

The original documents are located in Box 38, “9/11/76 - Remarks Upon the Signing of the New River Bill” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

NEW RIVER BILL SIGNING CEREMONY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1976

9/11

Susan:

This cover goes with talking points
sent to you earlier today.

Sorry, but it came back down from
the P. separately.

Sara

Members of Congress / Mr. Helms / Church
Mr. Hollibaugh
Executive Board

I AM DELIGHTED TO WELCOME YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE

TODAY FOR A CEREMONY OF VERY SPECIAL IMPORTANCE.

IN JUST A MOMENT, I WILL SIGN INTO LAW A BILL TO

PROTECT THE NEW RIVER IN NORTH CAROLINA FROM DESTRUCTION,

BY INCLUDING THE RIVER IN THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

SYSTEM.

THIS NEW LAW IS THE CULMINATION OF YEARS OF EFFORT

BY A GREAT MANY PEOPLE.

I CONGRATULATE YOU AND YOUR

FRIENDS FOR YOUR PERSISTENCE, YOUR COURAGE AND YOUR

ULTIMATE SUCCESS.

SOME VERY SERIOUS OBSTACLES HAD TO BE OVERCOME

FOR THIS LEGISLATION TO BE ENACTED, AND IN A WAY, THAT

IS AS IT SHOULD BE.

WHEN A DECISION HAS TO BE MADE BETWEEN ENERGY

PRODUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, BOTH SIDES HAVE

LEGITIMATE AND WORTHY CLAIMS TO MAKE, AND SUCH DECISIONS

SHOULD NEVER BE MADE IN HASTE.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION, ON THIS

ISSUE OR ANY OTHER IN A ^{government} ~~DEMOCRACY~~ LIKE OURS, IS "WHAT

IS THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE?"

IT SHOULD NOT MATTER WHETHER THE PEOPLE INVOLVED
ARE RICH OR POOR, FAMOUS OR ANONYMOUS, POWERFUL OR NOT.
THE PEOPLE'S VOICE MUST ALWAYS BE HEARD, AND IT IS CLEAR
THAT THE PEOPLE WANTED TO KEEP THE NEW RIVER LIKE IT IS.

THROUGH THE TIRELESS EFFORTS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA
CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, PAST AND PRESENT, COMBINED
WITH THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER AND A DETERMINED
GROUP OF PRIVATE CITIZENS, THE PEOPLE'S WILL HAS NOW
BEEN DONE.

AN ANCIENT, MAJESTIC RIVER AND THE BEAUTIFUL LAND
THAT SURROUNDS IT HAVE BEEN SAVED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
TO ENJOY, AS WE ENJOY THEM.

WITH SPECIAL PRIDE AND PLEASURE, I NOW SIGN THIS ACT
INTO LAW, AND I JOIN YOU IN THE HOPE THAT THE NEW RIVER
WILL FLOW FREE AND CLEAR FOR ANOTHER HUNDRED MILLION YEARS.

END OF TEXT