Public Law 100-534
100th Congress

An Act

To protect and enhance the natural, scenic, cultural, and recreational values of certain segments of the New, Gauley, Meadow, and Bluestone Rivers in West Virginia for the benefit of present and future generations, and for other purposes.

Oct. 26, 1988
[H.R. 900]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act of 1987. National Park System. 16 USC 460m-15 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

This Act may be cited as the "West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act of 1987".

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.
Sec. 2. Findings and purposes.

TITLE I—NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

Sec. 101. Boundary modification.
Sec. 102. Cooperative agreements with State.
Sec. 103. Improvement of access at Cunard.
Sec. 104. Flow management.
Sec. 105. Visitor facility.

TITLE II—GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Sec. 201. Establishment.
Sec. 202. Administration.
Sec. 203. Miscellaneous.
Sec. 204. Authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 205. Special conditions.
Sec. 206. Advisory committee.

TITLE III—BLUESTONE NATIONAL SCENIC RIVER

Sec. 301. Designation of Lower Bluestone River.

TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 401. Coordination among recreational resources.
Sec. 402. Special provisions.
Sec. 403. Public awareness program.
Sec. 404. Consolidated management.
Sec. 405. New spending authority subject to appropriations.

TITLE V—TECHNICAL CHANGE TO WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT

Sec. 501. Acreage limitations.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

16 USC 460m-15 note.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) The outstanding natural, scenic, cultural and recreational values of the segment of the New River in West Virginia within the boundaries of the New River Gorge National River have been preserved and enhanced by its inclusion in the National Park System.

(2) The establishment of the New River Gorge National River has provided the basis for increased recreation and tourism

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activities in southern West Virginia due to its nationally recognized status and has greatly contributed to the regional economy.

(3) Certain boundary modifications to the New River Gorge National River are necessary to further protect the scenic resources within the river's visual corridor and to provide for better management of the national park unit.

(4) Several tributaries of the New River in West Virginia also possess remarkable and outstanding features of national significance. The segment of the Gauley River below Summersville Dam has gained national recognition as a premier whitewater recreation resource. The lower section of the Bluestone River and the lower section of the Meadow River possess remarkable and outstanding natural, scenic, and recreational values due to their predominantly undeveloped condition.

(5) Portions of several of the New River tributaries, including segments of the Gauley River, the Meadow River, and the Bluestone River are suitable for inclusion in the National Park System or the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

(6) It is in the national interest to preserve the natural condition of certain segments of the New, Gauley, Meadow, and Bluestone Rivers in West Virginia and to enhance recreational opportunities available on the free-flowing segments.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to provide for the protection and enhancement of the natural, scenic, cultural, and recreational values on certain free-flowing segments of the New, Gauley, Meadow, and Bluestone Rivers in the State of West Virginia for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

TITLE I—NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

SEC. 101. BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

Section 1101 of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 460m-15) is amended by striking out "NERI-20,002, dated July 1978" and substituting "NERI-80,023, dated January 1987".

SEC. 102. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH STATE.

Title XI of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 is amended by adding the following new section at the end thereof:

16 USC 460m-26.

Law enforcement and crime.

"SEC. 1113. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH STATE.

"In administering the national river, the Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the State of West Virginia, or any political subdivision thereof, for the rendering, on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis, of rescue, fire fighting, and law enforcement services and cooperative assistance by nearby law enforcement and fire preventive agencies.".

SEC. 103. IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS AT CUNARD.

Title XI of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 is amended by adding the following new section at the end thereof:

16 USC 460m-27.

Real property. Safety.

"SEC. 1114. IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS AT CUNARD.

"(a) DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT.—The Secretary shall expeditiously acquire such lands, and undertake such developments and improvements, as may be necessary to provide for commercial and noncommercial access to the river near Cunard. No restriction

shall be imposed on such access based on the time of day, except to the extent required to protect public health and safety.

"(b) INTERIM MEASURES.—Pending completion of the developments and improvements referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary shall permit the motorized towing of whitewater rafts in the section of the national river between Thurmond and Cunard when the volume of flow in the river is less than three thousand cubic feet per second.".

SEC. 104. FLOW MANAGEMENT.

Title XI of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 is amended by adding the following new section at the end:

"SEC. 1115. FLOW MANAGEMENT. 16 USC 460m-28.

