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# Another national park?

## Black Canyon of Gunnison Complex proposed by Rep. Strang

By Ann Schmidt

Denver Post Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Black Canyon of the Gunnison, whose spectacular cliffs were carved by the Gunnison River, could become one of the nation's premier national park attractions under legislation introduced Thursday.

The bill, by Rep. Mike Strang of Carbondale, would create an area that would be named the Black Canyon of the Gunnison Complex.

The Western Slope Republican said it would combine 131,000 acres of public lands into a national park that would be jointly managed by the National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bureau of Land Management.

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**'We're about 95 percent down the road, and time is running out for introducing legislation this year. It was a judgment call, but I thought we'd better get the process going.'**

**Rep. Mike Strang**

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Included would be 20,800 acres in the Black Canyon National Monument, 29 miles of wild and scenic river, a proposed BLM wilderness area, and the Curecanti National Recreation Area.

It would become Colorado's third national park. The others are

Rocky Mountain and Mesa Verde.

The bill was drafted by an advisory group made of land owners, federal, city, and county officials, environmental organizations, and Montrose-area businesses.

Strang admitted that some details still need to be worked out.

"We're about 95 percent down the road, and time is running out for introducing legislation this year. It was a judgment call, but I thought we'd better get the process going," said Strang.

The major obstacle is establishing minimum stream flow in the river, but the water users are close to agreement, Strang said.

Strang said he has been in touch with Department of the Interior officials and will be pushing for hearings in the national parks subcommittee as soon as possible.

His bill would not cost the federal treasury anything, Strang said. "But it should result in a significant increase in tourism in the area."

Pass 3-21-86 P-3B