



The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman
Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 1, 2025

RE: Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act

Dear Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Huffman:

On behalf of over 300,000 members, volunteers, and supporters, American Rivers is writing to express our support for the *Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act of 2025 – H.R. 654*. Rivers provide our drinking water, grow our food, and sustain our spirits. For more than 50 years, American Rivers has worked alongside communities to champion a national effort to protect and restore all rivers, from remote mountain streams to urban waterways. Healthy rivers like the Myakka provide people and nature with clean, abundant water and natural habitat that is worthy of enduring protection. H.R. 654 would amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate the portion of the Myakka River lying within Sarasota County, Florida as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Designated as the state's only "Florida Wild and Scenic River" by the Florida State Legislature in 1985, the Myakka is home to extensive marshes, lakes, and habitat for diverse wildlife in an area surrounded by encroaching development. H.R. 654 expands upon existing protections and provides for the ongoing preservation and management of the 34-mile portion of the river within Sarasota County as a partnership Wild and Scenic River, safeguarding the river's natural character and water quality for its inhabitants and surrounding residents.

The Myakka River is vital to maintaining the natural character and environment of southwest Florida and Sarasota County. American Rivers joins other public leaders and private property owners, including the Myakka River Management Coordinating Council, to urge the House Natural Resources Committee to take up *H.R. 642 - Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act of 2025* to amend the Wild and Scenic River Act and designate the portion of the Myakka River within Sarasota County as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This action would ensure continued access to nature for Sarasota County and its residents and build upon existing, local protections while further leveraging federal resources to benefit local communities.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Cruickshank
Director, American Rivers

CC: The Honorable Tom Tiffany, Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal Lands
The Honorable Joe Neguse, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Federal Lands