

Clinton directs agencies to

■ **Congress should not block his efforts, the president said.**

YULEE, Fla. (AP) — President Clinton issued three directives yesterday to protect miles of government-run beaches and help clean waterways and demanded that Congress stop making "sneak attacks on our environment."

In his weekly radio address, Clinton said he was directing the National Park Service to expand health protections along seashores man-

aged by the federal government, including beaches along Cape Cod, Mass.; Cape Hatteras, N.C.; and Point Reyes National Seashore 30 miles north of San Francisco.

He also told all federal agencies to adopt "a comprehensive strategy to better safeguard rivers and other bodies of water on federal lands."

In addition, he directed the Environmental Protection Agency to develop better ways to prevent sewage spills, a major cause of beach closures. Last year, 350 of 1,062 beaches surveyed by the EPA reported closures or health

clean waterways and federal beaches

advisories due to pollution.

"We often speak of building a country where our children have an opportunity to do even better than we've done," Clinton said. "We know our children cannot do better tomorrow if we're willing to squander precious environmental resources today."

Environmentalists welcomed Clinton's announcement. Tryg Sletteland, director of the Pacific Rivers Council in Portland, Ore., said the new initiative should reduce pollution of lakes and streams from timber cutting and cat-

tle grazing on public lands.

"This is long overdue," he said.

The president spoke from White Oak Plantation, along the banks of the St. Marys River near the Georgia-Florida border. He and his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, arrived Tuesday. They return to Washington today.

"Our visit here reminds us once again what a gift it is to spend time outdoors, to walk among tall trees, to see wild animals and rare birds, to watch the sun set and the stars come out over a beautiful river," Clinton said. "It also makes us

appreciate the generations of Americans who fought to preserve the parklands and the beaches we all enjoy today."

But Clinton said those efforts are being jeopardized by Republican congressional leaders' budget allocations.

"We've already seen troubling signs that Congress again will try to gut environmental protections by tacking provisions called riders onto their budget bills," Clinton said. "I urge Congress to end these sneak attacks on our environment once and for all."