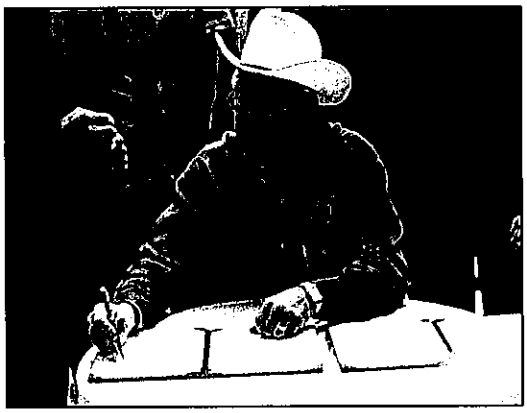
The National Blueways System

Where Land and Water Stewardship and Recreation Meet

Connecticut River - Photo: USFWS

Healthy rivers and watersheds are among America's most loved national treasures. These resources are vital to local economies, to enjoyment of the natural world, and to the quality of the environment on which we all depend. Rivers connect communities, rural and urban, human and natural. Across the nation, towns, county and state governments, civic organizations, businesses, landowners, and volunteers are working together to protect and restore healthy rivers and lands capable of providing quality outdoor recreation and other benefits within a working landscape.

The National Blueways System is where water and land stewardship come together, creating synergy and a framework for partnerships. The National Blueways System uses a landscape-scale approach to river conservation and outdoor recreation that unites activities from the headwaters to the mouth and across the watershed.



Secretary Salazar signing the National Blueways Secretarial Order - Photo: USFWS

- The National Blueways System recognizes and rewards the work of stakeholder partnerships and provides federal support to increase collaboration among diverse partners.

- The National Blueways System, established on May 24, 2012 by Secretarial Order 3321, will provide a blueprint for communities to plan and manage for the health, resiliency, and connectivity of their rivers and watersheds. It supports communication, cooperation and collaboration among different stakeholders, who strive for an integrated approach to managing land and water resources.

- Healthy rivers and watersheds provide outdoor recreation, clean water, flood and drought protection, and other valuable economic, social and ecological services. The National Blueways System seeks to sustain and enhance these services providing long-term value for the American people.

A National Blueway is a nationally significant river and its watershed recognized for having a diverse stakeholder partnership committed to integrative and adaptive management in land and water management that sustains working lands, natural resources, and outdoor recreation.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
U.S. Department of the Interior

www.doi.gov
News Release

AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS: White River and its Watershed in Arkansas and Missouri Recognized as Second "National Blueway"

Designation to Boost Tourism, Expand Recreational Opportunities and Fuel Local Economies

01/09/2013

Contact: Blake Androff (DOI) 202-208-6416
Courtney Rowe (USDA) 202-720-2971
Moira Kelley (Army) 703-614-3992

LITTLE ROCK, AR— Deputy Secretary of the Interior David J. Hayes today announced that the White River, along with its watershed, has been named the nation's second National Blueway. Hayes was joined by Senator Mark Pryor, Congressman Tim Griffin, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army Terrence "Rock" Salt, Deputy Undersecretary of Agriculture Ann Mills, as well as state, local, and conservation leaders at a ceremony in Little Rock, Arkansas, to make the announcement. Deputy Secretary Hayes said that the collaboration taking place in the White River watershed is a model of successful river conservation for the 21st century.

"The National Blueway designation recognizes that strong, diverse partnerships are the best way to address the modern-day threats to our nation's most important rivers, and the White River is an outstanding example of that approach," said Hayes. "The river is the recreational and economic lifeblood of communities from the Ozarks to the Mississippi. River users and river lovers of all stripes have banded together to protect the White River watershed and maintain this magnificent resource for the region – and for the nation."

"The designation of the White River watershed as a National Blueway demonstrates the Obama Administration's continued commitment to the protection of public and working lands that are crucial to the growth and revitalization of rural America," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The resources made available through this designation will support and promote needed conservation efforts and bolster valuable economic growth and job creation in years to come."

In May 2012, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar established the National Blueways System, a new designation for rivers and watersheds of national significance designed to promote and conserve the economic, recreational, and natural values of healthy river systems from source to outlet and across watersheds. The initiative is part of President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative to establish a community-driven conservation and recreation agenda for the 21st century. The designation does not establish a new protective status or regulation, but rather is intended to recognize and support existing local and regional conservation, recreation, and restoration efforts by coordinating ongoing federal, state, and local activities.

Flowing for over 700 miles from its headwaters in the Ozarks to its mouth at the Mississippi River, the White River drains a watershed spanning 17.8 million acres across 60 counties in Arkansas and Missouri. It is home to 1.2 million people who rely on the economic impact that recreation, tourism, agriculture, and commerce along the river provide to watershed communities. The White River is an important part of the wildlife-related economies of Arkansas and Missouri, which statewide accounted for $1.8 billion and $2.8 billion in 2011, respectively. Public and private landowners in the watershed have already conserved more than 3.2 million acres of their land for the benefit of people and wildlife.

The White River National Blueway was nominated for this designation by 26 diverse stakeholder groups including the

National Wildlife Refuge Association, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, The Conservation Fund, Audubon, the Arkansas Canoe Club, the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, the cities of Augusta and Clarendon, local businesses, and federal partners from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Department of the Interior, and the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture.

"We know through experience that by aligning federal, state and local agencies along with nonprofit and private interests, we can together accomplish great things for the people and wildlife of Arkansas and Missouri," said National Wildlife Refuge Association President David Houghton.

In support of the new White River National Blueway, senior leaders from partnering federal agencies announced new projects that will enhance the river's natural resources and create economic opportunities for the region.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that in FY 2013, working with the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts to establish priorities, it will commit more than $22 million to soil and water conservation in counties located within the White River Watershed through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Approximately $13 million of those funds will be directed to pasture land to provide soil and water conservation needs that arose from the drought in 2012. Additionally, the USDA Forest Service manages more than 1 million acres of federal forest land within the boundary of the Blueway, and is engaging in dozens of projects aimed at improving habitat within the watershed.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently approved a 101,110-acre expansion to the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge—named for one of the White River's main tributaries—that will protect valuable floodplain habitat through conservation easements and acquisitions from willing landowners.

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service seeks to build on the great conservation work by our state, federal, conservation, and sportsmen partners," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe. "Today's recognition formalizes something all of us already know—that the White River watershed is special. We are committed to passing on to future generations the chance to hike, paddle, hunt, fish, and otherwise enjoy this exceptional watershed."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that they are moving forward with the Lower Cache River Basin Restoration Project, which will restore flows to meanders cut off by flood control work and will increase fish and wildlife habitat.

