

Public Law 107-365

107th Congress

An Act

To designate certain waterways in the Caribbean National Forest in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

Dec. 19, 2002
[H.R. 3954]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Caribbean National Forest Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 2002”.

Caribbean
National Forest
Wild and Scenic
Rivers Act of
2002.
16 USC 1271
note.

SEC. 2. WILD AND SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATIONS, CARIBBEAN NATIONAL FOREST, PUERTO RICO.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) In the revised land and resource management plan for the Caribbean National Forest/Luquillo Experimental Forest, approved April 17, 1997, and the environmental impact statement prepared as part of the plan, the Secretary of Agriculture examined the suitability of rivers within the Caribbean National Forest/Luquillo Experimental Forest for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

(2) Based on such examination, the Rio Icacos, Rio Mameyes, and Rio de La Mina were found to be free flowing waterways and to possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geological, hydrological, biological, historical, and cultural values, and, therefore, to qualify for addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

(b) DESIGNATIONS.—Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(____) RIVERS OF CARIBBEAN NATIONAL FOREST, PUERTO RICO.—

“(A) RIO MAMEYES.—The segment of approximately 4.5 miles from its headwaters in the Baño de Oro Research Natural Area to the boundary of the Caribbean National Forest, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture as follows:

“(i) As a wild river from its headwaters in the Baño de Oro Research Natural Area to the crossing point of Trail No. 24/11 (approximately 500 feet upstream from the confluence with the Rio de La Mina), a total of approximately 2.1 miles.

“(ii) As a scenic river from the crossing point of Trail No. 24/11 to the access point of Trail No. 7, a total of approximately 1.4 miles.

“(iii) As a recreational river from the access point of Trail No. 7 to the national forest boundary, a total of approximately 1.0 miles.

“(B) RIO DE LA MINA.—The segment of approximately 2.1 miles from its headwaters to its confluence with the Rio Mameyes, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture as follows:

“(i) As a recreational river from its headwaters in the El Yunque Recreation Area downstream to La Mina Falls, a total of approximately 0.9 miles.

“(ii) As a scenic river from La Mina falls downstream to its confluence with the Rio Mameyes, a total of approximately 1.2 miles.

“(C) RIO ICACOS.—The segment of approximately 2.3 miles from its headwaters to the boundary of the Caribbean National Forest, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture as a scenic river.”.

(c) SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS.—

(1) CERTAIN PERMITTED ACTIVITIES.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amendment made by the subsection (b) and the applicability of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to the river segments added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System by the amendment shall not be construed to prevent any of the following activities within the boundaries of the river segments:

(A) Installation and maintenance of hydrologic, meteorological, climatological, or atmospheric data collection and transmission facilities, or any combination of such facilities, when the Secretary of Agriculture determines that such facilities are essential to the scientific research purposes of the Luquillo Experimental Forest.

(B) Construction and maintenance of nesting structures, observation blinds, and population monitoring platforms for threatened and endangered species.

(C) Construction and maintenance of trails to such facilities as necessary for research purposes and for the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

(2) CONDITIONS.—The activities authorized by paragraph (1) shall be subject to such conditions as the Secretary considers desirable. The Secretary shall ensure that the scale and scope of such activities within the boundaries of a river segment added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System by the amendment made by the subsection (b) are not detrimental to the characteristics of the river segment that merited its designation as a wild, scenic, or recreational river.

(d) PRESERVATION OF COMMONWEALTH AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section or the amendment made by this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the Commonwealth of Puerto

Rico over waters and natural channels of public domain pursuant to the laws of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Approved December 19, 2002.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 3954:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 107-441 (Comm. on Resources).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 148 (2002):
May 7, considered and passed House.
Nov. 19, considered and passed Senate.

