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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
UPON SIGNING
THE NEW RIVER BILL - H.R. 13372

THE ROSE GARDEN

12:10 P.M. EDT

Senator Helms, Governor Holshouser, Members of
the House of Representatives:

I am delighted to welcome all of you here today
for a bill signing ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White
House.

In just a minute I will sign into law a bill to
protect the New River in North Carolina from destruction by
including it in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

This new law, as many of you know here, is the
culmination of years of efforts by a great many people, and
I congratulate all of you here and your many friends for
your persistence, your courage and your ultimate success.

Some very serious obstacles had to be overcome
for this legislation to be enacted. In a way, I think that
is the way it should be. When a decision has to be made
between energy production and environmental protection,
both sides have legitimate and very worthy points to be
made, and such decisions should never be made in haste.

But the most important consideration on this
issue or any other issue in a Government like ours is, what
is the will of the people involved? It should not matter
whether the people involved are rich or poor, famous or
anonymous, powerful or not. And, it is clear that in this
key case, the people wanted the New River like it is.

Through the tireless efforts of the North Carolina
delegation, past as well as present, through the combined
efforts of Governor Holshouser and the many, many people in
the State of North Carolina, the people's will has now been
done and the ancient and majestic river and the beautiful
lands that surround it has been saved for future generations
to enjoy just as we have.

With special pride and a great deal of 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
100 million years.

END (AT 12:15 P.M. EDT)