"(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that adjustments of flows from Bluestone Lake project during periods of low flow are necessary to respond to the congressional mandate contained in section 1110 of this Act and that such adjustments could enhance the quality of the recreational experience in the segments of the river below the lake during those periods as well as protect the biological resources of the river.

"(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of the Army, in conjunction with the Secretary of the Interior, shall conduct a study and prepare a report under this section. The report shall be submitted to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate and the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives not later than December 31, 1989. Before submission of the report to these Committees, a draft of the report shall be made available for public comment. The final report shall include the comments submitted by the Secretary of the Interior and the public, together with the response of the Secretary of the Army to those comments. Public information.

"(c) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The study under this section shall examine the feasibility of adjusting the timing of daily releases from Bluestone Lake project during periods when flows from the lake are less than three thousand cubic feet per second. The purpose of such adjustment shall be to improve recreation (including, but not limited to, fishing and whitewater recreation) in the New River Gorge National River. Any such adjustments in the timing of flows which are proposed in such report shall be consistent with other project purposes and shall not have significant adverse effects on fishing or on any other form of recreation in Bluestone Lake or in any segment of the river below Bluestone Lake. The study shall assess the effects of such flow adjustments on the quality of recreation on the river in the segments of the river between Hinton and Thurmond and between Thurmond and the downstream boundary of the New River Gorge National River, taking into account the levels of recreational visitation in each of such segments. Fish and fishing.

"(d) TEST PROCEDURES.—As part of the study under this section, the Secretary of the Army shall conduct test releases from Bluestone Lake project during twenty-four-hour periods during the summer of 1989 when flows are less than three thousand cubic feet per second from the project. All such adjustments shall conform to the criteria specified in subsection (c). The tests shall provide adjustments in the timing of daily flows from Bluestone Lake project which permit flows higher than the twenty-four-hour average to reach downstream recreational segments of the river during morning and afternoon hours. The tests shall develop specific data on the

effects of flow adjustments on the speed of the current and on water surface levels in those segments. No test shall be conducted when flows from the lake are less than one thousand seven hundred cubic feet per second and no test shall reduce flows below that level.".

SEC. 105. VISITOR FACILITY.

Title XI of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 460m-15 and following) is amended by adding the following new section at the end thereof:

16 USC 460m-29.

"SEC. 1116. GLADE CREEK VISITOR FACILITY.

Public information.

"In order to provide for public use and enjoyment of the scenic and natural resources of the New River Gorge National River and in order to provide public information to visitors with respect to the national river and associated State parklands, the Secretary is authorized and directed to construct a scenic overlook and visitor information facility at a suitable location accessible from Interstate 64 in the vicinity of Glade Creek within the boundary of the national river. There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out construction (including all related planning and design) of the scenic overlook and visitor information facility.".

Appropriation authorization.

TITLE II—GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

16 USC 460ww.

SEC. 201. ESTABLISHMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to protect and preserve the scenic, recreational, geological, and fish and wildlife resources of the Gauley River and its tributary, the Meadow River, there is hereby established the Gauley River National Recreation Area (hereinafter in this Act referrred to as the "recreation area").

(b) AREA INCLUDED.—The recreation area shall consist of the land, waters, and interests therein generally depicted on the boundary map entitled "Gauley River National Recreation Area", numbered NRA-GR/20,000A and dated July 1987 and on the boundary map depicting the Meadow River, numbered WSR-MEA/20,000A and dated July 1988. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

Public information.

Reports.

(c) BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS.—Within five years after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter in this title referred to as the "Secretary") shall submit to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate a report containing any boundary modifications which the Secretary recommends, together with the reasons therefor.

16 USC 460ww-1.

SEC. 202. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The recreation area shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with this Act and with the provisions of law generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including the Act entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes", approved August 25, 1916 (16 U.S.C. 1-4).

(b) HUNTING AND FISHING; FISH STOCKING.—The Secretary shall permit hunting, trapping and fishing on lands and waters within the recreation area in accordance with applicable Federal and State

laws. The Secretary may, after consultation with the State of West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, designate zones where, and establish periods when, such activities will not be permitted for reasons of public safety, administration, fish and wildlife habitat or public use and enjoyment subject to such terms and conditions as he deems necessary in the furtherance of this Act. The Secretary shall permit the State of West Virginia to undertake or continue fish stocking activities carried out by the State in consultation with the Secretary on waters within the boundaries of the recreation area. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as affecting the jurisdiction or responsibilities of the State of West Virginia with respect to fish and wildlife

Safety.

