisor and District Ranger.

Date: May 02, 2017; updated July 2021

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

In response to public comment, the planning team revisited this segment's eligibility in July 2021. Based on a field review and specialists' input, it was determined that there are no scenery ORVs in this river segment. The original evaluation incorrectly identified a scenery ORV based on characteristics such as waterfalls and gorge features in the NC segment. These scenic features exist further downstream in GA on a river segment already determined to be eligible, however the July 2021 site visit confirmed they do not exist in NC.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Recreation activities include dispersed camping, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, and fishing. The river section in North Carolina provides backcountry fishing; however, these recreational opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

Additionally, comparable hiking, fishing, and paddling experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Wilson Creek.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion:

No ORVs exist for this segment.

In the 2020 proposed Plan, this river was found eligible with free-flowing conditions, a scenery ORV, and a scenic classification. Accuracy of the stated ORV and eligibility were revisited when public comments between draft and final requested that this segment be classified as wild. Based on the July 2021 field review and specialists’ input, it was determined there are no scenic features justifying an ORV within the evaluated river segment in NC, nor were any other ORVs identified. Therefore, this segment is not eligible.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

PANTHERTOWN CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Big Ridge quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence of Greenland Creek at the Tuckasegee River

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public. The stream was evaluated for potential ORVs in May 2017 and again in September 2022 with a site visit by the Deputy Forest Supervisor, District Ranger, and Forest Planner, and evaluated with specialist input from the forest botanist, forest recreation specialist and district aquatic biologist.

Date: May 02, 2017; updated November 1, 2022

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to this resource were identified during internal review. Although public comment claimed ORVs related to tannic-stained waters, the conclusion of a site visit in September 2022 and data from the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area; therefore, the original finding of no scenic ORV was confirmed.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

The primary recreational opportunities associated with the river include fishing and some kayaking. There are quite a few catch-and-release streams scattered around Western North Carolina. While public comments identify that Panthertown Creek is a location on the NC Fly Fishing Trail recognized by Jackson County, the Fly Fishing Trail location in Panthertown is just one of 15 locations in the county identified for having excellent fishing opportunities. The recreation opportunities at Panthertown Creek are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values of this resource were identified during internal review. Public comment suggested waterfalls may constitute an ORV, but waterfalls and other river-related geologic features on this segment are similar to many rivers and streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area and in other parts of the ROC. Other geologic features in the greater Panthertown area are not directly related to the river segment.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

While the Panthertown streams do exhibit excellent fish habitat, this is also not unique in the region of comparison. Within the Highland Domes geographic area of the forest there are at least 18 other streams with segments of low gradient, meandering channels with sandy substrate and tannic stained waters that support wild brook trout populations: Slatten Branch, Robinson Creek, Flat Creek, Cedar Creek, Silver Run Creek, Little Whitewater River, Jacks Creek, Nicolson Licklog Creek, Bad Creek, Scotsman Creek, Glade Creek, Little Creek, Edwards Creek, Blackrock Branch, Unnamed tributary of Chattooga River, Big Creek, Turtle Pond Creek, and Henson Branch.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
<p>Evaluation Step</p> <p>F. <u>Wildlife</u></p> <p>Discussion:</p> <p>The area supports several animal species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.</p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>NO</p>
<p>Evaluation Step</p> <p>G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u></p> <p>Discussion:</p> <p>Panthertown Bog is one of the largest and oldest bogs in the southern Appalachians; however, it lacks both animal and plant species diversity in comparison to the other Southern Appalachian bogs. Additionally, the Panthertown Bog does not have any federally listed species or regionally rare species, such as those present at Dulany Bog, The Pink Beds, Eller Seep, or McClure's Bog.</p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>NO</p>
<p>Evaluation Step</p> <p>H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u></p> <p>Discussion:</p> <p>No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.</p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>NO</p>
<p>Evaluation Step</p> <p>I. <u>Other Similar Values</u></p> <p>Discussion:</p> <p>No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to other resources were identified during internal review. Although public comment claimed ORVs related to tannic-stained waters, the conclusion of a site visit in September 2022 and data from the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area.</p> <p>Public comments raised that the presence of NC Outstanding Resource Waters as reason for eligibility, however, this does not equate to eligible status for National Wild and Scenic Rivers. The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality identifies ORWs as a subset of High Quality Waters, all across the state. There are several across the Nantahala and</p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>NO</p>

