

BREITENBUSH WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

Santiam Basin | Marion County | Proposed Miles: 51.6 | Willamette National Forest
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Deemed eligible as a Wild & Scenic River, the Breitenbush River and its major forks and tributaries is about as wild and scenic as they come in western Oregon. Outstanding values of recreation, water quality, scenery, and wildlife habitat are just some in need of protected status in this beautiful watershed.

Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the Breitenbush River

RECREATION: The wild streams in this proposal offer excellent whitewater paddling opportunities on several segments, including on French Creek and the river's mainstem. Hiking trails like the South Fork Breitenbush Gorge National Scenic Trail and along the mainstem, and others that connect to the Mount Jefferson Wilderness are popular, and there are other stellar opportunities for camping, recreational driving, photography, fishing, and seeking solitude. Visitors to the popular hot springs in and near Breitenbush Hot Springs and Resort get to experience one of the most unique and beautiful areas in the Cascades.

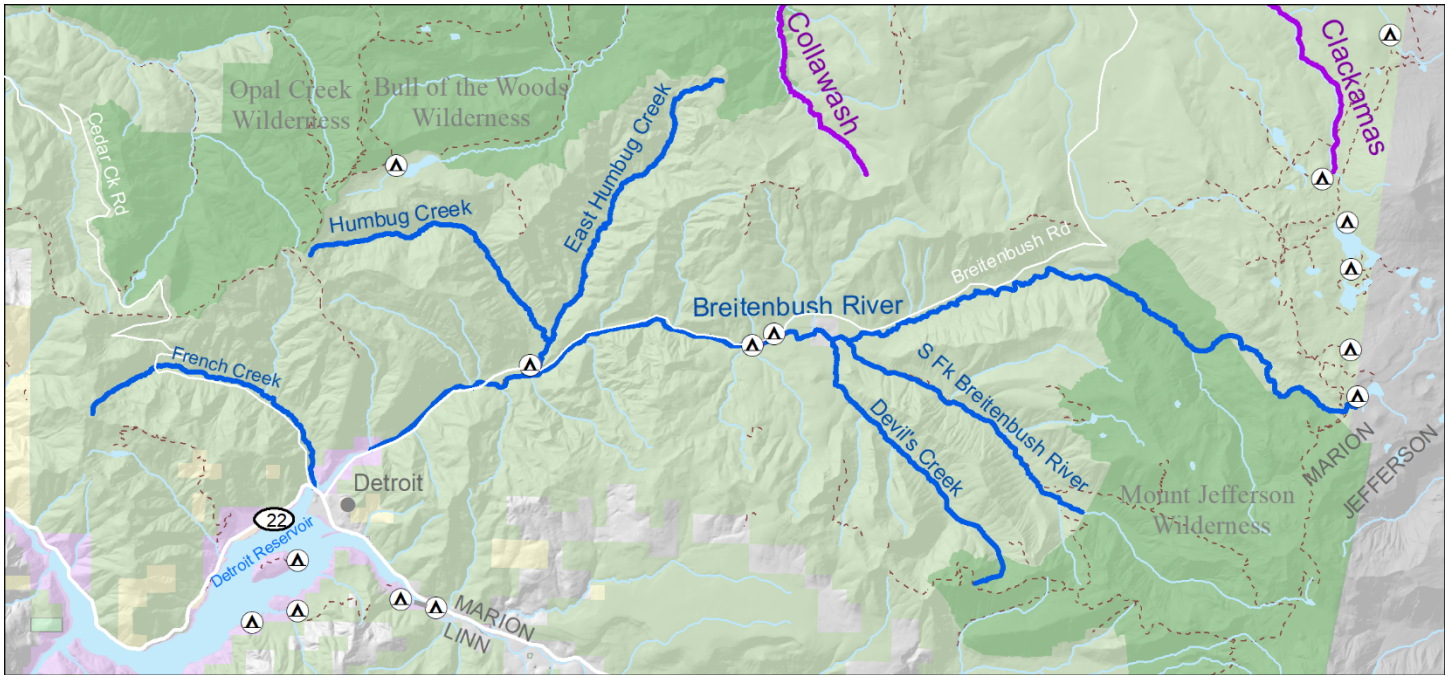
SCENERY: The Breitenbush scenic corridor, deemed the West Cascades Scenic Byway and the Cascading Rivers Scenic Bikeway, connects with the higher elevation Olallie Lakes Scenic Special Interest Area into the Clackamas basin to the north. The ancient forests, waterfalls, wild river gorges, and mountain views make this area simply spectacular.