(c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH STATE.—In administering the recreation area the Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the State of West Virginia, or any political subdivision thereof, for the rendering, on a reimbursable basis, of rescue, firefighting, and law enforcement services and cooperative assistance by nearby law enforcement and fire preventive agencies.

Law enforcement and crime.

(d) APPLICATION OF OTHER PROVISIONS.—The provisions of section 7(a) of the Act of October 2, 1968 (16 U.S.C. 1278(a)), shall apply to the recreation area in the same manner and to the same extent as such provisions apply to river segments referred to in such provisions.

(e) RECREATIONAL ACCESS.—

(1) EXISTING PUBLIC ROADS.—The Secretary may enter into a cooperative agreement with the State of West Virginia under which the Secretary shall be authorized to maintain and improve existing public roads and public rights-of-way within the boundaries of the national recreation area to the extent necessary to facilitate and improve reasonable access to the recreation area at existing access points where such actions would not unreasonably diminish the scenic and natural values of the area.

Contracts.

(2) FACILITIES ADJACENT TO DAM.—In order to accommodate visitation to the recreation area, the Secretary shall construct such facilities as necessary to enhance and improve access, vehicle parking and related facilities, and provide river access for whitewater recreation and for other recreational activities, immediately downstream of the Summersville Dam, to the extent that such facilities are not provided pursuant to section 205 and such facilities are within the boundaries of the recreation area. Such construction shall be subject to the memorandum of understanding referred to in subsection (f).

(3) OTHER LOCATIONS.—In addition, in order to provide reasonable public access and vehicle parking for public use and enjoyment of the recreation area, consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the natural and scenic values of the recreation area, the Secretary may, with the consent of the owner thereof, acquire such lands and interests in lands to construct such parking and related facilities at other appropriate locations outside the boundaries of, but within one mile of the recreation area as may be necessary and appropriate. Any such lands shall be managed in accordance with the management provisions for the recreation area as defined in subsection (a).

(f) PROPERTIES AND FACILITIES OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—After consultation with any other Federal agency managing lands and waters within or contiguous to the recreation area, the Secretary shall

enter into a memorandum of understanding with such other Federal agency to identify those areas within the recreation area which are (1) under the administrative jurisdiction of such other agency; (2) directly related to the operation of the Summersville project; and (3) essential to the operation of such project. The memorandum of understanding shall also include provisions regarding the management of all such lands and waters in a manner consistent with the operation of such project and the management of the recreation area.

16 USC 460ww-2. Gifts and property.

SEC. 203. MISCELLANEOUS.

(a) LANDS AND WATERS.—The Secretary may acquire lands or interests in lands within the boundaries of the recreation area by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange. When any tract of land is only partly within such boundaries, the Secretary may acquire all or any portion of the land outside of such boundaries in order to minimize the payment of severance costs.

(b) JURISDICTION.—Lands, waters and interests therein within the recreation area which are administered by any other agency of the United States and which are not identified under section 202 as directly related to the Summersville project and essential to the operation of that project shall be transferred without reimbursement to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(c) PROTECTION OF EXISTING PROJECT.—Nothing in this Act shall impair or affect the requirements of section 1102 of Public Law 99-662 or otherwise affect the authorities of any department or agency of the United States to carry out the project purposes of the Summersville project, including recreation. In releasing water from such project, in order to protect public health and safety and to provide for enjoyment of the resources within the recreation area, other departments and agencies of the United States shall cooperate with the Secretary to facilitate and enhance whitewater recreational use and other recreational use of the recreation area.

16 USC 460ww-3.

SEC. 204. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this title.

16 USC 460ww-4. Dams.

SEC. 205. SPECIAL CONDITIONS.

(a) NEW PROJECT CONSTRUCTION.—If, after the enactment of this Act, any department, agency, instrumentality or person commences construction of any dam, water conduit, reservoir, powerhouse, transmission line or other project at or in conjunction with the Summersville project, the department, agency, instrumentality or other person which constructs or operates such new project shall comply with such terms and conditions as the Secretary deems necessary, in his discretion, to protect the resources of the recreation area, including such terms and conditions as the Secretary deems necessary to ensure that such new project will not adversely affect whitewater recreation and other recreation activities during or after project construction.

