



July 21, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

As President/CEO of the Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau it is my honor to write this letter in support of the Upper Elk bill. Tourism is the driving force in our county's economy. What brings people to our area year after year is its scenic beauty and wonderful outdoor attractions. From the eight rivers that originate in the county to the five state parks, one national and two state forests and a premier ski resort, Pocahontas County truly is Nature's Mountain Playground.

With most of our attractions being natural resources it is imperative that we work to protect them. We must ensure they will be protected so that many generations can enjoy them for years to come. Allowing the Elk River to be studied for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers' System would be one step towards protecting what is so important to our area. From its pristine waters that attract fly fisherman from all over the world, to trails along the river enjoyed by hikers, the importance of the Elk River to tourism in Pocahontas County is immeasurable.

It is my hope that this letter of support will help to increase awareness to the importance of passing this bill. With over 1 million visitors a year to our county, valuable steps like this help to ensure that our visitors will find the pristine waters that they have heard so much about. In addition, the livelihood of many of the citizens who rely on tourism in our county will remain a valued asset.

On behalf of the Pocahontas County CVB, I greatly appreciate the time you have taken to consider this bill and look forward to seeing the positive outcome.

Sincerely,

Abbey Withrow
President/CEO