"In keeping with President Obama's commitment to the America's Great Outdoors initiative, the Corps is proud to be a part of the National Blueways initiative, which recognizes and supports stakeholder partnerships," said Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Jo-Ellen Darcy. "The Corps' Lower Cache River Basin Restoration project is part of this effort."

For maps and photographs of the White River, click here.

For a copy of the Designation of the White River National Blueway, click here.

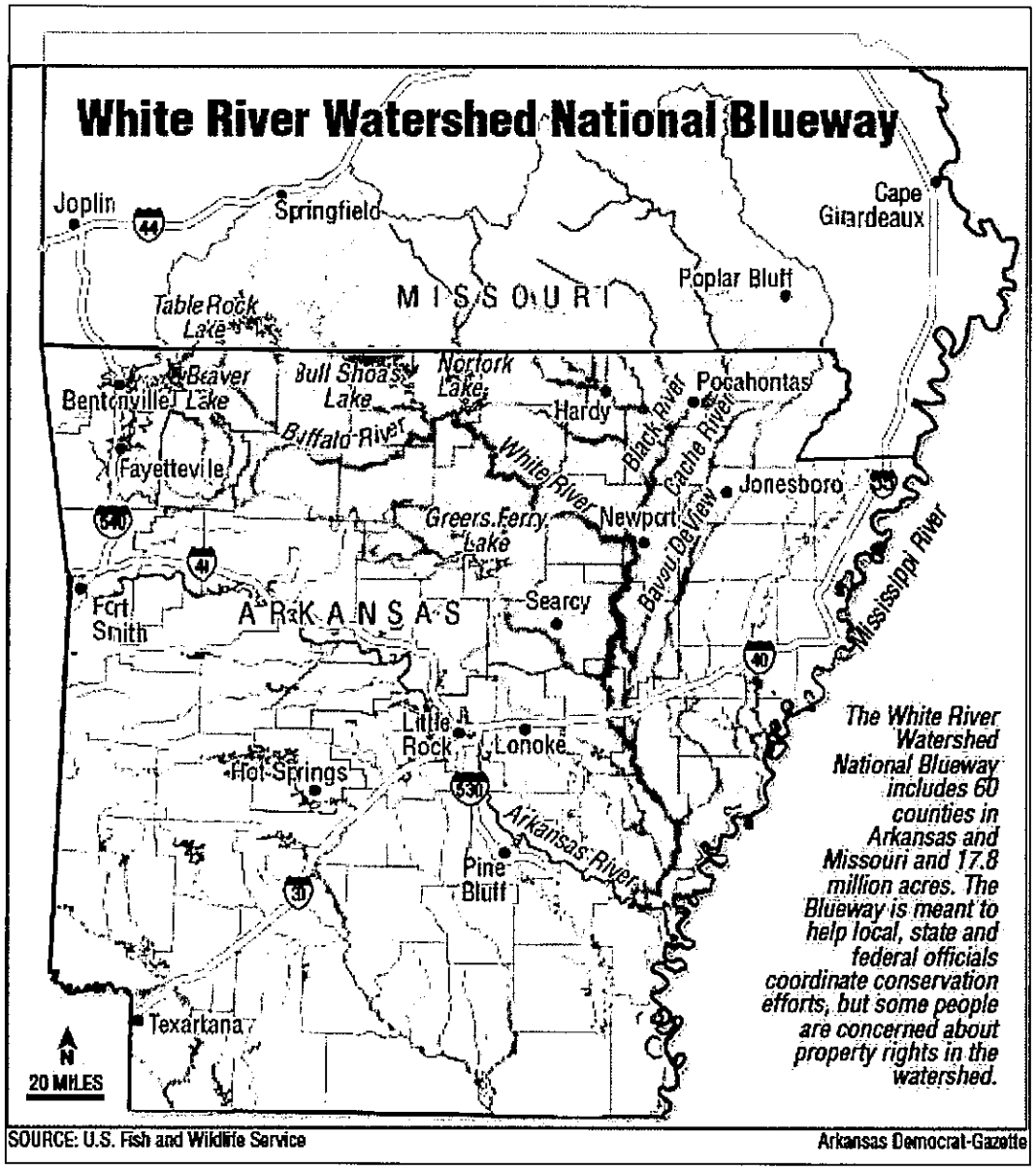
For a list of organizations supporting the designation, click here.

For a copy of Secretary's Order Number 3321 establishing the National Blueways System, click here.

###

<< Previous
Secretary Salazar Launches Expedited Assessment of 2012 Arctic Operations

Next >>
Federal Agencies Announce National Council to Build 21st Century Conservation Corps



SOURCE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

Designation of the White River National Blueway

Whereas: President Obama announced an America's Great Outdoors (AGO) initiative to achieve lasting conservation of the outdoor spaces that power the Nation's economy, shape its culture, and strengthen its outdoor traditions.

Whereas: The White River flows for more than 700 miles from its headwaters in the Ozark Mountains to its mouth at the Mississippi River through its 17.8-million acre watershed and is renowned for its scenic beauty; diversity of land forms and habitats; rare and unique fish and wildlife; rich cultural and natural heritage; nature-based recreational opportunities within a large working landscape; and valuable natural resources of water, timber, minerals, and croplands.

Whereas: The White River and its watershed include National Forests, National Historic Sites, National Wildlife Refuges, National Fish Hatcheries, National Fish Habitat Partnerships, a National River, a National Scenic Riverway, a Scenic River, National Scenic Byways, USACE Recreation Areas, National Recreation Trails, National Natural Landmarks, units of the National Wilderness Preservation System, a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance, important bird areas, and more than 3.1 million acres of public and private lands and waters conserved for the benefit of wildlife and people.

Whereas: The efforts of over 40 partner organizations have benefitted the White River watershed residents and visitors through conservation and restoration of the river and its watershed; protection of over three million acres of habitat in the watershed; expanded environmental education and interpretive efforts; increased economic opportunities; and enhanced recreational access to the river, its tributaries, and public land in the watershed.

Whereas: The Department of the Interior and the States of Arkansas and Missouri through a collaborative process, have demonstrated a sustained commitment to conservation, recreation, education, and sustainable economies in the White River Watershed.

Whereas: The White River meets the criteria required for designation and the designation has been processed in accordance with Secretarial Order 3321.

Therefore: It is with great pleasure that I hereby designate the White River and its Watershed as a National Blueway.

