

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 11, 1982

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RAHALL ANGRY OVER ELIMINATION OF FLOOD CONTROL FUNDS

WILLIAMSON, WEST VIRGINIA --- "WHILE THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS CUT OFF THE MONEY, THEY HAVEN'T CUT OFF THE WATER," STRESSED WEST VIRGINIA'S FOURTH DISTRICT CONGRESSMAN NICK J. RAHALL, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WILLIAMSON.

RAHALL CALLED THE MEETING BECAUSE OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION TO ELIMINATE ALL STUDY AND CONSTRUCTION FUNDS FOR THE TUG FORK FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT FROM THE FISCAL YEAR 1983 FEDERAL BUDGET.

"TO ME, THIS DECISION WHICH HAS BEEN MADE BY THE HIGHEST OFFICIALS IN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION -- DAVID STOCKMAN AND OTHERS ABOVE HIM ----- IS HEARTLESS AND GROSSLY UNFAIR," RAHALL CHARGED.

"AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE ESTIMATED COST OF A LONG-TERM FLOOD CONTROL PROGRAM FOR THIS REGION WOULD BE IN THE AREA OF \$400 MILLION," CONGRESSMAN RAHALL POINTED OUT. "A SUM WHICH EQUALS THE COST OF OPERATING THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT FOR ONLY 11 HOURS," RAHALL OBSERVED.

CONGRESSMAN RAHALL ALSO OUTLINED HIS EFFORTS TO RESTORE FUNDING FOR THIS PROGRAM. "WHILE THE PRESIDENT AND MR. STOCKMAN MAY PROPOSE, THE CONGRESS STILL MUST DISPOSE. THEREFORE I HAVE ALREADY BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE APPROPRIATE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO WORK WITH THEM TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL." **LETTERS ARE ATTACHED**

IN CONCLUDING, CONGRESSMAN RAHALL SAID, "I FEAR THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS BECOME SO OBSESSED, TOTALLY AND COLDLY, WITH CUTS--UPON CUTS--UPON CUTS--THAT THEY ARE BLIND TO THE PROTECTION AND CARE OF HUMAN LIFE. A DAY OR EVEN AN HOUR SPENT WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE TUG VALLEY DURING A RAINFALL, I BELIEVE WOULD TEACH THEM A FEW FACTS ABOUT THE AVERAGE WAY OF LIFE, AND FEAR OF FLOODING THAT EXISTS."

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Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN NICK J. RAHALL, II

2/11/82

I am sure that the assembled public officials here this morning, and the others who have joined us, do not need to be reminded about what took place in this valley nearly five years ago. For in April of 1977, one of the most devastating floods in the history of this region brought havoc and destruction to the residents of southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky.

While over \$30 million has been spent since 1977 on various flood control measures--and I should point out that more has been spent on studies than on construction--the fear of a heavy downpour has not disappeared. And worst of all, no funds are provided for study or construction of any aspects of the Tug and Levisa Forks flood control project in the fiscal year 1983 Federal budget.

This continued cold-hearted approach to this problem, now under two Administrations, angers me as much as it does you.

To me, this decision which has been made by the highest officials of the Reagan Administration -- David Stockman and others above him--is heartless and grossly unfair. While they have stopped the money, they unfortunately have not stopped the water. Furthermore, while the President and Mr. Stockman may feel like they can walk on water, the residents of the Tug Valley cannot.

At the present time, the estimated cost of a long-term flood protection program for this region would be in the area of \$400 million--a sum which equals the cost of operating the Defense Department for only 11 hours. Granted, we should be strong in the world community, but I believe our strength should begin right here at home.

I fear the Reagan Administration has become so totally and coldly obsessed with cuts--upon cuts--upon cuts, that they have become blind to the need for protection and care of human life. A day, or even an hour spent with the people of this region during a rainfall, would teach the members of this Administration about the average way of life, and fear of flooding that exists.

My commitment to the people of this valley has always been strong, you all know that, and for this reason I have been in contact with the appropriate officials to begin the effort to see that these needed funds are restored.

The President and Mr. Stockman may propose, but Congress must dispose, and therefore I will present the case of the people of the Tug Valley to the House Appropriations Committee in the coming weeks, as they review the Administration's budget requests.

Since 1957, the estimated flood damages for this region come to over \$630 million. Sadly, this figure does not reflect the true damage caused to the region and its residents.

