

# NORTH SANTIAM WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

As proposed in the River Democracy Act of 2021

Santiam Basin | Linn and Marion County | Proposed Miles: 26.9 | Willamette National Forest  
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North Santiam River © David Stone

The North Fork Santiam River, deemed an eligible Wild & Scenic River by the USFS, has amazing scenic, recreational, fish and wildlife, and water quality values important to protect. One of its main tributaries, Whitewater Creek, flows out of the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness and adds important fish and water quality values to the mix.

## What makes the North Santiam River and its tributaries special?

**RECREATION:** The upper North Santiam is a popular recreation destination for intermediate to advanced whitewater paddlers, bicycling, fishing, and camping, and the corridor offers access to numerous hiking trails in both the high Cascades and Mt. Jefferson Wilderness, and in the western Cascades. Birders utilize the area on the Mt. Jefferson Loop of the Cascades Birding Trail.

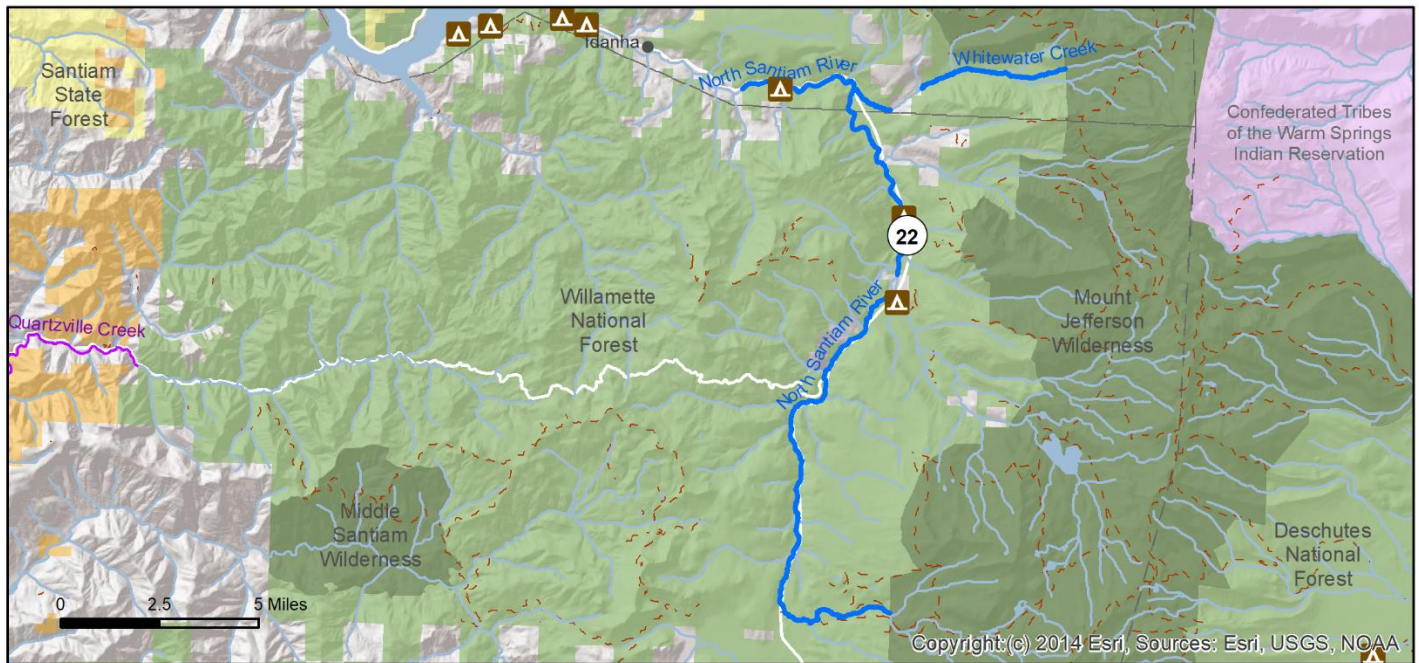
**SCENERY:** The North Santiam River flows alongside the West Cascades Scenic Byway (also known as Hwy 22 or the Santiam Hwy), a major route through the Cascades. The river's canyon, forests, and water make this route incredibly scenic as it climbs in elevation - with views of Mount Jefferson and other Cascade peaks. Back roads also lead to spectacular views and scenic waterfalls.

**FISH:** Though historic native salmon and steelhead runs are impeded by Detroit and Big Cliff dams, the North Santiam is still home to spring Chinook salmon, native cutthroat trout, kokanee salmon, and other native trout populations important for the recreational fishery.

**WILDLIFE:** The North Santiam corridor is vital for many wildlife - connecting low to high elevations, offering diverse habitat for raptors like osprey along the river, and including diverse forest habitat and structure like those along Whitewater Creek recovering naturally from a 2017 fire.

**WATER QUALITY:** The upper North Santiam is sourced from high in the Cascades, making its water pure and cold and an excellent source of water for downstream fish, recreation, and drinking. Whitewater Creek also flows out of the Mount Jefferson Wilderness, fresh off Whitewater Glacier, and is an extremely good source of cold, clean water for the North Santiam.

## Proposed North Santiam Wild and Scenic River Segments



<i>Segment Name</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Proposed Classification</i>
<b>Mainstem, Upper</b>	3.4 Miles	Scenic
<b>Mainstem, Middle</b>	9.0 Miles	Recreational
<b>Mainstem, Lower</b>	9.5 Miles	Recreational
<b>Whitewater Creek, Upper</b>	4.0 Miles	Scenic
<b>Whitewater Creek, Lower</b>	1.0 Miles	Recreational
Total	26.9 miles	

The Lionshead Fire of 2020 burned along several miles of the proposed North Santiam Wild & Scenic River. Natural recovery of the forests in the river corridor will add to the scenic and wildlife values in the area. Unfortunately the watershed is threatened by roadside and other post-fire logging.

This proposal is supported by Friends of the Douglas-fir National Monument, Oregon Wild, American Whitewater and other Oregon Wild & Scenic River Coalition partners.