



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NRGRDA Showcasing New River Gorge and Southern West Virginia

During Philanthropy WV 2022 Conference at Glade Springs Resort May 18-20

Beckley, W.Va. (May 17, 2022) – The New River Gorge region and southern West Virginia will be showcased at this year’s annual Philanthropy West Virginia 2022 Conference at Glade Springs in Daniels. Sessions will be both in person and virtual for participants.

Jina Belcher, executive director of the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority (NRGRDA), and Judy Moore executive director of the West Virginia Hive and managing director of Country Roads Angel Network (CRAN), will both be participating in panels at the three-day gathering. Belcher’s panel, “Moving to Solutions in Southern West Virginia,” is at 1:30 p.m. on May 19. Moore’s panel, “Cultivating Entrepreneurship and Economic Development,” is at 11:05 a.m. on May 20.

NRGRDA staff – including Allison Smith, Chance Raso, Andy Davis, Olivia Morris, Jenna Grayson, Belcher and Moore – will be supporting local events during the afternoon and evening of May 19, including tours of Beckley, Fayetteville, and Mount Hope and a festive “Taste of New River Gorge” dinner.

“NRGRDA’s hard work during the past several years has led to a definitive turning point for the New River Gorge region and southern West Virginia,” said Belcher. “The national park designation expedited the expectations of in-state citizens and millions more tourists set to visit the region in the future. Supporting and sponsoring conferences like the philanthropy community is an honor.”

Moore agreed, citing federal-state-local collaboration, increased funding sources for community and economic development, and the successful implementation of the WV Hive and Country Roads Angel Network, the state's only certified angel investment network able to invest in new business ventures. "The West Virginia Hive has served more than 400 businesses and helped launch 53 new businesses in its 12-county service area since its inception in 2016," said Moore. "Our team is currently assisting 102 clients with business advising and technical assistance support on business modeling, financing, human resources, marketing, and other services. And, CRAN has invested nearly \$750,000 in four new companies thus far."

The Philanthropy West Virginia 2022 Conference is hosted annually by non-profit Philanthropy West Virginia headquartered in Morgantown. Both NRGRDA and WV Hive are sponsors of this year's conference. Conference attendees can visit them in the Networking Hub, near conference registration. Details at <https://www.philanthropywv.org/2022-annual-conference/>

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About New River Gorge Regional Development Authority: The New River Gorge Regional Development Authority's (NRGRDA) mission is to initiate, facilitate and support the economic and community development efforts within the counties of Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh, and Summers located in this region of southern West Virginia. NRGRDA stimulates the regional economy through business expansion and retention efforts, including an extensive portfolio of financial services; the management of sites for new companies locating to our region; and serving as a point of access for local service providers which offer a variety of technical assistance for business owners.

The West Virginia Hive is the entrepreneurship program of the NRGRDA and the administrator of the Country Roads Angel Network (CRAN). More can be found at <https://nrgrda.org/>