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# RAHALL RIVER PARK BILL TO ALLOW BLACK FLY SPRAYING IN NEW RIVER

BECKLEY, WV...U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) announced today that his proposed "West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act" will include a provision directing the National Park Service to allow the state department of natural resources to engage in activities to eradicate black flies within the boundaries of the New River Gorge National River.

Rahall's proposed legislation, to be introduced in the U.S. Congress early next year, would also make boundary modifications to the New River national park unit, create the Gauley River national recreation area and establish the state's first national wild and scenic rivers.

"The state has engaged in a successful Bti application program on portions of the New River not within the national park unit as well as on the Greenbrier and Bluestone Rivers and many residents of Raleigh County have told me they have noticed a reduction in the black fly population," Rahall said. "However, residents are still being menaced and injured by black fly stings primarily because the National Park Service will not allow the state to spray ~~black flies~~ <sup>with</sup> in the New River Gorge National River."

Rahall said that while the state Department of Natural Resources has filed an application with the National Park Service seeking permission to spray black flies within the boundaries of the New River park unit, he believes the federal agency is predisposed to not granting the permit based on statements made by the Park Service in correspondence with Charles Connors, publisher of the Beckley Newspapers. In one of the Park Service letters, Rahall said it appeared the agency was more concerned with the health and well-being of the black flies than of the local residents. "If the Park Service grants the permit that will be great, but if they do not we will have this legislative remedy as a back-up," Rahall said.

The draft West Virginia river bill would also designate the whitewater segment of the Gauley River below Summersville Dam as a national recreation area. In addition, it would designate a portion of the lower Meadow River as a national wild river and the segment of the lower Bluestone River already in public ownership as a national scenic river. Private lands in the Bluestone River Gorge would not be effected.

According to Rahall, enactment of the legislation will promote greater recreation and tourism opportunities in southern West Virginia and will enhance related economic development activities. The Fourth District congressman said he intends to contact Governor Arch ~~bill with Governor~~ Moore for his views and comments on the draft proposal ~~so that any concerns of the administration could be~~ in an effort to accommodate any potential concerns of the state government. Rahall said he believes the West Virginia Congressional Delegation will support the measure.