Signed this 8th day of January, 2013

Ken Salazar

Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior

WHITE RIVER NATIONAL BLUEWAY
SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

USFWS, Southeast Region
USACE, Memphis District
USACE. Little Rock District
USGS, MO Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit (Univ. of Missouri)
USGS, AR Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit (Univ. of Arkansas)
USDA – NRCS - MO
USDA – NRCS - AR
USDA– Forest Service – Mark Twain NF
USDA– Forest Service - Ozark-St Francis NF
NPS – Buffalo National River
NPS – Arkansas Post National Memorial
Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture
Missouri Department of Conservation
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
Arkansas Dept. of Parks & Tourism
Arkansas Forestry Commission
City of Augusta, Arkansas
City of Clarendon, Arkansas
Cache River Non-Profit Association
Ozarks Water Watch
Ducks Unlimited
National Wildlife Refuge Association
The Nature Conservancy - Missouri
The Nature Conservancy - Arkansas
The Conservation Fund
Audubon – Missouri
Audubon – Arkansas
Arkansas Canoe Club
Arkansas Waterways Association
Arkansas Assoc. of Conservation Districts
Jackson County Historical Society
G & G Irrigation, LLC

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

ORDER NO. 3321

SIGNATURE DATE: May 24, 2012

Subject: Establishment of a National Blueways System

Sec. 1 **Purpose**. This Order establishes a program to recognize river systems conserved through diverse stakeholder partnerships that use a comprehensive watershed approach to resource stewardship. River systems designated as a National Blueway shall collectively constitute a National Blueways System. The National Blueways System will provide a new national emphasis on the unique value and significance of a "headwaters to mouth" approach to river management and create a mechanism to encourage stakeholders to integrate their land and water stewardship efforts by adopting a watershed approach. This Order also establishes an intra-agency National Blueways Committee to provide leadership, direction, and coordination to the National Blueways System. It further directs the bureaus of the Department of the Interior (Interior) to collaborate in supporting the National Blueways System, to the extent permitted by law and consistent with their missions and resources.

Sec. 2 **Background**. Rivers play a vital role in connecting Americans with the lands and waters that provide economic, recreational, social, cultural, and ecological value to their communities. Healthy rivers are integral to the quality of life for all Americans and their communities. Resilient rivers and watersheds are essential sources of clean water supplies for rural, agricultural, and urban communities alike. Rivers provide important habitat for fish and wildlife species and act as corridors for their migration and dispersal, providing ecosystem connectivity that supports resilience to environmental change. Rivers support our recreation and tourism economy by providing opportunities for boating, fishing, hiking, camping, swimming, and numerous other activities. Rivers offer a focal point for environmental education and outreach that helps communities understand and connect with the great outdoors.

Across the Nation, communities of stakeholders have formed partnerships focused on stewardship and sustainability of rivers and their watersheds. When these partnerships work successfully across Federal agencies, with state, local, and tribal governments, and with non-profit organizations, private landowners, and businesses, they are able to accomplish their shared stewardship and conservation objectives. National recognition and Federal agency coordination in support of river systems will inspire and help stakeholders to plan and manage for the resiliency and connectivity of their rivers, to seek cooperation and collaboration among communities and across jurisdictions, and to strive for an integrative, adaptive approach for sustaining the whole river system.

National Blueways will be nationally and regionally significant rivers and their watersheds that are highly valued recreational, social, economic, cultural, and ecological assets for the communities that depend on them. National Blueways encourage a landscape-scale approach to

river conservation that involves a river from its headwaters to its mouth and across its watershed, rather than individual segments of the channel and riparian area alone. Establishment of a National Blueways System will help promote best practices, share information and resources, and encourage active and collaborative stewardship of rivers across the country.

Sec. 3 **Authority**. This Order is issued in accordance with authority provided under the Take Pride in America Act, Public Law 101-628; the Outdoor Recreation Act, Public Law 87-714; and the Cooperative Watershed Management Program of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, Public Law 111-11. The bureaus within Interior have a broad panoply of legal authority to carry out their respective missions that support enhancing river recreation, undertaking river restoration, and pursuing river protection initiatives to pass on healthy rivers to future generations. These authorities include the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, 42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.; the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, 16 U.S.C. 742 et seq.; the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.; the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 16 U.S.C. 4601-4 et seq.; the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, 16 U.S.C. 1271-1287; the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, 43 U.S.C 1702 et seq.; the Reclamation Act, Public Law 57-161; the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, Public Law 111-11; and the National Trails System Act of 1968, 16 U.S.C. 1241 et seq.

Sec. 4 **Model National Blueway**. I hereby designate the Connecticut River and Watershed as the first National Blueway as a model for future designations. The Connecticut River Watershed exemplifies the National Blueways System with diverse partnerships of interested communities including over 40 partner organizations, protection of over 2 million acres of habitat, environmental and educational efforts aimed at urban and rural populations, and recreational access to the river, its tributaries, and public lands.

Sec. 5 **National Blueways Committee**. This Order establishes a National Blueways Committee (Committee), to be chaired by the Secretary or his or her designee.

a. Membership. Members of the Committee will include a representative designated by the Directors of the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs; the Commissioner of Reclamation; and a representative designated by the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget. The Committee may also include representatives of other Federal agencies, whose representatives shall participate through appropriate agreements.

b. Responsibilities. The Committee will:

(i) Oversee the process of National Blueways criteria development, assessment, and designation;

(ii) Make recommendations to the Secretary for the designation of National Blueways;

(iii) Oversee support provided by Interior to designated National Blueways; and

(iv) Report to the Secretary on the progress, accomplishments, opportunities, and challenges of the National Blueways System.

Sec. 6 **National Blueways System**. The National Blueways System program shall recognize and promote nationally or regionally significant rivers and their watersheds.

a. Nomination. Any established stakeholder partnership may, in collaboration with a sponsoring Federal or state agency, nominate a river and its associated watershed as a proposed National Blueway by submitting an application according to the nomination process and assessment criteria.

b. Assessment. The assessment criteria will evaluate the intrinsic values a river and its watershed possess and the interested communities' record of commitment to land and water management practices that provide or maintain outstanding recreational, social, and/or ecological benefits.

c. Designation. Following consideration of recommendations made by the Committee, the Secretary may designate the river and its associated watershed as a National Blueway that will become part of the National Blueways System.

d. Alignment. Bureaus within Interior, to the extent permitted by law and consistent with their missions, policies, and resources, shall endeavor to align the execution of agency plans and implementation of agency programs to protect, restore, and enhance the natural, cultural, and/or recreational resources associated with designated National Blueways.

e. Coordination. Bureaus will coordinate within Interior and with other participating Federal, state, local, and tribal agencies and partners to support designated National Blueways.

f. Partnerships. Bureaus are encouraged, to the extent permitted by law, to develop partnerships with other federal, state, local, and tribal governments, water and power authorities, and community and non-governmental organizations in support of designated National Blueways. Bureaus will be responsive to the diverse needs of different kinds of communities from, the core of our cities to the remote rural areas, and shall seek to ensure that the role played by the Federal Government is complementary to the plans and work being carried out by other Federal, state, local, and tribal governments. To the extent practicable, Federal resources will be strategically directed to complement resources being spent by these partner entities.