FISH: Despite the blockage of Detroit and Big Cliff Dams, the Breitenbush River and tributaries like Humbug Creek are important habitat for spring Chinook salmon, coastal cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and winter steelhead.

WILDLIFE: The Breitenbush watershed offers plenty of high quality habitat for old growth-forest dependent species like northern spotted owls, as well as for deer and elk. Some areas burned in 2017 fires are recovering naturally and offering important, and rare, habitat for woodpeckers and other native wildlife.

WILDNESS: The forks of the Breitenbush flow off the slopes of Mt. Jefferson through pristine forest and mountainous terrain and the USFS has deemed these rivers eligible for Wild & Scenic status. While past logging has fragmented some of the landscape within the proposed stream corridors, most are quite intact, wild, and ecologically important connections for climate adaptation and migration.

ECOLOGICAL & GEOLOGICAL: The wild nature of the North and South Fork Breitenbush rivers have led to some of the most dynamic stream channels, structures, and forests in the region. Old growth forests dominate much of this landscape along steep walled canyons - offering a series of ecological marvels. Natural hot springs are found along the Breitenbush



River.

Proposed Breitenbush Wild and Scenic River Segments

<i>Segment Name</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Classification</i>	<i>Outstandingly Remarkable Values</i>
Mainstem, Upper	0.2 Miles	Recreational	Recreation, scenic, wildlife, fish, geological
Mainstem, Lower	9.1 Miles	Recreational	Recreation, scenic, wildlife, fish, geological
North Fork Breitenbush	11.9 Miles	Scenic	Recreation, scenic, geologic
South Fork Breitenbush	5.8 Miles	Scenic	Scenic, wildlife, recreation, ecological
Devils Creek	6.1 Miles	Scenic	Recreation, wildlife, ecological
French Creek	5.8 Miles	Recreational	Recreation
Humbug Creek	6.4 Miles	Scenic	Recreation, fish
East Fork Humbug Creek	6.5 Miles	Scenic	Recreation
Total	51.6 miles		

SUPPORT: This proposal is supported by Friends of the Douglas-fir National Monument, American Whitewater, Oregon Wild, and other coalition partners. The Breitenbush Hot Springs Resort and Conference Center may be supportive of this designation.

THREATS/ISSUES: A large-scale logging project called “Hwy 46” is currently in the implementation stage on the Willamette National Forest in this area that may lead to some scenic, recreational, and wildlife disturbance. The Breitenbush Resort community was concerned that designation of the river would negatively impact their water rights and hydrological power production. Legislative language has been drafted to ensure this community can continue existing uses.

PRIVATE LANDS: Friends of the Breitenbush Cascades, the community that runs the Breitenbush Hot Springs Resort and Conference Center, own an inholding along the mainstem Breitenbush and the immediate confluence area of the North Fork and South Fork rivers. This proposal has excluded this property.

PRIMARY REFERENCES:

[Breitenbush Watershed Analysis](#). 1996. Willamette National Forest

[Nationwide Rivers Inventory](#), National Park Service

USDA Forest Service. undated. Candidate Wild and Scenic River Profile Report

America's Scenic Byways <https://scenicbyways.info/state/OR.html>

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Opportunity Areas (website)

<http://www.oregonconservationstrategy.org/conservation-opportunity-areas/>

Willamette National Forest Management Plan. 1990.

https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/willamette/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fse_006005