

# Measure 17-72 Josephine County

Referred to the People by Josephine County Board of Commissioners

## 17-72

**Advisory Question on the Rogue River's Proposed Federal Designation**

**QUESTION:** In your opinion, should Congress designate 63 additional miles of the Rogue River as a Wild and Scenic River?

**SUMMARY:** The outcome of the election on this advisory question will not be binding. It will provide information to the Board of County Commissioners while the Board formulates policy.

In 2015, The United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposed to designate an additional 63 miles of the Rogue River, extending from Lost Creek Lake in Jackson County to the Applegate River in Josephine County, under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The entire section of the Rogue River that is located in Josephine County would then be designated under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could affect public and private property that is located within one quarter mile of the riverbanks. The BLM has estimated that the new designation could apply to 19,798 acres of property in Josephine and Jackson Counties. Of that, the BLM has estimated that 17,005 acres are privately owned.

### Explanatory Statement

The segment of the Rogue River extending from the mouth of the Applegate River downstream to the Lobster Creek Bridge, near the coast, is already included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system through Public Law 90-542 (1968). That law intended to preserve the character of the area within a quarter-mile of the Rogue River. The vast majority of the land within the existing corridor is publicly owned and is managed by the federal government.

Based upon a recent Suitability Report from the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the BLM could recommend to Congress that an additional 63 mile stretch of the Rogue River is suitable for designation under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Generally, such a designation would apply to property located within one quarter mile of the riverbanks. The BLM has estimated that 85% (17,005 acres) of the property affected by its proposal is privately owned. The designation could eventually subject such property to scenic easements or other easements that pertain to the public's access to the river.

The answer to this advisory question would have no binding effect. This is a request from the Board of County Commissioners for information from the community. This question is an opportunity for the community to express an opinion. The Board of County Commissioners may use the response to this question to create policy.

*(This information furnished by Josephine County Board of Commissioners.)*