Sec. 7 **Disclaimer**. Nothing in this Order is intended to authorize or affect the use of private property. Nothing in this Order is intended to be the basis for the exercise of any new regulatory authority, nor shall this initiative or any designation pursuant to this Order affect or interfere with any Federal, state, local, and tribal government jurisdiction or applicable law including interstate compacts relating to water or the laws of any state or tribe relating to the control, appropriation, use or distribution of water or water rights.

Sec. 8 **Implementation**. The Deputy Secretary is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this Order. Nothing in this Order shall be interpreted as amending, revising, or modifying either Executive Order 13061 of September 11, 1997, entitled, "Federal Support of Community Efforts Along American Heritage Rivers" or Secretarial Order 3319 of February 29, 2012, entitled, "Establishment of a National Water Trails System."

Sec. 9 **Expiration Date**. This Order is effective immediately. It shall remain in effect until its provisions are converted to the Departmental Manual or until it is amended, superseded, or revoked, whichever comes first.

/s/ Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior

SO #3321 05/24/2012

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between the
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
And the
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
And the
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

I. Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between the Department of the Interior (Interior), acting through its Secretary; the Department of Agriculture (Agriculture), acting through its Secretary; and the Department of the Army (Army), acting through the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. The purpose of this MOU is to establish a framework for collaborative efforts to identify and create opportunities to work together as partners to accomplish shared, compatible, and priority conservation, restoration, outdoor recreation, environmental education, and sustainable economic objectives in support of the National Blueways System as a whole, and specific designated National Blueways.

II. Background

Thanks to growing awareness of the link between healthy communities and healthy watersheds, one of the objectives of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative (AGO), launched by President Barack Obama in 2010, calls on Federal agencies to use a comprehensive and collaborative approach to conserving rivers and other waters by employing a combination of land and water management strategies at the watershed level and using tools such as Integrated Water Resources Management to pursue this approach in cooperation with stakeholder-driven watershed-based partnerships.

On May 24, 2012, Secretary Ken Salazar issued Secretary's Order 3321 establishing the National Blueways System, which designates the Connecticut River and Watershed as the Nation's first National Blueway, and directs Interior to align the implementation of all plans and programs in Interior with the National Blueways System; coordinate among bureaus to support designated National Blueways; and pursue partnerships outside Interior in support of the National Blueways System and designated National Blueways.

A National Blueway is a designation for nationally significant rivers and their watersheds that recognizes the economic, recreational, ecological, and cultural value of healthy river systems. A Watershed designated as a National Blueway employs integrated land and water management techniques to conserve and restore a river from its headwaters to its mouth, and across its entire watershed. A large scale is needed, such as the Connecticut River and Watershed National Blueway, to successfully address 21st century challenges posed by changing patterns of resource

use and climate. National Blueways are intended to achieve a balance between scope, scale, and national significance while facilitating grassroots stewardship and local leadership from communities, organizations, and agencies within the watershed, and also remaining relevant and manageable at the local scale.

A National Blueway is envisioned, planned, and adaptively managed by a diverse stakeholder partnership among the communities, tribes, organizations, and agencies that are responsible for, invested in, and committed to the river, watershed, and its array of resources. A National Blueway designation facilitates communication, cooperation, and collaboration to leverage resources and magnify the favorable outcomes of land and water management actions. The large scale of a National Blueway provides a shared context for locally based organizations and agencies to come together in support of a common vision, goals, and actions within the watershed.

There are opportunities for the Federal Government to efficiently coordinate management of their resources in order to maximize program effectiveness across shared objectives. This MOU establishes a framework whereby the Federal Government can better integrate its existing or future investments in rivers and watersheds to achieve shared objectives within the National Blueways System and designated National Blueways.

III. Authorities

The Interior authorities for this MOU include the following: the Take Pride in America Act, Public Law 101-628; the Outdoor Recreation Act, Public Law 87-714; the Cooperative Watershed Management Program of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, Public Law 111-11; the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, 16 U.S.C. 742 et seq.; the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.; the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 16 U.S.C. 4601-4 et seq.; the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, 16 U.S.C. 1271-1287; and the National Trails System Act of 1968, 16 U.S.C. 1241 et seq.; The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.

The Agriculture authorities for this MOU include the following: the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (Public Law 74-46 as amended through Public Law 110-246); the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended (Public Law 99-198 as amended through Public Law 110-246); the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-313 as amended through Public Law 110-246) which includes Rural Forestry Assistance (16 U.S.C. 2102), Forest Stewardship Program (16 U.S.C. 2103a), Watershed Forestry Assistance Program (16 U.S.C. 2103b), Forest Legacy Program (16 U.S.C. 2103c), Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (16 U.S.C. 2103d), and Urban and Community Forestry Assistance (16 U.S.C. 2105); and the Wyden Amendment (Public Law 105-277 as amended).

The Army authorities for this MOU include the following: the Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460d); Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 460l-12, et seq.); and Section 313 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2320).

IV. Objectives

It is the intent of the parties to this MOU to establish a general framework and identify agency leaders to work collaboratively among Federal Agencies and with external stakeholders nationally and within designated National Blueways to create and enhance partnerships among the Federal agencies to leverage the suite of agency programs and magnify the impact of existing multi-agency investments in the National Blueways System. The activities under these partnerships will be consistent with agency priorities, objectives, and mission, and will be deployed in a manner that attracts the attention and participation of state and municipal partners, organizations, and individuals to invest additional human and financial resources into the National Blueways System.

For purposes of this MOU, the parties agree that the broad objectives for the National Blueways System include the following:

- Conserving, protecting, and enhancing the natural diversity and abundance of fish and wildlife species, and the ecosystems upon which these species depend;

- Restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters;

- Integrating and adaptively managing the land and water resources, including agricultural and working lands and waters, within the National Blueways System consistent with applicable laws;

- Providing opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, outdoor recreation, cultural preservation, and sustainable economic opportunities within National Blueways to the extent compatible with agency missions, goals, objectives, and priorities.

V. Implementation Strategies

The parties to this MOU will work to implement the stated objectives using agency programs and initiatives as a part of a collaborative effort to leverage, focus, and magnify the impact and use of those programs and related available resources to accomplish shared and compatible objectives in support of designated National Blueways and the National Blueway System. Specifically, to the extent possible in accordance with applicable laws, policies, budgetary limitations, and consistent with agency priorities, the parties to the MOU will do the following:

1. Encourage interagency sharing of a broad range of specialized professional expertise, program capacity, and other appropriate resources among the parties in order to overcome barriers facing any individual agency and create opportunities for collaborative action to achieve National Blueways System goals.

2. Employ voluntary and incentive-based measures within the National Blueways System to promote integrated and adaptive land and water management, including working lands

and waters, to achieve more natural riverine flows, functions, and aquatic species passage consistent with applicable laws.

