

North Fork Virgin River



ESSENTIAL FACTS

Length: 2.2 miles

Corridor Acres:
Approx. 540 acres

Classification: Wild

Outstandingly Remarkable Values: Scenery, Recreation, Wildlife

LOCATION

Beginning at SESE Sec. 32, T 39 S, R 9 W, SLM, and ending at SWSW Sec. 31, T 39 S, R 9 W, SLM, where river enters Washington County just north of Zion NP boundary

Kanab Field Office

Color Country District

Kane County, Utah

2nd Congressional District

Utah State Office



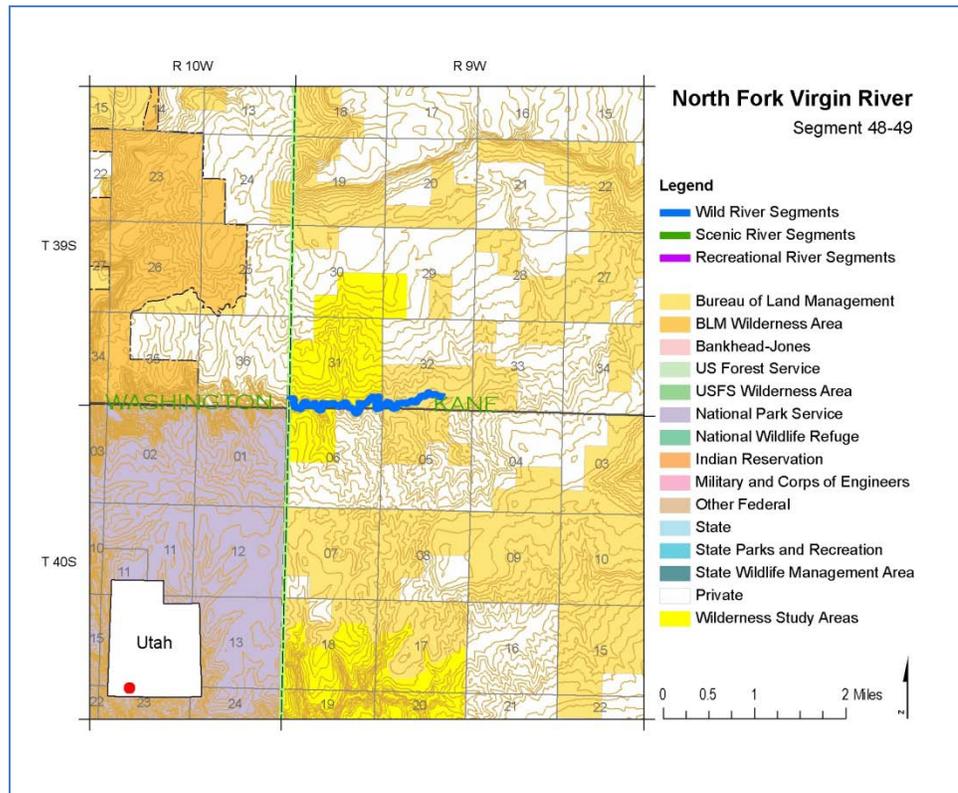
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General Description

The scarcity of man-made structures; variety of natural shapes, textures, and colors; and the gradual transition from a relatively open valley stream setting to a deeply entrenched, prominent slot canyon make the North Fork Virgin River exceptionally scenic and photogenic. Because the North Fork serves as the main entrance to the Zion Narrows trek within Zion National Park (NP), the main recreation activity involves trekkers accessing the Park. In the extreme canyon narrows portion, the river itself often becomes the hiking trail. The outstanding scenery and wilderness-like setting make the trek along the river unique and exceptionally satisfying. Day use activities include hiking into portions of the canyon, nature photography, wildlife viewing, and occasional hunting. Private land upstream of the BLM segment limits off-highway-vehicle (OHV) use to only an occasional authorized vehicle. There is no motorized travel allowed westward, beyond the east end of the segment. This segment includes possible neotropical migratory bird habitat. It is also Mexican spotted owl designated critical habitat.

Summary

This segment has nationally significant Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) and designation of this segment would provide a unique slot canyon and recreation experience to the National System. Future congressional designation would protect free flow and ORVs and complement the intent of Wilderness (in Washington County) and WSA (in Kane County) management strategies. While Kane County does not support the designation of this entire segment, the County would prefer that only the portion within the WSA be considered for WSR designation. However, since much of the entire segment is located within an existing WSA the county's opposition to this segment has not been as strong as to other segments outside of WSAs. There are no anticipated negative effects from designation because there are no competing resource considerations. Still, local and state agencies and water users oppose designation primarily over their concerns that current and potential water use could be affected. Finally, there are newly designated WSR segments downstream in Washington County (including North Fork Virgin River and Deep Creek) and together these segments represent a significant contribution to the integrity of the Virgin River system.



Rivers Suitable for WSR Designation on Bureau of Land Management Lands in Utah

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