

## **Wild and Scenic River Act – Outrage**

Like most that have experienced unbalanced reporting, I considered letting my frustration pass and simply get back to work. However, your reporter Geoffrey Plant deserves public acknowledgment for his inability to offer unmanipulated reporting to your readers. In explanation of my statement, Mr. Plant took the time, Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, to travel to Cliff, committed in listening to a presentation on W&SRA. By evenings end his decisions, as confirmed in his article the next morning, reflected inaccurate reporting on the presenter, compounded by cherry picking which factual topics to share with your readers.

While listening to the presentation content Mr. Plant ignored numerous meaningful risks, to NM citizens, should our rivers be designated Wild and Scenic. Instead focusing on ambiguous points regarding property condemnation, while blatantly misquoting the presenter apparently with intention to move forward his agenda. While I could argue his position on condemnation of private property under the act, I'll again simply state what is true.

The fact is 72 acres of private property have been “acquired in fee” through condemnation under W&SRA in NM. Additionally, over 29, 000 acres of land condemned by easements, has been experienced nationwide, all under W&SRA. Yes, condemnation is a reality and a risk. It is unfortunate that Mr. Plant’s reporting also chose to isolate your readers from additional facts and risks which were presented. A partial list is shown below for your readers information.

1. Each designated river also draws into consideration all tributaries associated with the river. Greatly expanding the designated areas risking private land and water rights.
2. Risk of condemnation or zoning control to all private properties, cities or boroughs, both above and below the designated river section that could/would affect the meaning of W&SRA and river management.
3. Risk of forced abandonment of water rights, along with potential condemnation of water rights.
4. Overlay of Federal law forcing state and local governments to transfer local land and water control to the Federal government.
5. Senators Heinrich and Udall’s single sided actions in support of W&SRA:
  - a. Allowing NM Wild to write the very legislation that threatens to take control of NM land and water
  - b. Publicly supporting those organizations which promote W&SRA without stating all the facts and risks associated with the act.
  - c. Allowing Arizona to inherit, by default, 14,000-acre feet of water flowing into that state which AWSA agrees belongs to NM. While resisting to acknowledge the millions of dollars in value that the water represents to NM.
6. Historically W&SRA offers a path of entry for law suits by organizations wanting to force their own agenda onto all citizens.

I challenge this papers editor to pick-up his ethics and publish this editorial, while insisting his reporter offer full coverage rather than writing only those facts he identifies with.

It's my firm belief that your readers are intelligent and deserving of the complete story coverage and do not need to be swayed by reporting bias, rather offer all presented statements in an article allowing independent decisions to be drawn.

Haydn Forward presenter W&SRA