



## PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Congressman

# Nick Rahall

WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

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### BEECHFORK DEVELOPMENTS HAVE FIGHTING CHANCE

*Rahall Says Army Corps Willing to Contribute*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today said that while his persistent efforts to obtain recreational improvements at Beech Fork State Park were met with "stone cold silence" by the previous State Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' willingness to work on the matter will help keep the project alive.

"My objective is to see the development of a day-use area, a lodge complex, cabins and other recreational facilities at Beech Fork State Park," Rahall said. "The Corps has been very straightforward with me on the costs associated with the necessary infrastructure improvements, which require cost-sharing, to support this type of development. However, we were met with stone cold silence by State officials last year when we brought these matters to their attention."

Rahall explained that while the park is managed by the State of West Virginia, in actuality all of the land at Beech Fork is in federal ownership. The State administers the park area through a leasing arrangement with the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Corps has told Rahall that while it is prohibited by law from contributing to "revenue-producing facilities such as lodges, cabins and golf courses," in the event infrastructure requirements involving roads and utilities associated with these types of facilities "also serve public water oriented recreation facilities to be developed in the same or on adjacent areas, then these infrastructure requirements can be cost shared on a proportional basis to public use requirements."

"This means that we can get the Corps to defray 50% of the costs associated with putting in an access road, utilities, restrooms, a boat launching ramp, picnic and play facilities and parking lots if the State can put up the other 50%," Rahall said.

"Obviously, Beech Fork is going to be a much attractive place for a private developer to invest in for the purposes of building a lodging complex once the necessary utilities are in place."

Rahall added: "It's a fairly simple rule of thumb. You have to invest in order to get a return. So if we're going to expect our State Parks to be self-supporting, then we have to make some initial investments into them. In light of its proximity to Huntington, I think Beech Fork should be on the 'A List' for recreational development."