



WHAT: The redesignation of the New River Gorge National River to a National Park and Preserve would primarily be a name change, while promoting the beauty and historical significance of the Gorge, and ensure that the longstanding traditions of hunting and fishing are protected for generations to come.

WHY: Redesignating the National River to a National Park and Preserve will shine a new light on the New River Gorge and its many offerings—including hunting and fishing—to help drive tourism and spur the local and regional economy.

- With the New River Gorge's proximity to metropolitan areas such as Washington, D.C.; Pittsburgh, PA; Richmond, VA; Charlotte, NC; and other major cities, it will attract new tourists and thrill seekers to the Gorge and the region as a whole.

WHERE: The National Park will be composed of four areas, totaling approximately 7,021 acres, including:

- **The Lower Gorge** – This will make up the majority of the National Park. Most of the land is steep, rough terrain that overlooks the New River below. This section is also home to the New River Gorge Bridge, which is the third tallest bridge in the United States. 301 acres of the Lower Gorge have been kept open for hunting at the request of local hunters.
- **Thurmond** – The inclusion of the Thurmond protects and highlights the history of a town once at the heart of the coal boom and now a popular place for tourists to go and learn about West Virginia's rich coal heritage.
- **Grandview** – This area is known for its five hiking trails and scenic overlooks, which are popular destinations. 368 acres in Grandview will be opened up for hunting for the first time ever.
- **Sandstone Falls** – This portion of the Park is home to the largest waterfall on the New River and a unique botanical ecosystem, which is caused by the river flowing north across the region.
- The approximately 65,165-acre Preserve has been legislated to carry over the current hunting and fishing regulations that are observed in its current National River designation. This means that hunting and fishing will be regulated in accordance with Section 1106 of the *National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978* (16 U.S.C. 460m–20), meaning the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources will retain jurisdiction over these activities.
- Regardless of whether private property is in the National Park or the Preserve, hunting, trapping, and fishing are protected rights on private lands.
- The bill would authorize the National Park Service to acquire up to 100 acres for parking to address current infrastructure issues and to expand parking if need be.

- Commercial recreational watercraft services within the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve will continue to be administered in the same manner as directed by Section 402 of the West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act of 1987.