

## Carviou, Erin E - DNR

---

**Subject:** FW: Pike Wild River Designation

---

**From:** Hughes, Audra A - DNR <[audra.hughes@wisconsin.gov](mailto:audra.hughes@wisconsin.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, April 7, 2025 4:14 PM

**To:** John Lefebvre <[John.Lefebvre@marinettecountywi.gov](mailto:John.Lefebvre@marinettecountywi.gov)>; Rebecca Lindner <[Rebecca.Lindner@marinettecountywi.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Lindner@marinettecountywi.gov)>

**Cc:** Severson, Ryan J - DNR <[Ryan.Severson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Ryan.Severson@wisconsin.gov)>; Berklund, Heather A - DNR <[Heather.Berklund@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Heather.Berklund@wisconsin.gov)>; Antonuk, Connie J - DNR <[Connie.Antonuk@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Connie.Antonuk@wisconsin.gov)>; Callan, Benjamin S - DNR <[Benjamin.Callan@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Benjamin.Callan@wisconsin.gov)>; Lutze, Kay E - DNR <[Kay.Lutze@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Kay.Lutze@wisconsin.gov)>

**Subject:** Pike Wild River Designation

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [audra.hughes@wisconsin.gov](mailto:audra.hughes@wisconsin.gov). [Learn why this is important](#)

Good Afternoon,

This email is in response to Marinette County's email to DNR dated March 25, 2025. The DNR waterways program is happy to provide more details to clarify its position regarding the boundaries of the Pike wild river designation. The DNR has long interpreted the Pike wild river designation under Wis. Stat. s. 30.26 and Wis. Admin. Code s. NR 302.02 to include the north and south headwater branches of the Pike River. Wis. Stat. s. 30.26(2)(a) broadly defines the Pike River in Marinette County as a wild river. Section NR 302.02(1)(a) defines as a wild river "those rivers designated by the legislature in s. 30.26," including "the Pike river in Marinette county from its mouth in section 3, township 34 north, range 21 east, upstream to the headwater branches; one branch beginning at the outlet of Coleman lake in section 17, township 36 north, range 18 east, and the other branch beginning at the outlet of North pond in section 20, township 37 north, range 18 east." The description of the locations where the north and south headwater branches begin supports the interpretation that the north and south headwater branches are intended to be included in the Pike wild river designation, as these descriptions would be unnecessary to include if the designation excluded the headwater branches. Other tributaries to the Pike River that are not considered to be part of the designation are not identified in the rule definition. Moreover, both the DNR and Marinette County have long considered the north and south headwater branches to be part of the wild river designation. For instance, at the time the 1991 Agreement between the DNR and Marinette County was executed, the DNR had a "Pike Wild River Project" Master Plan that clearly included the headwater branches as part of the designation, and this master plan was referenced in the 1991 Agreement. Thus, in accordance with DNR's longstanding interpretation of the rule, and consistent with maps and plans depicting the Pike wild river designation, the DNR continues to maintain that the protections afforded to wild rivers under Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 302 apply to the north and south headwater branches of the Pike River. The DNR hopes that Marinette County will consider this information in deciding how to move forward with respect to the 1991 Agreement between the DNR and Marinette County and any potential amendments to the County's forest management plan. If desired, the DNR would be happy to have a discussion with Marinette County regarding the wild river designation.

I hope this information is helpful.

Thanks,

Audra Felix

**Audra Felix**

Staff Attorney – Bureau of Legal Services

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
1027 W. St. Paul Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233  
Phone: 608-640-6395  
[audra.felix@wisconsin.gov](mailto:audra.felix@wisconsin.gov)



[dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov)

Our core values include professionalism, integrity, and customer service.

Please visit our [survey](#) to provide feedback on your experience interacting with any DNR employee.

