

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 29, 1988

CONTACT: JERRY BURKOT
(202) 225-3452

NRA SUPPORTS GAULEY NRA

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. REP. NICK J. RAHALL (D-WV) TODAY SAID THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION (NRA) HAS ANNOUNCED ITS SUPPORT OF THE WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS BILL, WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH A GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.

"THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION NOW JOINS THE BROAD COALITION ALREADY SUPPORTING THIS BILL. THE LEGISLATION IS UNIQUE AMONG MEASURES OF THIS NATURE IN THAT IT ENJOYS THE SUPPORT OF SUCH A WIDE RANGE OF INTERESTS -- FROM THE LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS, FROM WHITEWATER RAFTING INTERESTS TO THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA," RAHALL STATED.

THE BILL, WHICH ORIGINALLY PASSED THE HOUSE DURING MAY 1987 AND THE SENATE EARLIER THIS MONTH, NOW MUST BE RECONCILED BY THE TWO BODIES. THE HOUSE IS SCHEDULED TO CONSIDER H.R. 900 ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, WITH AN AMENDMENT THAT WOULD INCLUDE A 5.5 MILE SEGMENT OF THE MEADOW RIVER TRIBUTARY OF THE GAULEY RIVER WITHIN THE PROPOSED NATIONAL RECREATION AREA AND ENSURE CONTINUED STATE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE PROPOSED BLUESTONE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER.

IN A SEPTEMBER 27TH LETTER TO ALL HOUSE MEMBERS, THE NRA SAID "THE AMENDED VERSION WILL SAFEGUARD WEST VIRGINIA'S FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PREROGATIVES AND THE RIGHTS OF WEST VIRGINIA SPORTSMEN." RAHALL SAID THAT HE WELCOMES THE ORGANIZATION'S LETTER BUT HAD NOT DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH THE NRA NOR HAD HE REQUESTED THEIR SUPPORT.

"HUNTING AND FISHING WERE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED IN THE LEGISLATION ALL ALONG BUT SOME CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED BY THE WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES ABOUT WHETHER TRAPPING WOULD BE ALLOWED WITHIN THE RIVER SEGMENTS AFFECTED BY THE BILL. THE SENATE VERSION REFERENCED TRAPPING AND THIS WILL BE MAINTAINED FOR THE GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA," RAHALL SAID.