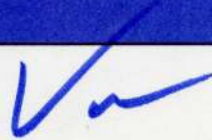


U.S. Congressman  
**Nick Rahall**  
*WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**RAHALL-CAPERTON FISHERY INITIATIVE ADVANCES**  
*House Committee Approves New Federal Trout Hatchery For WV*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A House Committee today approved a proposal devised by U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) and West Virginia Governor Gaston Caperton to construct a new federal trout hatchery in southern West Virginia.

"There is a dire need for additional fishery resources in southern West Virginia," Rahall said. "Many of our lakes and streams could receive greater levels of stocked trout. However, at present there is inadequate hatchery capacity in the State."

Gov. Caperton stated: "An additional hatchery in the southern part of our State would provide extra trout for stocking and would make distribution easier and more economical. This project will greatly benefit West Virginia's sportsmen."

Earlier this year Rahall had asked State officials to evaluate sites in southern West Virginia to determine whether any were suitable to support a hatchery operation. Two sites in McDowell County which would utilize mine discharges are currently under consideration. Both are capable of supporting an annual production capacity of 25,000 pounds of trout.

In a letter to Rahall, DNR Director Ed Hamrick explained: "Since springs with sufficient flow to support a trout hatchery do not occur in southern West Virginia, the only source of large volumes of cold water are mine discharges. Mine discharges in that area of West Virginia are generally not acidic and could be suitable as a hatchery water supply."

Rahall's legislation directs the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to construct a hatchery operation in McDowell County utilizing mine effluents. The project would be undertaken in consultation with the State of West Virginia and the Office of Surface Mining. The bill must now be approved by the full House of Representatives before being considered by the Senate.

"West Virginians have a deep affection for the outdoors and many of us enjoy fishing and hunting activities as underscored by the fact that over 30% of the State's residents hold a fishing or hunting license," Rahall noted. "I view my bill as an effort to enhance these recreational opportunities."

Currently, the Bowden National Fish Hatchery in Elkins is the major federal trout raising facility in West Virginia. The Leetown National Fisheries Center in Kearneysville concentrates on fishery related research while operations at the White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery are limited to raising eggs for nationwide use.