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CONGRESSMAN

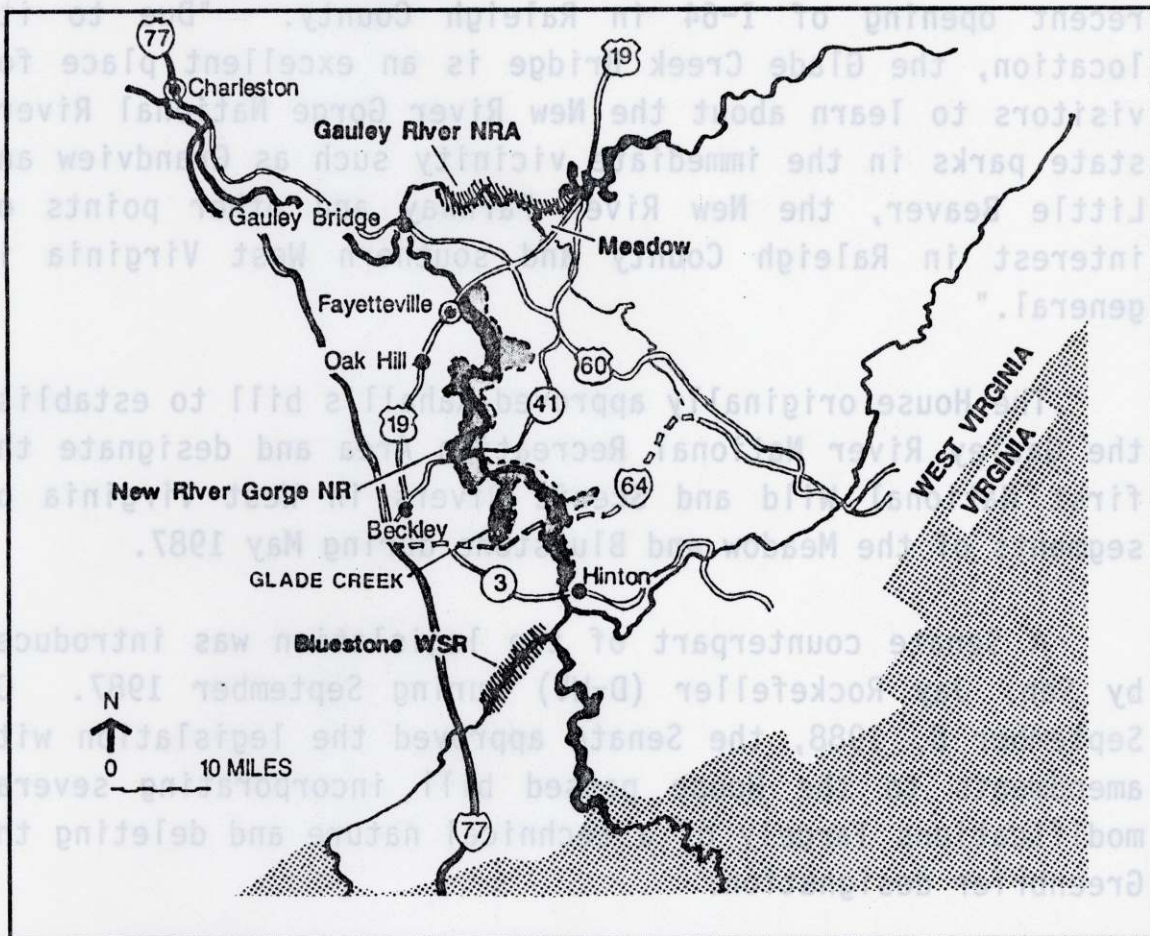
Nick Rahall

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HOUSE PASSES W.VA. RIVERS BILL (AGAIN) GLADE CREEK VISITOR CENTER AMENDMENT ADDED BY RAHALL



WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The U.S. House of Representatives today for the second time this Congress acted on the "West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act" (H.R. 900), paving the way for final action on the measure by the Senate.

U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV), the bill's original sponsor, used the opportunity to gain the adoption of an amendment to authorize and direct the National Park Service to construct a scenic overlook and visitors facility at the I-64 Glade Creek Bridge.

"This legislation represents what its title implies," Rahall stated. "It is in the national interest to conserve the three West Virginia rivers addressed by the bill, and with its enactment, we will have established the largest network of federally protected rivers in the eastern United States."

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According to Rahall: "The benefits of today's action, in terms of providing new opportunities for economic growth associated with the establishment of these National Park System units in the region, will be felt not only by the present generation, but by generations of West Virginians to come."

The Glade Creek visitor center, Rahall said, will enhance the economic benefit potential associated with the recent opening of I-64 in Raleigh County. "Due to its location, the Glade Creek Bridge is an excellent place for visitors to learn about the New River Gorge National River, state parks in the immediate vicinity such as Grandview and Little Beaver, the New River Parkway and other points of interest in Raleigh County and southern West Virginia in general."

The House originally approved Rahall's bill to establish the Gauley River National Recreation Area and designate the first National Wild and Scenic Rivers in West Virginia on segments of the Meadow and Bluestone during May 1987.

A Senate counterpart of the legislation was introduced by Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) during September 1987. On September 8, 1988, the Senate approved the legislation with amendments to the House passed bill incorporating several modifications largely of a technical nature and deleting the Greenbrier designation.

Rahall said that today's House action, in addition to authorizing the Glade Creek visitors facility, further modified the bill by incorporating the 5.5 mile segment of the Meadow River into the Gauley River National Recreation Area. The Meadow is a tributary of the Gauley River.

"The West Virginia Congressional Delegation has worked long and hard on this legislation and under the leadership of Senator Robert C. Byrd and Senator Rockefeller, I expect the Senate will move quickly toward final enactment of H.R. 900," Rahall said.

Map Note: The map depicts the new units of the National Park System established by H.R. 900 (Gauley River National Recreation Area with Meadow River tributary and the Bluestone Wild and Scenic River) along with the Glade Creek Visitors Facility in relation to the existing New River Gorge National River.