

PROTECT SCENIC RIVERS

Preserving Tennessee's Scenic Rivers – Protecting Water, Wildlife, and Communities

AT A GLANCE

The Tennessee Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 protects designated rivers for their outstanding natural, scenic, and recreational value. Tennessee has over 60,000 miles of rivers and streams, many of which provide drinking water, recreation, and critical wildlife habitat.

WHAT IS A STATE SCENIC RIVER?

A state scenic river in Tennessee is a river that has been designated for its scenic, ecological, cultural, or historical value.

WHAT IS A CLASS II DESIGNATION?

Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free flowing, unpolluted, and with shorelines and scenic vistas partially or predominately used for agricultural and other recreational activities which do not interfere with public use and enjoyment of the river and shores.



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HB 0895 / SB 0725



AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 11, Chapter 13 and Title 68, relative to scenic rivers. Parks, Natural Areas Preservation - As introduced, removes the two-mile buffer between class II scenic rivers and new and expanded landfill sites. Amends TCA Title 11, Chapter 13 and Title 68.

What does that mean?

This bill would remove the two-mile buffer between Class II Scenic Rivers and landfills. It could allow for landfill sites to be developed and/or expanded near scenic rivers, ultimately reducing environmental protections.

WHY IS THE BUFFER BETWEEN RIVERS AND LANDFILLS IMPORTANT?



1

Preventing Water Contamination

Landfills can produce leachate, a toxic liquid created when water seeps through waste, absorbing harmful chemicals, heavy metals, and pathogens. If not properly managed, leachate could make its way into adjacent ground or surface water, leading to the pollution of rivers. The two-mile buffer ensures protection for our most valuable rivers in TN.

2

A Matter of Public Health and Recreation

Our State Scenic Rivers are some of the most ecologically valuable and highly recreated rivers in TN. The 2-mile landfill buffer limits pollution and impact to our scenic rivers and ensures a safe recreational experience for the community.

3

Wildlife and Habitat Protection

State Scenic Rivers often have significant ecological value and provides habitat for some of our rare and endangered aquatic species. A buffer helps prevent habitat destruction, limits exposure to toxins, and prevents interference with the river's ecosystem.

TENNESSEE HAS 9–CLASS II PASTORAL RIVER AREAS, SPANNING A TOTAL OF MORE THAN 140 MILES ACROSS 12 COUNTIES, INCLUDING CHEATHAM, DAVIDSON, GRUNDY, HICKMAN, JACKSON, LAWRENCE, MARSHALL, MAURY, OVERTON, PUTNAM, RUTHERFORD, AND WILLIAMSON.