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Why Not a Colorado National Riverway?

A much-debated program of expanding the national park system—given impetus by Interior Secretary Udall's enthusiasm for the plan—includes the Ozark Rivers area in southeast Missouri.

Since 1961 various bills have been on file in Congress for preserving about 94,000 acres along the Current and Jacks Fork as a national monument, administered by the National Park Service. For all practical purposes a national monument is a little national park with almost identical restrictions and rules.

NOW THE MISSOURI congressional delegation and conservation spokesmen are united behind a bill to substitute the name "Ozark National Rivers" for national monument. The St. Louis Post-Dis-

patch reports Agriculture Secretary Freeman has instructed the Forest Service, in his department, "to refrain from bureaucratic competition for the project." The Forest Service currently administers the public land in the area.

If the Ozarks area is made a national riverway it will come under the newly created national recreation area system of the National Park Service. This category includes national seashores, of which there are now three, lakeshores, waterways and recreation demonstration areas.

A **CABINET-LEVEL** recreation advisory council, which set criteria for selecting such national recreation areas, emphasized that outdoor recreation should be their dominant or primary purpose. "If natural resources in addition to the recreation facilities are utilized, such use should be compatible with the recreation mission, and under no conditions significantly detrimental," the council added.

Nevertheless, national recreation areas will be administered under less rigid rules than are enforced in true national parks. So far as we know, the Ozarks area is the first to be presented to Congress for classification as a national riverway. A preliminary congressional study two years ago listed the Green, San Juan and Colorado rivers in Utah, the middle fork of the Salmon, the Snake and the Selway in Idaho and the Yampa in Colorado and others as possible national riverways.

There are other straws in the wind that Interior Department officials and others interested are bowing to realities—in shaping up future additions to the national park system.

While there may be objections and technical obstacles, designation of most of the Colorado and Green River systems throughout Utah as a national riverway might be a compromise solution to controversies over these near-wilderness streams.

Already the Glen Canyon National Recreation area extends 186 miles northeastward from the Utah-Arizona line to the vicinity of Cataract Canyon.

The proposed Canyonlands National Park would include the confluence of the Colorado and Green Rivers and extend along the Green to the present Deadhorse Point State Park, west of Moab. The Green River has no special designation from Deadhorse Point to the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation, which it traverses on the west. Surely there would be no serious opposition to national riverway designation of this stretch, and the 50 odd miles from the reservation to Dinosaur National Monument. About 25 or 30 miles northwest of Dinosaur (as the hawk flies) is the boundary of Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area which extends north 60 miles (91 miles of shoreline) to the vicinity of Green River, Wyoming.

THE COLORADO RIVER, with headwaters in the Grand Lake area of Colorado, flows into Utah at Westwater, past Arches National Monument and Moab and down to the confluence with the Green. Between Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona are 40 odd miles of Colorado River through Marble Canyon.

Is there any reason why these streams could not be designated as a national riverway, at least those segments not already under national park administration, or otherwise set aside for special public use?

CRATERS OF THE MOON
NATIONAL MONUMENT
ARCO, IDAHO

Colorado National Riverway
Arches National Monument