3. Promote resiliency and representation of terrestrial and aquatic species and habitats within the National Blueways System by enhancing connectivity within the conservation estate in area, elevations, latitudes, aspects, and processes at a scale that is sustainable given anticipated changes in climate and land use.

4. Ensure robust consideration of projects and proposals associated with designated National Blueways when deliberating on the award of agency grants, enrollment in programs, agency initiatives, and/or other agency assistance.

5. Use and promote a watershed approach to river conservation that integrates land and water conservation and addresses morphology, hydrology, and ecology of the river and its watershed to enhance the effectiveness of restoration and conservation efforts.

6. Promote and integrate habitat connectivity, representation, redundancy, and resiliency into the design of conservation, restoration, and recreation initiatives, to address the effects of climate and land use changes.

7. Communicate, collaborate, and cooperate with diverse stakeholder partnerships of public and private organizations to further the objectives of this MOU and the National Blueways System and designated National Blueways.

8. Seek opportunities to use the broad range of programs, improve capacity, and facilitate participation by allowing additional administrative flexibility in the allocation and use of agency financial assistance and technical assistance funding, to expand the ability to forge internal and external partnerships to achieve the objectives herein.

9. Within 180 days of designation, the parties with land and/or water managing authorities within the watershed will work together to develop, sign, and submit a Memorandum of Understanding or similar agreement for the specific National Blueway to the signatories of this MOU and the National Blueway System Committee that was created under Interior's Secretarial Order 3321. Future MOUs or similar agreements are intended to facilitate communication, cooperation, collaboration, and resource prioritization consistent with agency priorities and to the extent allowable in light of legal, budgetary, and policy limitations. National Blueway-specific MOUs or similar documents will outline watershed-specific objectives, implementation strategies, projects, and initiatives, along with short- and long-term desired outcomes for the river and watershed as an integrated land and water management system. In an effort to increase capacity, leverage resources, and magnify the outcomes, the recruitment of additional Federal partners as parties to the National Blueway-specific MOUs is encouraged as a means of achieving additional and enhanced outcomes and quality public service.

Disclaimer

1. While the actions identified in this MOU are deemed desirable and considered necessary to achieve the aforementioned objectives, the actual contribution will be dependent on agency priorities, laws and policies, and contributions toward core objectives, and subject to the availability of resources for these purposes.

2. This MOU is not a fiscal obligation document. Nothing in this MOU obligates the parties to enter into contracts or other funding instruments to carry out the purposes of this MOU.

3. Nothing in this MOU is intended to authorize or affect the use of private property or is intended to be the basis for the exercise of any new regulatory authority. This MOU shall not affect or interfere with any Federal, state, local, and tribal government jurisdiction or applicable law including interstate compacts relating to water or the laws of any state or tribe relating to the control, appropriation, use, or distribution of water or water rights.

4. This agreement and the obligations of the parties to this MOU hereunder shall be subject to the availability of funding, and nothing herein contained shall be construed as binding the parties to this MOU to expend in any one fiscal year any sum in excess of appropriations made by Congress or administratively allocated for the purpose of this MOU for the fiscal year, or to involve the parties to this MOU in any contract or other obligation for the further expenditure of money in excess of such appropriations or allocations.

5. This MOU is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

VII. Special Provisions

1. No voluntary transfer or assignment of this agreement or any part thereof or interest therein, directly or indirectly, shall be made unless such transfer or assignment is first approved by all of the parties hereto in writing.

2. Additional Federal agencies and departments may be added to this MOU upon approval of the National Blueways Committee after executing a copy of Exhibit I, certifying acceptance of the intent, objectives, implementation strategies, and provisions outlined in this document.

3. Participating departments and/or agencies may designate a representative from each agency or department to serve on the National Blueways System Committee who will strive to support the National Blueways System and seek opportunities to enhance communication, cooperation, and collaboration to leverage available agency resources and magnify the impact of desired outcomes, consistent with agency objectives and priorities.

4. This MOU shall become effective on the date of the last signature as indicated below and the same will apply to all National Blueways once they are designated and included in the National Blueways System.

VIII. Expiration

This MOU shall be in effect for a term of five (5) years and will automatically renew for periods of five (5) year intervals unless participation is terminated by the signatories to this MOU.

This agreement may be terminated in whole or in part hereof at the option of any party to this MOU after thirty (30) days from the date written notice of termination is given.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have hereunto subscribed their names as of the date indicated.

U.S. Department of the Interior

Date: JAN 2 3 2013 **By:** Ken Salazar

Secretary of the Interior

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Date: JAN 1 7 2013 **By:** [illegible]

Secretary of Agriculture

Department of the Army

Date: JAN [illegible] **By:** Jo-Ellen Darcy

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works

Memorandum of Understanding
Among the
National Park Service
Bureau of Land Management
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Forest Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Army Corps of Engineers

For Coordination of Landscape & Watershed-scale Conservation Demonstration Areas

This MEMORADUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) is hereby entered into by and among the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers, Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Bureau of Reclamation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (collectively, "the Federal partners").

I. PURPOSE

To strengthen and formalize the institutional framework, including the existing inter-agency partnership teams, better enabling cooperation, communication, and collaboration among the Federal partners on large-scale landscape and watershed conservation demonstration areas.

II. BACKGROUND

Conservation in the 21st -century requires a holistic integrated management approach that can operate across Federal agency jurisdictions, programs, and authorities. In response, Federal agencies are joining state, tribal, and private stakeholders in a variety of conservation approaches to landscape and watershed-scale conservation. While this approach to conservation is most appropriately defined in the context of place, some attributes are relatively constant across geographies; for example, landscape and watershed-scale conservation inherently transcends any single jurisdiction and is predicated on multiple parties collaboratively defining shared objectives and coordinated action.

There are numerous examples of agencies and local partners working collaboratively to conserve large landscapes, including watersheds and coastal ecosystems. These include whole ecological systems, such as the Everglades, Chesapeake Bay, longleaf pine forests in the Southeast, and the California Bay Delta, as well as Federal agencies engaging in state or local landscape conservation initiatives such as Keeping Maine's Forests as Forests and the Blackfoot Challenge in the Crown of the Continent. In addition, there are programmatic initiatives that support large-scale landscape and watershed collaboration including Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, the Army Corps of Engineers' Integrated Water Management Strategy, the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Landscape Initiatives, and the Department of the Interior National Blueways System, as well the National Fish Habitat Action Plan and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The interagency teams formalized pursuant to this MOU will not supplant any of these ongoing efforts, but will complement and, as appropriate, coordinate with them to advance shared objectives.