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

Pisgah National Forest, including the following other streams on the Nantahala NF, which include both eligible and ineligible WSR streams: Buck Creek, upper Nantahala River, Overflow Creek, Fires Creek, Big Creek, Scotsmans Creek, Panthertown Creek, Greenland Creek, Little Green Creek and the Upper Tuckasegee River. Recognition as a state-identified ORW for the purposes of managing surface water quality does not equate to being recognized as a having and outstanding remarkable characteristics across the Southern Appalachians in the context of the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

ROARING CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Carvers Gap quad;

From: Headwaters

To: FS property line

Evaluated By: Appalachian Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Additionally, the Golden-winged warbler does not owe its existence to the river.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

NO

Discussion:

The area supports Gray's lily; however, the Gray's lily not associated with river.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

The river corridor contains the Over Mountain Victory Trail; however, the significant historical features in this area are not river-dependent nor do they owe their location or existence to the presence of the river.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

ROCK CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Celo and Mount Mitchell quads

From: Headwaters (Mount Mitchell quad)

To: FS property line north of Maple Bald Creek (Celo quad)

Evaluated By: Appalachian Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

The scenery on the southeastern section of Rock Creek consists of mature and immature timber, rhododendron, and other shrub species typical of the area. There is a gated developed forest road system that parallels Rock Creek and is used for administrative purposes limiting negative intrusions. The area has been historically managed for wildlife and early successional habitat thus creating seasonal variations in the diverse young and older vegetation. The northwestern section of Rock Creek is private property with multiple private dwellings located on or near the creek. The private dwellings are primarily vacant during the winter months and occupied spring through fall season with moderate intrusions. There are many other mountain creeks and rivers that offer similar, if not better, scenic opportunities.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	
Rock Creek offers some recreational opportunities but not that of high quality that would attract visitors throughout or beyond the region specific to river related activities. Other river related activities such as the use of small water craft, rafts, and kayaks are limited due to the river size and continuous high water flow. Recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, sightseeing and photography are available with seasonal variations. Wildlife viewing may be limited due to foot travel on developed forest system road and private property bordering the northwestern portion of Rock Creek.	
Forest product collection such as Galax is very popular in the area and has resulted in random user created trails. There are many other mountain creeks and rivers that offer similar, if not better, recreational opportunities.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

SASSAFRAS CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Marble and Santeetlah quads

From: Headwaters (Marble quad)

To: Confluence with Snowbird Creek (Santeetlah quad)

Evaluated By: Cheoah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

The area supports Southern Brook Trout; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
------------------------	-----------------

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

SHINING CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Dunsmore Mountain quad

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with East Fork of Pigeon River

Evaluated By: Pisgah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Shining Creek is a wilderness stream with nice scenery; however, the scenery along the river is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province and it is not outstanding at the region of comparison. The scenery is not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor is it considered a destination location. Wilson Creek and Linville River have larger gorges. Additionally, comparable scenery and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

The primary river-related recreational opportunity associated with the river is hiking. However, this opportunity is not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor does it consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison. Higher quality recreation experiences can be found on other rivers such as Linville River, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater River.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
Shining Creek contains no known associated cultural resources. It is within a larger cultural and traditional landscape; however, there are no locatable unique, rare, or significant prehistoric or historic resources in this corridor.	

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

SLICKROCK CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Tapoco and Whiteoak Flats quads;

From: Headwaters (Whiteoak Flats quad)

To: Confluence with Cheoah River (Tapoco quad)

Evaluated By: Cheoah Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Scenery along Slickrock Creek and throughout the Slickrock Creek watershed is considered typical for the Southern Appalachian Physiographic Province. Slickrock Creek supports a riparian forest vegetative community, including dense thickets of *Rhododendron maximum*. This forest type limits the field of view for persons engaged in recreation along the creek. Primary access to the creek is provided by the Slickrock Creek backcountry hiking trail which offers limited fields of view due to vegetation along both sides of the trail. The trail has few access points that provide visitors with expansive vistas.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	
Discussion:	NO
The primary river-related recreational opportunities associated with Slickrock Creek include recreational fishing, camping, hiking, and hunting. However, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context, nor do they consistently attract visitors from throughout or beyond the Southern Appalachian region of comparison.	
Additionally, Slickrock Creek has very little potential to provide recreational settings for national or regional usage or competitive events, and is not considered a destination location for these types of activities.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	
Discussion:	NO
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	
Discussion:	NO
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	
Discussion:	NO
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	
Discussion:	NO
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

SPRING CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Hot Springs quad

From: Headwaters

To: FS property line north of Squirrel Branch

Evaluated By: Appalachian Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

The Spring Creek area contains a steep wall gorge on the east and west side with limited access and intrusions to the river corridor. State Highway 209 is a scenic byway that borders Spring Creek to the west with two road side vistas to view Spring Creek. However, these features are not unique or rare on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Comparable scenery and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	NO
Discussion:	
Spring Creek offers some recreational opportunities, but not of high quality that would attract visitors throughout or beyond the region specific to river- related activities. There are segments of Spring Creek that support class III and IV rapids, especially during high water events, but they're not consistent enough throughout the river corridor for a high quality experience. Other recreational opportunities found in the area include fishing, hunting, and wildlife observation. However, these features are not unique or rare on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison and comparable recreation can be found on other rivers such as Linville River, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater River.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. The Hellbender species is found in the lower French Broad, which is a currently eligible Wild and Scenic river.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	
Discussion:	NO

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	
Discussion:	NO

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
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Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

TALLULAH RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Hightower Bald and Rainbow Springs quads

From: Headwaters (Rainbow Springs quad)

To: NC/Georgia border

Evaluated By: Tusquitee Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their populations do not owe their existence to the river and are not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports Rock gnome lichen; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked “YES”; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO
Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.	

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

TANASEE CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Lake Toxaway and Sam Knob quads

From: Headwaters (Sam Knob quad)

To: FS property line (Lake Toxaway quad)

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Scenery representation of the area is common in most of the rivers in the region of comparison and on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs. Cullasaja Falls, Linville Falls, Whiteoak Creek Falls, and Whitewater Falls are more scenic waterfalls within the area.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

The primary recreational opportunities associated with the river include camping, hiking, fishing, and non-motorized boating; however, these opportunities are not considered unique, rare, or exemplary in a regional or national context. Comparable recreational experiences can be found on other rivers such as Chattooga River, Davidson River, Linville River, Nantahala River, Nolichucky River, and Ocoee River.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.	NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

TUCKASEGEE RIVER

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Big Ridge and Lake Toxaway quads. For the purposes of this evaluation, the river has been divided into the upper and lower segments described below.

Upper Segment:

From/To: The upper segment begins at the confluence of Greenland and Panthertown Creeks and ends at the FS boundary northeast of Devil’s Elbow. (Big Ridge quad)

Lower Segment:

From/To: The lower segment begins at the FS boundary below Tanasee Lake Dam, runs through Bonas Defeat Gorge, and ends at the FS boundary above Bear Lake. (Lake Toxaway quad)

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public in May 2017. Status of the lower segment was updated in February 2018. A review of potential ORVs on the upper segment was conducted again in September 2022 with a site visit by the Deputy Forest Supervisor, District Ranger, and Forest Planner and evaluated with specialist input from the forest botanist, forest recreation specialist and district aquatic biologist.

Date: May 02, 2017; lower segment updated February 1, 2018; upper segment updated November 1, 2022

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

YES

The upper segment is free flowing.

The lower segment is not free-flowing. This segment through Bonas Defeat Gorge is “dewatered” as a result of water diversion for hydroelectric power generation. No further evaluation of the lower segment was performed, as it is not free flowing (status updated February 2018).

NO

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
B. <u>Scenery</u>	
Discussion:	NO

Upper segment:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to this resource were identified during internal review. Although public comment claimed ORVs related to tannic-stained waters, the conclusion of a site visit in September 2022 and data from the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams and rivers have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area; therefore, the original finding of no scenic ORV was confirmed.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
C. <u>Recreation</u>	
Discussion:	NO

Upper segment:

This river segment is not a recreation destination compared to other rivers within the Southern Appalachian ROC. This is confirmed by FS recreation specialists. As of 11/1/2022 the river description on American Whitewater website says this river segment *“is often overlooked, simply because of the fact that it is located amidst such a plethora of whitewater options”* and that *“there are few people who have boated this section.”*

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	
Discussion:	NO

Upper segment:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values of this resource were identified during internal review. Public comment suggested waterfalls may constitute an ORV, but waterfalls and other river-related geologic features on this segment are similar to many rivers and streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area and in other parts of the ROC. Other geologic features in the greater Panthertown area are not directly related to the river segment.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	
Discussion:	NO

Upper segment:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	
Discussion:	NO

Upper segment:

The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	
Discussion:	NO

Upper segment:

Botanically, the FS recognizes the high-quality habitat for rock gnome lichen, a federally endangered species, in the Devil's Elbow area. As a result of this concentration, this location is recognized in the revised plan as a Special Interest Area Management Area. However, from a Wild and Scenic River perspective, the area is not as botanically diverse or rich with rare species as other gorges in the region of comparison including Cullasaja River, Linville Gorge, the Chattooga River and Whitewater River, all of which have greater concentration of rare bryophytes, liverworts, and mosses.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	
Discussion:	NO

Upper segment:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

Upper segment:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to other resources were identified during internal review. Although public comment claimed ORVs related to tannic-stained waters, the conclusion of a site visit in September 2022 and data from the Nantahala zone fisheries biologist indicated that Panthertown Valley streams have similar characteristics of tannic-stained waters along with 18 other streams in the Highland Domes Geographic Area.

