

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

H

2

**HOUSE BILL 1316
Senate Agriculture/Environment/Natural Resources Committee Substitute
Adopted 8/10/05**

Short Title: State Christmas Tree/State Freshwater Trout. (Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 20, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT ADOPTING THE FRASER FIR AS THE OFFICIAL CHRISTMAS TREE
2 OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND THE SOUTHERN
3 APPALACHIAN BROOK TROUT AS THE OFFICIAL FRESHWATER TROUT
4 OF NORTH CAROLINA.
5

6 Whereas, North Carolina has 1,500 Christmas tree growers and produces
7 more trees than any other state except Oregon; and

8 Whereas, North Carolina tree growers produce over 50 million Fraser firs
9 each year; and

10 Whereas, the Fraser fir constitutes more than 90% of all the Christmas trees
11 grown in North Carolina; and

12 Whereas, the Fraser fir is named for John Fraser, a Scottish botanist who
13 explored the Southern Appalachian mountains of North Carolina in the late 1700s; and

14 Whereas, the Fraser fir is a pyramid-shaped tree that reaches a maximum
15 height of 80 feet and a trunk diameter of one to one and one-half feet; and

16 Whereas, the Fraser fir grows naturally only in the Southern Appalachians;
17 and

18 Whereas, Fraser fir trees grown in North Carolina have won the National
19 Christmas Tree Association's annual tree competition more than any other species; and

20 Whereas, North Carolina contains innumerable mountain streams and
21 coldwater fisheries habitats; and

22 Whereas, these mountain streams are home to brook trout (*Salvelinus*
23 *fontinalis*), which is North Carolina's only native freshwater trout species; and

24 Whereas, the Southern Appalachian form of brook trout is a
25 scientifically-recognized unique and genetically distinct form locally known as "specks"
26 or "speckle" trout because of the numerous specks on its skin; and

27 Whereas, North Carolina is home to some 400 self-sustaining populations of
28 Southern Appalachian brook trout, more than in any other state; and

1 Whereas, these wild and colorful fish are important keystones of ecological
2 diversity, indicators of outstanding water quality, and representatives of the pure and
3 unspoiled areas that they inhabit; and

4 Whereas, Southern Appalachian brook trout are cooperative sport fish, and
5 may be caught by anglers using traditional fly-fishing equipment and locally-adapted fly
6 patterns, thereby supporting extensive recreational fishing opportunities, economic
7 development, and tourism; and

8 Whereas, by their character and contribution, these unique fish are woven
9 into the historical and cultural fabric of Western North Carolina; and

10 Whereas, the Fraser fir deserves recognition as the official Christmas tree of
11 the State of North Carolina and the Southern Appalachian brook trout deserves
12 recognition as the official freshwater trout of the State of North Carolina; Now,
13 therefore,

14 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

15 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 145 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a
16 new section to read:

17 **"§ 145-25. State Christmas tree.**

18 The Fraser fir (*Abies fraseri*) is adopted as the official Christmas tree of the State of
19 North Carolina."

20 **SECTION 2.** Chapter 145 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a
21 new section to read:

22 **"§ 145-26. State freshwater trout.**

23 The Southern Appalachian strain of brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) is adopted as
24 the official freshwater trout of the State of North Carolina."

25 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.