Woven throughout the large landscape and watershed conservation ethic is the basic tenet that the Federal government has an important and unique role to play as a partner and supporter of local conservation efforts. The Federal agencies have a special interest in maximizing conservation benefits, leveraging taxpayer dollars, catalyzing private sector investment, and reconnecting with and engaging Americans about the importance of our outdoor resources. The advantages of landscape and watershed conservation areas are highlighted in President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative (AGO) which calls for a 21st-century conservation agenda that will protect America's natural and cultural resources, and connect people to the outdoors through jobs, education, recreation, and restoration.

To facilitate these shared objectives, the Federal agencies established AGO interagency regional landscape and watershed teams to encourage interagency coordination, to improve communication, and collaboration and to model the importance and advantages of Federal family coordination with local partners. The Federal partners initially established interagency large landscape teams and watershed teams focused on specific landscapes and watersheds across the country. This MOU will formalize the initial Federal agency coordination, including providing a forum for exploring the relationships among existing landscape and watershed-based initiatives.

Further, it is the intent of this MOU that the interagency teams will focus first and foremost on ensuring that the Federal partners themselves are well-coordinated, in part by providing a forum to assist in developing cross-cutting budget and action plans. Unique to this MOU are the Federal interagency teams that were established and are organized and managed as interagency teams with no one agency having a greater or lesser leadership role than another. While these teams are currently organized under the umbrella of AGO's demonstration large landscape and waters initiative, the need for interagency collaboration and communication transcends any particular initiative.

III. AUTHORITIES

This agreement is based on existing authorities including the President's Memorandum of April 16, 2010: *A 21st Century Strategy for America's Great Outdoors*, 75 Fed. Reg. 20767 (April 20, 2010), and various authorities within the context of the laws or regulations governing specific programs administered by the agencies.

IV. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTERESTS

The signatory Federal partners' missions include many overlapping and complementary conservation interests. Accordingly, there is great potential for mutual benefit from enhanced cooperation and synergies, especially in the area of large landscape conservation where alignment of multiple resources will result in strategic and effective conservation outcomes.

V. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

For the purpose of guiding efforts under this MOU, the Federal partners find and agree that:

a. Conservation planning and implementation at a large scale is a critical component of protecting our natural and cultural resources and is most effective when land and water objectives are approached in an integrated fashion by stakeholders at all levels—Federal, tribal, state, local, and private. Effective and efficient implementation can only be accomplished through the

voluntary collaborative efforts of tribal, state, and Federal agencies; non-profit organizations; and many other entities associated with large landscape conservation.

b. Federal effectiveness in realizing shared landscape and watershed conservation goals depends on developing, where appropriate, shared capacities (including information sharing, shared personnel, and shared science-based understanding of social, economic, and environmental conditions of the target landscape, and complementary landscape and watershed conservation strategies); better aligning and leveraging conservation funding and authorities across the executive branch; and creating mechanisms to facilitate coordination and cooperation among these programs/agencies to concentrate investments in shared priority conservation areas.
c. Conservation planning and implementation among diverse partners benefits substantially from a shared science-based understanding of social, economic, and environmental conditions of the target place. This shared scientific understanding can inform prioritization and selection of conservation strategies, measurement of progress and adaptive management.

VI. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In furtherance of the purpose agreed to under this MOU, the partners resolve to take further actions to:

a. Advance national, regional, and community-supported work to preserve and enhance large landscapes including watersheds, and their historic and cultural resources.
b. Catalyze strategic large-scale landscape and watershed conservation partnerships projects though economic incentives, technical assistance, and the leveraging of funds consistent with agency objectives and priorities.
c. Work to increase the pace of conservation activities applied on working farms, ranches, range land, forests, and waters.
d. Consider ways to increase the availability of voluntary financial incentives for stewardship of working lands and waters and look for opportunities to develop and expand new markets for nature's ecological services.
e. Conserve, restore, and manage Federal lands and waters to ensure appropriate access and enjoyment for future generations while contributing to the protection of larger natural, working, and cultural landscapes.
f. Improve Federal government performance and value as a conservation partner.
g. Maximize the efficacy of Federal investments.
h. Support efforts to share scientific information to inform conservation strategies and progress.
i. Break down barriers among landscape and watershed initiatives, including but not limited to those covered by this MOU, in order to maximize investments, resources, and sharing of knowledge.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION

To meet the goals and objectives of this agreement, the Federal partners agree that the MOU will focus on the existing AGO interagency large landscape demonstration areas: the deserts of the Southwest; the grasslands of the northern Great Plains; the Crown of the Continent in the northern Rockies; the northern forests and waters of New England; and America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative in the Southeast (For the purposes of this MOU, it is anticipated that the existing Federal Coordinating Committee established pursuant to an interdepartmental MOU in 2010 will serve as the interagency team for the longleaf pine demonstration area); and the watershed demonstration pilots: the Connecticut River Watershed and the White River/Cache River Watershed. However, it is the

Federal partners' intent that as opportunities arise to expand or modify the number and scope of the interagency teams, this MOU will adapt to those opportunities as appropriate.

Further, through these interagency teams, the Federal partners shall:

(1) Establish and maintain interagency landscape and watershed working groups consisting of representatives at the headquarters and regional levels to provide the leadership necessary to coordinate Federal action in each of the identified landscapes.

(2) Establish a shared vision, metrics, and strategy document for each selected landscape and watershed demonstration area. The document must outline goals and objectives, as well as an implementation plan.

(3) Develop and implement actions in each of the demonstration areas that will:

a. Maintain and strengthen formal and informal partnerships and coordination with the full range of stakeholders and partners as appropriate.
b. Support landscape partnerships by targeting existing Federal dollars, policies, technical support, staff, best practices, tools, scientific information, training, and other resources toward conservation of large landscapes and watersheds, and coordinating expenditures, where appropriate, across Federal agencies and partners.
c. Support financial and other incentives to encourage access for hunting, fishing, hiking, recreation, and other outdoor activities across private working lands and waters.
d. Manage Federal lands and waters within a large-scale landscape and watershed context to help conserve and restore ecosystems and watershed health, to the extent feasible and allowable under Federal law.
e. Strategically invest and align Federal funds, as appropriate, to achieve landscape-scale and watershed conservation and restoration goals on public and private land and waters and to leverage other public and private funds.
f. Manage Federal lands and Federally-controlled waters to create and protect critical wildlife corridors and maintain landscape connectivity in collaboration with other public and private stakeholders to the extent feasible and allowable under Federal law.
g. Identify opportunities to align other Federal large-scale landscape and watershed initiatives and share scientific information to furher that alignment.
h. Measure and report progress.

(4) Convene periodically, but at least on a quarterly basis, Federal representatives from across the landscapes and watersheds covered by this MOU to review the progress made under this MOU; transfer knowledge; assess current goals and objectives; and consider or develop additional short- and long-term goals, objectives and strategies for future implementation, including the projected financial and technical resources needed for project implementation in the upcoming fiscal year budget and 2 years beyond.

