



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE





Rock climbing is one of the popular activities in the park.



Hikers are rewarded with river views.

New River Gorge Marks Second Anniversary as a National Park

FAYETTEVILLE, W. Va., December 12, 2022 - Southern West Virginia's [New River Gorge National Park and Preserve](#) will mark its second anniversary as a national park on Dec. 22, 2022. Known for its abundant outdoor recreational opportunities, compelling history and stunning beauty, this cherished Appalachian playground continues to climb in popularity as more and more people discover this easily accessible and affordable vacation destination.

The designation has been a boon to tourism in the entire Southern West Virginia region.

Although the New River Gorge is within a day's drive of more than half of the U.S. population, it's not at all uncommon to see visitors from as far away as Oregon and California. The park is welcoming increasing numbers of international travelers as well, according to Roger Wilson, CEO of [Adventures on the Gorge](#), an adventure resort adjacent to the park boundaries.

"As the country's newest national park, it is understandable that so many people want to see what all the fun is about," said Wilson. "This is a multi-day destination, and we're finding that many visitors split their time among park activities, participating in outdoor adventures like rafting and mountain biking and roaming the small towns and historic sites along the country roads for which West Virginia is so famous."

So far this year, nearly [1.6 million visitors](#) have explored the park. While that number represents a small drop compared to year-to-date visitors in 2021, it's still significantly more than the pre-Covid year of 2019, when a total of 1,195,721 visitors were recorded for the entire year.

How the national park designation happened

Wilson was among the outdoor recreation business leaders who worked in partnership with legislators to develop the omnibus bill that included the national park designation. The initiative specifically protects hunting, fishing and trapping as well as supporting the dynamic recreation industry and its thousands of jobs. The move was lauded as a bipartisan, public-private initiative that benefits local residents, visitors and workers.

About the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve

The New River Gorge first became a National Park Service (NPS) site in 1978 as the New River Gorge National River. For centuries, much of the rugged river was not easily accessible to humans. That changed in 1873 when railroads opened up the isolated area and made it possible to transport coal to the outside world. Mining boom towns such as Thurmond emerged seemingly overnight.

The park encompasses more than 70,000 acres of land along 53 miles of the New River from Bluestone Dam to Hawk's Nest Lake. The rugged whitewater river flows northward through deep and spectacular canyons, and it is the deepest and longest river gorge in the Appalachian Mountains.

The region is also home to the [Gauley River National Recreation Area](#) and [Bluestone National Scenic River](#), giving Southern West Virginia a trifecta of NPS destinations.

The park is within 500 miles of about 60 percent of the U.S. population. Two major interstates - I-77 and I-64 - cross through the heart of the region. The area is served by two regional airports - Raleigh County

Memorial Airport in Beckley and Greenbrier Valley Airport in Lewisburg as well as Amtrak train stations and Yeager Airport in Charleston.

Four NPS Visitor Centers feature exhibits that showcase the history, culture and natural offerings of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve as well as the Gauley River National Recreation Area and the Bluestone National Scenic River.

What to do in the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve

Among the many human-powered slow travel experiences available in the region are guided whitewater rafting on both the New and Gauley Rivers as well as rock climbing, hiking, mountain biking, fishing, ziplining and stand up paddle boarding.

The National Park Service website lists a variety of tips for [planning a visit](#) including information about [visitor centers](#), [maps](#) and [scenic drives](#). There is also information about the [history](#) of the region and [nature and science](#).

Book 2023 trips now

The resort features a variety of [lodging options](#) including cabins, campsites, glamping tents and RV sites. There are also [adventure packages](#) such as [Explore the Gorge](#), which includes adventures, lodging and meals for vacations ranging in length from two to five days.

For winter vacationers, the resort is offering big [discounts on lodging](#) during the winter.

Vacationers who book trips for 2023 before the end of 2022 can lock in on this year's rates for lodging and activities.

For more information, visit the website or connect with the resort on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), Travelers can find out more about Adventures on the Gorge [online](#), by calling 1-855-379-8738, or connecting on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Google+](#), [TripAdvisor](#), [YouTube](#), and [Vimeo](#) and signing up for AOTG [e-newsletter](#).

What to know about Adventures on the Gorge

Named one of the top adventure resorts in the country by [U.S. News & World Report](#), Adventures on the Gorge is located on more than 350 acres along the rim of the majestic New River Gorge near Fayetteville, W.Va. The resort provides an array of outdoor experiences including whitewater rafting on the New and Gauley Rivers, aerial adventures, rock climbing, rappelling, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, fishing, mountain biking and hiking. There are also restaurants, bars and shops as well as a small-group conference center. Visitors can choose from a variety of [accommodations](#) and [vacation packages](#).

Travelers can find out more about Adventures on the Gorge [online](#), by calling 1-855-379-8738, or connecting on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Linkedin](#), [TripAdvisor](#), [YouTube](#), and [Vimeo](#) and signing up for AOTG [e-newsletter](#).

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