

# BETSIE RIVER NATURAL RIVER PLAN

BENZIE AND MANISTEE COUNTIES

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## PREFACE

The Natural Rivers Act of 1970 authorizes the Natural Resources Commission to establish a system of "natural" rivers in the state and to provide for their preservation, protection, and enhancement. As a result of this charge, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources is studying the Betsie River and its tributaries for possible inclusion in the Natural Rivers System. The river system and adjacent lands will be investigated to determine: (1) aesthetic and ecologic values, (2) free-flowing condition--now and prospectively, (3) water quality, (4) fish, plant, and wildlife resources, and (5) historic values. If the river ranks high in such values, it will be proposed for inclusion in the Michigan Natural Rivers System. A river management plan will be prepared with the participation of concerned public officials and citizens and presented to the public at hearings in the area. After public hearings, the Natural Resources Commission may designate the river or portions of it as either a Wilderness, Wild-Scenic, or Country-Scenic River.

This report contains the Natural River Plan for the Betsie River, which is proposed as a Wild-Scenic River. Briefly, the Wild-Scenic River is a stream with wood or forested borders, shorelands and/or backlands, in close proximity to man-made development. The plan (1) provides a physical description of the river, surrounding lands, and nearby structures; (2) reviews values of the river and factors affecting its future nature and use; and (3) provides a plan for its management so as to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural qualities of the river area and facilitate their best use.