(b) ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE RECREATION AREA.—If any such new project referred to in subsection (a) will create a direct, physical, adverse effect on access to the recreation area immediately downstream of the Summersville Dam during or after project construction, including vehicle parking, related facilities, and river access for

whitewater recreation and other recreational use of the recreation area, the department, agency, instrumentality or person constructing such project shall replace and enhance the adversely affected facilities in such manner as may be appropriate to accommodate visitation, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) NEW PROJECT PERMITS.—The terms and conditions referred to in this section shall be included in any license, permit, or exemption issued for any such new project. Any such new project shall be subject to all provisions of this Act, including section 202(d), except that during the four-year period after the enactment of this Act, nothing in this Act shall prohibit the licensing of a project adjacent to Summersville Dam as proposed by the city of Summersville, or by any competing project applicant with a permit or license application on file as of August 8, 1988, if such project complies with this section. If such project is licensed within such four-year period, the Secretary shall modify the boundary map referred to in section 201 to relocate the upstream boundary of the recreation area along a line perpendicular to the river crossing the point five hundred and fifty feet downstream of the existing valve house and one thousand two hundred feet (measured along the river bank) upstream of United States Geological Survey Gauge Numbered 03189600, except in making the modification the Secretary shall maintain within the boundary of the recreation area those lands identified in the boundary map referred to in section 201 which are not necessary to the operation of such project.

SEC. 206. ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

16 USC 460ww-5.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established the Gauley River National Recreation Area Advisory Committee (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the "Advisory Committee"). The Advisory Committee shall be composed of fifteen members appointed by the Secretary to serve for terms of two years. Any member of the Advisory Committee may serve after the expiration of his term until a successor is appointed. Any member of the Advisory Committee may be appointed to serve more than one term. The Secretary or his designee shall serve as Chairman.

(b) MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES.—The Secretary, or his designee, shall meet on a regular basis and consult with the Advisory Committee on matters relating to development of a management plan for the recreation area and on implementation of such plan.

(c) EXPENSES.—Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve without compensation as such, but the Secretary may pay expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their responsibilities under this Act on vouchers signed by the Chairman.

(d) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary shall appoint members to the Advisory Committee as follows:

(1) one member to represent other departments or agencies of the United States administering lands affected by the recreation area, to be appointed from among persons nominated by the head of such department or agency;

(2) two members to represent the State Department of Natural Resources, to be appointed from among persons nominated by the Governor of the State of West Virginia;

(3) one member to represent the State Department of Commerce to be appointed from among persons nominated by the Governor of West Virginia;

(4) three members to represent the commercial whitewater rafting industry in West Virginia;

(5) one member to represent noncommercial whitewater boating organizations;

(6) one member to represent conservation organizations in West Virginia;

(7) one member to represent individuals engaged in game fishing in West Virginia;

(8) one member to represent the Nicholas County Chamber of Commerce;

(9) one member to represent the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce;

(10) one member to represent recreational users of Summersville Lake; and

(11) two members to represent local citizens or citizens groups which are concerned with the Gauley River or own lands included within the boundaries of the recreation area.

(e) TERMINATION; CHARTER.—The Advisory Committee shall terminate on the date ten years after the enactment of this Act notwithstanding the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Act of October 6, 1972; 86 Stat. 776). The provisions of section 14(b) of such Act (relating to the charter of the Committee) are hereby waived with respect to this Advisory Committee.

TITLE III—BLUESTONE NATIONAL SCENIC RIVER

SEC. 301. DESIGNATION OF LOWER BLUESTONE RIVER.

Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended by adding the following new paragraph at the end:

"( ) BLUESTONE, WEST VIRGINIA.—The segment in Mercer and Summers Counties, West Virginia, from a point approximately two miles upstream of the Summers and Mercer County line down to the maximum summer pool elevation (one thousand four hundred and ten feet above mean sea level) of Bluestone Lake as depicted on the boundary map entitled 'Bluestone Wild and Scenic River', numbered WSR-BLU/20,000, and dated January 1987; to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as a scenic river. In carrying out the requirements of subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary shall consult with State and local governments and the interested public. The Secretary shall not be required to establish detailed boundaries of the river as provided under subsection (b) of this section. Nothing in this Act shall preclude the improvement of any existing road or right-of-way within the boundaries of the segment designated under this paragraph. Jurisdiction over all lands and improvements on such lands owned by the United States within the boundaries of the segment designated under this paragraph is hereby transferred without reimbursement to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior, subject to leases in effect on the date of enactment of this paragraph (or renewed thereafter) between the United States and the State of West Virginia with respect to the Bluestone State Park and the Bluestone Public Hunting and Fishing Area. Nothing in this Act shall affect the management by the State of hunting and fishing within the segment designated under this paragraph. Nothing in this Act shall affect or impair the management by the State of West Virginia of other wildlife activities in the Bluestone Public Hunting and Fishing Area to the extent permitted