(5) To the degree that the Federal parties agree that new or additional large landscape and watershed demonstration areas are appropriate, they will be selected after taking into consideration the following factors:
a. Community-led landscape collaborative conservation efforts where the alignment of Federal resources and authorities can play a value-added role;

b. Diversity of jurisdiction of the partners over components of the landscape (e.g. land ownership, resource oversight, permit responsibility, etc.);
c. Opportunity to aggregate scientific information to better inform shared conservation strategies among diverse partners;
d. Diversity of conservation needs and opportunities–acquisition, restoration, and designation—that could be successfully pursued and applied;
e. Opportunities to provide knowledge transfers and lessons learned, and demonstrate successful Federal partnerships in large landscape and watershed conservation;
f. Opportunities to partner with non-Federal, public or private entities to augment and leverage available resources; and
g. Opportunities to achieve, sustain, and measure improvements in ecosystem health.

VIII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Participation in Similar Activities. This MOU does not in any way restrict the Federal partners from participating in similar activities or entering into similar instruments with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.

B. Effective Period and Termination. This MOU will become effective upon date of final signature and continue for a period of 5 years. It may be renewed as mutually agreed upon by the Parties. It may be modified or terminated at any time by mutual agreement of all Parties in writing. Any party to this MOU may withdraw from its responsibilities identified herein by notifying, in writing, all Parties on or before October 1 of each year that this MOU is in effect.

C. Responsibilities. The Federal partners will manage their own activities and utilize their own resources, including expenditure of funds, if any, in pursuing the goals and objectives of the MOU. Although the Federal partners will carry out such activities independently, each partner intends to coordinate and cooperate with the other partners to promote successful implementation of this MOU's landscape and watershed-scale conservation goals.

D. Principal Contacts. The designated chair or co-chair of each interagency work team shall be the principal contact under this MOU for that respective landscape conservation area.

E. Non-fund Obligating Document. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed as obligating the Federal partners to expend, obligate, or transfer any funds; or as involving the United States in any obligation for the present or future payment of money in excess of appropriations authorized by law and administratively allocated for the work to be undertaken pursuant to this MOU.

Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, or property among the signatory Federal partners will require execution of separate instruments or agreements and be contingent upon the availability of funds. Such projects and activities must be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority of the respective signatory Federal partners. This MOU does not provide such authority. Negotiation, execution, and administration of each such instrument or agreement must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.

F. Communications and Engagement Coordination. The Federal partners will work together to coordinate public relations and public engagement activities related to this MOU.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto executed this Memorandum of Understanding on the date(s) set forth below:

Bureau of Land Management

Date: 12/18/12 **By:** _____
Title: Director

Department of the Army

Date: Jan. 7, 2013 **By:** _____
Title: Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date: 12.10.12 **By:** _____
Title: Director

U.S. Forest Service

Date: DEC 11 2012 **By:** _____
Title: Chief

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Date: 12/19/12 **By:** _____
Title: Chair

Bureau of Reclamation

Date: 12/6/12 **By:** _____
Title: Commissioner

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Date: Nov. 19, 2012 By: Dave White
Title: Chief

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Date: DEC -4 2012 By: [illegible]
Title: Administrator

National Park Service

Date: 12/17/2012 By: Jonathan B. Jarvis
Title: Director

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Among the

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
FOREST SERVICE
FARM SERVICE AGENCY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

In Recognition and Support of the White River National Blueway

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is hereby entered into by and among the Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Geological Survey, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Forest Service, Farm Service Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Environmental Protection Agency (collectively, "the Federal partners").

I. Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to strengthen and formalize the institutional framework better enabling cooperation, communication, and collaboration among the Federal partners to identify and create opportunities to work together to accomplish shared, compatible, and priority conservation, restoration, outdoor recreation, environmental education, and sustainable economic objectives in support of the White River and its watershed, designated as the White River National Blueway. The Federal partners recognize the economic health of the region depends largely on agricultural and recreational economies, which in turn, depend on healthy and sustainable land and water systems, and the White River National Blueways designation should support those principles. **II. Background**

Effective conservation in the 21st century requires a holistic, integrated management approach that incorporates conservation, recreation, education, and sustainable economies and enables organizations to effectively operate across agency jurisdictions, programs, and authorities. Therefore, the Federal partners are joining state, tribal, community, and private stakeholders in a variety of approaches to achieve watershed-scale conservation. Woven through the watershed conservation ethic is a basic tenet that the Federal government has an important and unique role to fulfill as a partner and supporter of local conservation efforts. The Federal agencies have a special interest in maximizing conservation benefits, leveraging taxpayer dollars, catalyzing private sector investment, and reconnecting with and engaging Americans about the importance of our outdoor resources. The America's Great Outdoors initiative calls on Federal agencies to use a comprehensive and collaborative approach to conserving rivers and other waters by employing a combination of land and water management strategies at the watershed level in cooperation with stakeholder-driven watershed-based partnerships. In response, on May 24, 2012, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar issued Secretary's Order 3321, which established the National Blueways System.

A National Blueway is a designation for nationally significant rivers and their watersheds that recognizes the economic, recreational, ecological, and cultural value of healthy river systems. A watershed designated as a National Blueway employs integrated land and water management techniques to conserve and restore a river from its headwaters to its mouth, and across its entire watershed. A large scale is needed, such as the White River National Blueway, to successfully address 21st century challenges posed by changing patterns of resource use, economic circumstances, and public needs. National Blueways are intended to achieve a balance between national scope and significance while also remaining relevant and manageable at the local scale, and to provide a forum and framework to facilitate grassroots stewardship and local leadership from communities, organizations, and agencies within the watershed.

A National Blueway is envisioned, planned, and adaptively managed by a diverse stakeholder partnership among the communities, tribes, organizations, and agencies that are responsible for, invested in, and committed to the river, watershed, and its array of resources. A National Blueway designation facilitates communication, cooperation, and collaboration to leverage resources and magnify the favorable outcomes of integrated land and water management actions. The large scale of a National Blueway provides a shared context for locally based organizations and agencies to come together in support of a common vision, goals, and actions within the watershed.

The designation of the White River National Blueway recognizes and complements decades of successful and expanding collaboration between local, state, and Federal governments, organizations, landowners, watershed citizens and other stakeholders in support of a common vision and goals within the watershed. The missions of the Federal partners include many overlapping and complementary interests; however, there are opportunities to more strategically and efficiently coordinate management of their resources and investments in the White River watershed in order to maximize program effectiveness and outcomes across shared goals. While this MOU does not mandate additional resource investments, it establishes a framework whereby the Federal partners can effectively communicate, collaborate, and better integrate their existing or optional future investments to achieve shared objectives within the White River National Blueway.