Public comments raised that the presence of NC Outstanding Resource Waters as reason for eligibility, however, this does not equate to eligible status for National Wild and Scenic Rivers. The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality identifies ORWs as a subset of High Quality Waters, all across the state. There are several across the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest, including the following other streams on the Nantahala NF, which include both eligible and ineligible WSR streams: Buck Creek, upper Nantahala River, Overflow Creek, Fires Creek, Big Creek, Scotsmans Creek, Panthertown Creek, Greenland Creek, Little Green Creek and the Upper Tuckasegee River. Recognition as a state-identified ORW for the purposes of managing surface water quality does not equate to being recognized as a having and outstanding remarkable characteristics across the Southern Appalachians in the context of the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

WATERFALL CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Craggy Pinnacle and Montreat quads

From: Headwaters

To: Confluence with Carter Creek

Evaluated By: Appalachian Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

Waterfall Creek offers hikers views of Douglas Falls as well as other cascading drops. However, these features are not unique or rare on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison. Comparable, if not of higher quality, scenery and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

Waterfall Creek offers hikers views of Douglas Falls as well as other cascading drops. The creek is a popular waterfall viewing destination for visitors to the immensely popular Craggy Gardens area on the Blue Ridge Parkway. However, these features are not unique or rare on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison and comparable, if not of higher quality, recreation and waterfalls can be found on other rivers such as Linville Gorge, Wilson Creek, and Whitewater Falls.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports rare species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
I. <u>Other Similar Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

Yes or No

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

WAYAH CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. –Wayah Bald quad
From: Border of Forest Service ownership on Wayah Bald quad (intermixed with private ownership)

To: Confluence with Jarrett Creek

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public.

Date: May 02, 2017

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

D. Geology

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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E. Fish

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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F. Wildlife

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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G. Vegetative/Ecological Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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H. Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural

NO

Discussion:

The area contains the Trail of Tears and Rutherford Trace; however, there is no specific feature for crossing and no current use.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
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I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. <u>ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS</u>	Yes or No
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If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.

Evaluation Form for Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Nantahala and Pisgah NFs

WEST FORK OVERFLOW CREEK

River Segment Reviewed: Entire reach on Forest Service property in NC. – Highlands and Scaly Mountain quads

From: Headwaters (Scaly Mountain quad)

To: Confluence of Overflow Creek (Highlands quad)

Evaluated By: Nantahala Ranger District and interdisciplinary team specialists with input from the public. Reviewed again by interdisciplinary team in November 2022, which confirmed original findings.

Date: May 02, 2017; updated November 1, 2022

I. ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

A. Free – Flowing

YES

- Is the river free-flowing?

Discussion:

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

B. Scenery

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable values related to this resource were identified during internal reviews in May 2017 and again in November 2022. There was public input suggesting this stream possessed scenic ORVs, but the planning team did not agree. The stream characteristics and waterfalls are similar to many others in the Southern Appalachian ROC.

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

C. Recreation

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

Evaluation Step	Yes / No
D. <u>Geology</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
E. <u>Fish</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
F. <u>Wildlife</u>	NO
Discussion:	
The area supports species; however, their population abundance is not exemplary on the Nantahala and Pisgah NFs or at the region of comparison.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
G. <u>Vegetative/Ecological Values</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	
Evaluation Step	Yes / No
H. <u>Heritage Resources – Historic and Cultural</u>	NO
Discussion:	
No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.	

Evaluation Step

Yes / No

I. Other Similar Values

NO

Discussion:

No unique or outstandingly remarkable river-related values related to this resource were identified during internal and public review.

II. ANALYSIS OF ELIGIBILITY COMPONENTS

No or Yes

If the river segment is free-flowing and one or more outstandingly remarkable value items are checked "YES"; then the river area is eligible for designation.

NO

Conclusion: No ORVs exist for this segment. Not eligible for designation.