

project. Erosion is an active force which will continue to encroach on the land. Until completely controlled, bank cutting will endanger several cottages that were built too close to the river in the past.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED LOCAL ZONING

Benzie County has a Planning Commission which is presently working on a county plan. They intend to have the plan and a tentative zoning ordinance prepared for the county by July 1, 1973.

Of the six townships in Benzie County, through which the Betsie River flows, three have comprehensive zoning ordinances and three have zoning boards presently working on zoning ordinances. Springdale Township in Manistee County does not have a zoning board or zoning ordinance.

LAWS AND PROGRAMS REINFORCING OBJECTIVES OF THE NATURAL RIVERS PROGRAM

A number of Michigan laws now authorize Department of Natural Resources' programs or activities for the protection of rivers. Officials administering the Natural Rivers Program for the protection of the Betsie River should utilize these statutes in implementing the plan objectives of the river and its tributaries. (See Appendix A)

The proposed Department of Natural Resources' program to establish rules for river use on heavily-used streams may also be directed toward protecting natural rivers-- particularly those rivers where recreational use is or may be expected to be quite heavy. The rules have been designed to protect the river resources and recreational experiences that are characteristic of a particular stream.

PRELIMINARY NATURAL RIVER PLAN

A. Proposed Designation

Development of recreation homes and homesites on the Betsie River have been increasing rapidly in recent years. The concern of local citizens and governmental units on the effect this development will have on the remaining natural portions of the Betsie prompted the six townships and others in Benzie County to petition the DNR to study the Betsie River for possible Natural River designation. It was found that although many areas of private land along the river is or will be developed in the near future, there are still many miles of stream in a natural state with scenic and other recreational values worth preserving.

It is recommended that the following portions of the Betsie Rive system be classified and managed as a wild-scenic river and be designated as a Natural River by the Natural Resources Commission under Part 305, P.A. 451 of 1994:

The 50-mile mainstream of the Betsie River from Grass Lake Dam, Benzie County downstream to its mouth at Betsie Lake, and the Thompsonville