III. Authorities

This agreement is executed pursuant to that certain Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretary of the Interior, Department of Agriculture and Department of the Army (January 23, 2013) and the Secretary of the Interior's Designation of the White River National Blueway (January 8, 2013) and is based on existing authorities, including, but not limited to the President's Memorandum of April 16, 2010: *A 21st Century Strategy for America's Great Outdoors*, 75 Fed. Reg. 20767 (April 20, 2010), Department of the Interior Secretarial Order 3321 (May 24, 2012), and other various authorities within the context of the laws or regulations governing specific programs administered by the agencies.

IV. Objectives

It is the intent of the parties to this MOU to establish a framework and identify agency leaders to work collaboratively among Federal partners and with external stakeholders within the White River National Blueway to leverage the full suite of applicable agency programs and magnify the impact of existing multi-agency investments in the White River watershed. The activities under these partnerships will be consistent with agency priorities, objectives, missions, and budgets and will be deployed in a manner that aligns with state, municipal, and other partners. Specifically, there is a desire to align White River National Blueway objectives with goals articulated in statewide natural resource management plans.

For purposes of this MOU, the parties agree that the broad objectives for the White River National Blueway are to:

- Provide a national model for restoration and enhancement of aquatic, wetland and terrestrial habitats that support a host of rare, threatened, and endangered species and other migratory/native wildlife;
- Contribute to sustainable use and conservation of surface and ground water;
- Contribute to improved water quality in the lower Mississippi River;
- Contribute to economic growth and sustainability of the region through sustainable recreational and agricultural economies;
- Highlight the value and effectiveness of private, municipal, state, federal partnerships, and
- Promote awareness and support of watershed restoration and conservation.

V. Implementation Strategies

The parties to this MOU will work to implement the stated objectives using agency programs and initiatives as a part of a collaborative effort to leverage, focus, and magnify the impact and use of those programs and related available resources to accomplish shared and compatible objectives in support of the White River National Blueway. Specifically, to the extent possible in accordance with applicable laws, policies, budgetary limitations, and consistent with agency priorities, the parties to the MOU will do the following:

1. Encourage and enable interagency sharing of a broad range of specialized professional expertise, program capacity, and other appropriate resources among the parties in order to overcome barriers facing any individual agency and create greater opportunities for successful collaborative actions to achieve the habitat, agriculture, hydrology, recreation, education, outreach, and economic objectives of the White River National Blueway.

2. Employ voluntary and incentive-based measures within the White River National Blueway to promote integrated and adaptive land and water management, including agricultural working lands and waters, consistent with applicable laws.

3. Ensure robust consideration of projects and proposals associated with the White River National Blueway when deliberating on the award of agency grants, enrollment in programs, agency initiatives, and/or other agency assistance.

4. Use and promote a watershed approach to river conservation that integrates land and water conservation and addresses morphology, hydrology, and ecology of the river and its watershed to enhance the effectiveness of restoration and conservation efforts.

5. Promote and integrate habitat connectivity, representation, redundancy, and resiliency into the design of conservation, restoration, and recreation initiatives, to address the effects of land use and climate changes.

6. Collect and share scientific information that helps stakeholders prioritize conservation actions within the watershed to sustain economic, recreational, and natural resources over the long-term. Utilize geospatial data tools, including an online river atlas to be developed for the White River National Blueway, to make scientific and other information accessible to and useful for stakeholders and the interested public.

7. Communicate, collaborate, and cooperate with diverse stakeholder partnerships that include public and private organizations, local communities, and citizens of the watershed to support development and implementation of a watershed-wide action plan for the White River National Blueway as an integrated land and water management system, that includes short- and long-term desired outcomes, projects and initiatives, and metrics for success based on the objectives for the White River National Blueway.

8. Seek opportunities to use the broad range of programs, improve capacity, and facilitate participation by allowing additional administrative flexibility in the allocation and use of agency financial assistance and technical assistance to expand the ability to forge internal and external partnerships to achieve the objectives of this MOU and the White River National Blueway.

9. In an effort to increase capacity, leverage resources, and magnify the outcomes, recruit additional Federal partners as parties to the White River National Blueway MOU as a means of achieving additional and enhanced outcomes and quality public service.

VI. Disclaimer

1. While the actions identified in this MOU are deemed desirable and considered necessary to achieve the aforementioned objectives, the actual contribution will be dependent on agency priorities, laws and policies, and contributions toward core objectives, and subject to the availability of resources for these purposes.

2. This MOU is not a fiscal obligation document. Nothing in this MOU obligates the parties to enter into contracts or other funding instruments to carry out the purposes of this MOU.

3. This MOU does not authorize or affect the use of private property and is not the basis for the exercise of any new regulatory authority. This MOU shall not affect or interfere with any federal, state, local, and tribal government jurisdiction or applicable law including interstate compacts relating to water or the laws of any state or tribe relating to the control, appropriation, use, or distribution of water or water rights.

4. The rights and benefits conferred by this MOU shall be subject to the laws of the United States governing the parties to this MOU and to the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, whether now in force or hereafter enacted or provided, and nothing herein shall be construed as in any way impairing the general powers of supervision, regulation, and control by the parties to this MOU.

5. This agreement and the obligations of the parties to this MOU hereunder shall be subject to the availability of funding, and nothing herein contained shall be construed as binding the parties to this MOU to expend in any one fiscal year any sum in excess of appropriations made by Congress or administratively allocated for the purpose of this MOU for the fiscal year, or to involve the parties to this MOU in any contract or other obligation for the further expenditure of money in excess of such appropriations or allocations.

6. This MOU is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

VII. Special Provisions

1. This MOU does not in any way restrict the Federal partners from participating in similar activities or entering into similar agreements with other public or private agencies, organizations or individuals.

2. No voluntary transfer or assignment of this agreement or any part thereof or interest therein, directly or indirectly, shall be made unless such transfer or assignment is first approved by all of the parties hereto in writing.

3. The terms and provisions contained within this agreement are the total, complete and exclusive agreement between the parties. Additionally, this agreement may only be modified in writing after providing notice to and obtaining written approval from all parties to this MOU.

4. Additional federal agencies and departments may be added to this White River National Blueway MOU after executing a copy of Exhibit I, certifying acceptance of the intent, objectives, implementation strategies, and provisions outlined in this document.

5. This MOU shall become effective on the date of the last signature to this MOU. The subsequent addition of other agencies or departments through execution of a separate document, described herein as Exhibit I, shall not change, alter or revise the effective date of this MOU

VIII. Expiration

1. This MOU shall be in effect for a term of five (5) years and will automatically renew for periods of five (5) year intervals, unless participation is terminated by the signatories to this MOU.

2. This agreement may be terminated in whole or in part hereof at the option of any party to this MOU after thirty (30) days from the date written notice of termination is given.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto executed this Memorandum of Understanding on the date(s) set forth below:

Signatures by agency, signatory agency official's title, and date will be inserted below: