

Anonymous Anonymous

We recommend putting comments in your own words, and establishing your personal connection to any of the rivers nominated (e.g. if you kayak the Cascade River) but here are additional points you can consider incorporating:

These waterways provide a multitude of ecosystem services including clean drinking water for communities, habitat that is critical to health and abundance of fish and wildlife species, scenic beauty that is a defining attribute of our quality of life, and numerous recreational opportunities for residents and visitors including fishing, boating, hiking and camping.

Outdoor recreation supports \$26.5 billion in annual expenditures and 264,000 jobs throughout Washington State and clean water is critical to this economic sector.

Protecting unimpaired headwaters is critical to the health of our rivers and everything downstream. The Clean Water Act recognizes the unique value of waterways of exceptional water quality and provides an opportunity for states to identify waterways as Outstanding Resource Waters.

The rivers being considered, the first for Washington State, represent outstanding state resources due to their extraordinary water quality, ecological, and recreational values.

Although Washington has an abundance of high-quality waters that are important to protect, to date Ecology has not designated any Outstanding Resource Waters. Other western states, including Oregon, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona have taken advantage of this opportunity under the Clean Water Act to protect priority rivers.