Thomas Jefferson once said, "The first and only concern of government should be the care of its people, not their destruction." This is a creed I plan to follow.

Thank you.

FUNDING TO DATE

Listed below is the funding to date on Tug Fork since the major flood in 1977.

- | Year | Estimated Damage (\$) at Time of Event |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1979 | ARC transferred \$10 million to the Corps with \$6 million of that going for stream clearing and another \$135,000 to assist counties in obtaining rights of entry. |
| 1978-1982 | \$3,495,000 for General Investigations |
| 1978 | \$520,000 for Advanced Engineering and Design |
| 1981-1982 | \$13.5 million with \$840,000 going for construction on the sheet pile cutoff in South Williamson and the highway addition at Barbourville. In FY 82 \$7.5 million was appropriated for planning, engineering, design and some construction. Of this amount, \$1.5 million has not been allocated by the Corps. |
| Total 1978-1982: | \$30,495,000, plus the \$1.5 million that is still available from FY 82. |
| 1983 | The Corps, under direction of the Administration has asked for <u>ZERO</u> funding on the Tug Fork. |

** adjusted figure in 1981 dollars -- \$630,471,000

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Ohio River Division, Huntington District, unpublished information sheet. Estimated damage in 1980 dollars based on application of price deflators for gross regional product provided by the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (See Economic Report of the President, transmitted to the Congress, January 1981, p. 137).

Table 1: Estimated Flood Damages in the Big Sandy River, Tug Fork, and Levisa Fork Region for Major Flood Events Since 1957, in Dollar Value at the Time of the Event and 1980 Dollars

Year	<u>Estimated Damage(\$) at Time of Event</u>			<u>Estimated Damage in 1980 Dollars</u>		
	<u>Tug Fork</u>	<u>Levisa Fork</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Tug Fork</u>	<u>Levisa Fork</u>	<u>Total</u>
1957	6,585,000	34,207,000	38,792,000	19,954,545	103,657,576	123,612,121
1963	2,190,000	17,761,000	19,951,000	6,843,750	55,503,125	62,346,875
1967	318,000	547,000	865,000	908,571	1,562,857	2,471,428
1972	250,000	217,000	467,000	543,478	471,739	1,015,217
1973	----	171,000	171,000	----	342,000	342,000
1974	806,000	303,000	1,109,000	1,465,455	550,909	2,016,364
1975	159,000	421,000	580,000	265,000	701,667	966,667
1977	197,300,000	63,600,000	260,900,000	274,027,778	88,333,333	362,361,111
1978	13,700,000	706,000	14,406,000	16,913,580	871,605	17,785,185
1979	----	243,000	243,000	----	264,130	264,130
	<u>221,308,000</u>	<u>118,176,000</u>	<u>339,484,000</u>	<u>320,922,157</u>	<u>252,258,941</u>	<u>573,181,048**</u>

** adjusted figure in 1981 dollars -- \$630,671,053

Source: U.S. Army, Corps. of Engineers, Ohio River Division, Huntington District, unpublished information sheet. Estimated Damage in 1980 Dollars based on application of price deflators for gross rational product provided by the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (See Economic Report of the President, transmitted to the Congress. January 1981, p. 237).

NICK J. RAHALL, II
4TH DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 10, 1982

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The Honorable David Stockman
Director, OMB
Executive Office Building
Washington D.C. 20503

Dear Dave:

As I am sure you are aware since we served together in the U.S. House of Representatives for four years, flood protection for the residents of my congressional district is a main concern of mine. For this reason, I am distressed that your FY 1983 Federal Budget contains no funding for study or construction of a long-term flood control project for the Tug and Levisa Forks of the Big Sandy River in southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky.

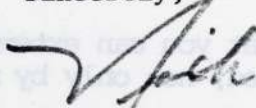
In April of 1977, the most devastating flood in this region's history brought great havoc and destruction to the residents. At this time, nearly five years later, little has been done to protect them from any recurrence of such a disaster.

Total cost of this project is estimated at around \$400 million, and your FY '82 budget contained \$7.2 million towards the effort. I want you to know, that I intend to work within Congress to see that these monies are restored.

While I am well aware that your's is a most difficult task, I am sure you realize that priorities are necessary, and the first priority should be the protection of human life.

With warm regard, I am

Sincerely,



Nick J. Rahall, II
Member of Congress

cc: President Ronald Reagan