in the lease agreement as in effect on the enactment of this paragraph, and such management may be continued pursuant to renewal of such lease agreement. If requested to do so by the State of West Virginia, the Secretary may terminate such leases and assume administrative authority over the areas concerned. Nothing in the designation of the segment referred to in this paragraph shall affect or impair the management of the Bluestone project or the authority of any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States to carry out the project purposes of that project as of the date of enactment of this paragraph. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect the continuation of studies relating to such project which were commenced before the enactment of this paragraph.".

TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 401. COORDINATION AMONG RECREATIONAL RESOURCES.

16 USC 460m-15 note.

Subject to existing authority, the Secretary of the Interior shall cooperate with, and assist, any regional authority comprised of representatives of West Virginia State authorities and local government authorities in or any combination of the foregoing Nicholas, Fayette, Raleigh, Summers, Greenbrier, and Mercer Counties, West Virginia, for the purposes of providing for coordinated development and promotion of recreation resources of regional or national significance which are located in southern West Virginia and management by State or Federal agencies, including State, local and National Park System units, State and National Forest System units, and historic sites.

SEC. 402. SPECIAL PROVISIONS.

16 USC 460m-15 note.
Contracts.

Subject to his responsibilities to protect the natural resources of the National Park System, the Secretary of the Interior shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the State of West Virginia providing for the State's regulation, in accordance with State law, of persons providing commercial recreational watercraft services on units of the National Park System and components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System subject to this Act.

SEC. 403. PUBLIC AWARENESS PROGRAM.

16 USC 1274 note.

The Secretary of the Interior shall establish a public awareness program to be carried out in Mercer, Nicholas, and Greenbrier Counties, West Virginia, in cooperation with State and local agencies, landowners, and other concerned organizations. The program shall be designed to further public understanding of the effects of designation as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System of segments of the Bluestone and Meadow Rivers which were found eligible in the studies completed by the National Park Service in August 1983 but which were not designated by this Act as units of such system. By December 31, 1992, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate describing the program undertaken pursuant to this section. Section 7(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act shall continue to apply to the segments subject to this section until December 31, 1992.

Reports.

Termination date.

16 USC 460m-15 note.

SEC. 404. CONSOLIDATED MANAGEMENT.

In order to achieve the maximum economy and efficiency of operations in the administration of the National Park System units established or expanded pursuant to this Act, the Secretary shall consolidate offices and personnel administering all such units to the extent practicable and shall utilize the existing facilities of the New River Gorge National River to the extent practicable.

16 USC 460m-15 note.

SEC. 405. NEW SPENDING AUTHORITY SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATIONS.

Any new spending authority which is provided under this Act shall be effective for any fiscal year only to the extent or in such amounts as provided in appropriation Acts.

TITLE V—TECHNICAL CHANGE TO WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT

SEC. 501. ACREAGE LIMITATIONS.

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 501(b)(1)(B) of Public Law 99-590, section 3(b) of the Wild and Scenic River Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(b)) is amended to read as follows:

"(b) The agency charged with the administration of each component of the national wild and scenic rivers system designated by subsection (a) of this section shall, within one year from the date of designation of such component under subsection (a) (except where a different date if provided in subsection (a)), establish detailed boundaries therefor (which boundaries shall include an average of not more than 320 acres of land per mile measured from the ordinary high water mark on both sides of the river); and determine which of the classes outlined in section 2, subsection (b), of this Act best fit the river or its various segments.

Federal Register, publication.

"Notice of the availability of the boundaries and classification, and of subsequent boundary amendments shall be published in the Federal Register and shall not become effective until ninety days after they have been forwarded to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.".

Approved October 26, 1988.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 900:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 100-106 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).
SENATE REPORTS: No. 100-481 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).
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Vol. 134 (1988): Sept. 8, considered and passed Senate, amended.
Oct. 3, 4, House concurred in Senate amendment with an amendment.
Oct. 7, Senate concurred in House amendment.