

# Wilderness and Other Special Designations

## Inventoried Roadless Area Finding

1. The 2001 Inventoried Roadless Areas are not identified in the current Forest Plan, nor are they accounted for within the existing Management Area designations.
2. Approximately 87% of inventoried roadless areas overlap with areas that are currently unsuitable for timber production.

## Special Interest Area Finding

1. There are 40 special interest areas (Management Area 13) identified in the 1987 Forest Plan and identified for registration by the NC Natural Heritage Program. Special Interest Areas have not been reevaluated for unique attributes since the 1987 Forest Plan.

## Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas Finding

1. The Nantahala and Pisgah NFs have six Wilderness Areas. Non-native invasive species and overuse are impacting wilderness characteristics in some areas.
2. Of the five Congressionally designated Wilderness Study Areas, three of them have been recommended for Wilderness designation. These include Happy Creek, Lost Cove, and Caggy Mountain.

## Wild and Scenic River Finding

1. Suitability studies have not been conducted on eight of the nine rivers that were determined eligible in the 1987 Forest Plan. Wison Creek was Congressionally designated as a Wild and Scenic River in 2000.



# What does the 1987 Plan say?

## Inventoried Roadless Areas:

1. The 1987 Plan does not account for the Inventoried Roadless Areas, as they did not exist when it was developed.

## Special Interest Areas:

1. These lands are managed to protect, and where appropriate, foster public use and enjoyment of unique scenic, geological, botanical or zoological attributes. All of the special interest areas are classified as not selected for timber production and not available for use by vehicles commonly classified as "off-road vehicles".

## Wilderness Study Areas:

1. Wilderness Study Areas are managed to protect wilderness attributes, until Congress determines whether or not to include them in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

## Wild and Scenic Rivers

1. Provide interim protection for eligible rivers which are recommended for future study by precluding management activities whose effects could preclude the potential classification. Continue interim protection through the study period and until the rivers are designated or released from consideration.

Eligible rivers include

- Nolchucky River
- Wilson Creek (designated in 2000)
- Nantahala River
- Snowbird Creek
- Mills River System
- Davidson River
- East Fork Pigeon River
- Linville River
- Tellico River