



Molalla River Alliance

www.molallariveralliance.org | PO Box 727, Molalla, OR 97038

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: John Atkins, 503-686-1788

President Signs Bill to Include Molalla in National Wild and Scenic River System

Today the Molalla River officially became a federal Wild and Scenic River, capping an 11-year campaign spearheaded by the Molalla River Alliance.

President Trump's signature on S.47, the Natural Resources Management Act, adds the Molalla to the nation's Wild and Scenic River System and gives federal protection to thousands of acres of natural areas across America.

"This is a landmark achievement, bringing together Democrats and Republicans alike to conserve our nation's standout natural treasures permanently," said John Atkins, president of the Molalla River Alliance.

All of the Wild and Scenic designation on the Molalla is along undeveloped property managed by the Bureau of Land Management for recreational purposes. That will continue under the new law.

The omnibus public lands act includes the Oregon Wildlands Act, sponsored by Oregon Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley. Besides making the Molalla a Wild and Scenic River, it:

- Adds 250 miles of salmon and steelhead spawning tributaries of the Rogue River, along with other Oregon rivers, to the National Wild and Scenic River System--protecting them from future development, logging or mining on a permanent basis.
- Creates a 30,000-acre Devil's Staircase Wilderness in the Oregon Coast Range.
- Provides permanent protection for the Chetco River, a haven for endangered salmon, in southern Oregon.
- Creates a Wild Steelhead Special Management area on the North Umpqua River in honor of Oregon conservationists Frank and Jeanne Moore.
- Strengthens efforts by the BLM to protect Crooked River Ranch from catastrophic wildfire by releasing nearby acreage designated as a wilderness study area for active management.

In a rare show of bipartisan action, the House voted 363 yes to 62 no to pass the public lands bill on Feb. 26, following a 92-to-8 vote in the Senate two weeks earlier. The Molalla River nomination was championed in the House by Rep. Kurt Schrader, who has been a consistent supporter of Wild and Scenic protection for the upper Molalla over the past five congressional sessions. The Wild and Scenic designation covers a 21-mile stretch of the upper Molalla River from the Glen Avon Bridge to a point 21 miles upstream on the Table Rock Fork of the river—all under the care of the Bureau of Land Management.

“These congressional leaders deserve our lasting thanks for their persistent efforts over many years to achieve this victory,” Atkins said.,

The Natural Resources Management Act incorporates dozens of individual conservation bills sponsored by Democrats and Republicans from nearly every state. It also permanently extends the Land and Water Conservation Act, passed by Congress in 1965, which provide funds and matching grants to federal, state and local governments to acquire land and water resources for permanent protection.

The Molalla River Alliance is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization working to preserve the water quality of the Molalla, sustain its wildlife, fish and plants, and promote a safe and healthy environment that offers recreational opportunities for all.

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