

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

HOUSE BILL 414
RATIFIED BILL

AN ACT DESIGNATING SWAIN COUNTY AS THE HOME TO THE FLY FISHING MUSEUM OF THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS AND THE NORTH CAROLINA OUTDOOR FESTIVAL HELD IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY AS THE OFFICIAL NORTH CAROLINA OUTDOOR FESTIVAL.

Whereas, Swain County is home to hundreds of miles of wild fish streams and scores of different streams, ranging from those accessible with a short walk to others that are more remote; and

Whereas, Swain County holds 52% of the entire acreage of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and also holds over several hundred miles of trout fishing within the National Park; and

Whereas, Swain County holds within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park the legendary streams of both Hazel Creek and Deep Creek and the complete length of the Oconaluftee River and its tributaries; and

Whereas, it is generally acknowledged that for stream-bred fish the streams of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park provide a scenic and wild destination unmatched in the eastern United States; and

Whereas, virtually all of Swain County's wild fish waters are available to the general public due to being located in the Nantahala National Forest or the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; and

Whereas, the lower end of the Nantahala River and the Nantahala Gorge are entirely in Swain County and enjoy the rare attribute of being wadeable during times of power generation as well as when upstream dam gates are shut and also enjoy year-round levels of water; and

Whereas, the tailwaters of the Nantahala River and the Nantahala Gorge are entirely in Swain County and hold a substantial population of wild fish, even though the river carries a "hatchery supported" designation; and

Whereas, the tailwaters of the Nantahala River and the Nantahala Gorge are entirely in Swain County and were named in Trout Unlimited's list of America's 100 greatest trout streams; and

Whereas, the tribal waters of the Cherokee Reservation's famed fishing are in Swain County and offer both catch-and-release trophy options as well as catch-and-keep fishing; and

Whereas, Swain County offers over two miles of delayed harvest waters on the Tuckasegee River readily accessible via wading, bank fishing, boating, and fishing piers; and

Whereas, Swain County has hosted two top fly fishing events, the 2011 U.S. National Fly Fishing Championship and the 2012 U.S. Youth National Fly Fishing Championship, and is hosting the upcoming 2017 U.S. Youth National Fly Fishing Championship; and

Whereas, Swain County has 42,550 stocked trout over 31.2 miles of stream, or 1,364 trout per mile; and

Whereas, Swain County holds two State record fish; the brook trout State record was caught on Ravens Fork and the brown trout State record was caught on the Nantahala River; and



Whereas, Swain County is comprised of 541 square miles with 13 square miles of water that equal 2.3% of the county overall with the vast majority of those streams being accessible to fishing; and

Whereas, Swain County holds four rivers, including the Nantahala, Tuckasegee, Little Tennessee, and Oconaluftee, all easily accessible for fishing and stocked; and

Whereas, Swain County is home to Fontana Lake, with over 900 miles of shoreline and over 13 varieties of fish, including brown and rainbow trout, small- and large-mouth bass, muskie, walleye, yellow perch, and others; and

Whereas, Swain County is home to Cheoah Lake, which has over six varieties of fish; and

Whereas, the fishing industry brings a \$174 million economic impact to Western North Carolina; and

Whereas, Swain County offers a remarkable variety of aquatic waters for outdoor recreation, including fishing, boating, kayaking, and more, which encourages destination tourism, second-home buyers, and retirees to the fair State of North Carolina; and

Whereas, Swain County is the home of the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians, which is devoted to the history and teaching of the art of fly fishing and nationally recognized as being the top museum of its type; and

Whereas, Montgomery County and the Uwharrie National Park are located within a two-hour or less drive of 7.6 million people, providing a central location for outdoor events; and

Whereas, Army Special Forces from Fort Bragg train in off-road maneuvers at the Uwharrie National Forest; and

Whereas, Montgomery County is the location of the North Carolina Outdoor Festival, an annual fall festival that promotes the natural wonders of the Uwharrie National Forest and the enhanced and sustainable use of the lakes, trails, streams, and the mountains of Montgomery County and the surrounding region; and

Whereas, the 2018 North Carolina Outdoor Festival will be held over 10 days and is being promoted as the "10 Days of Uwharrie;" and

Whereas, visitors of the North Carolina Outdoor Festival can enjoy many outdoor activities that include paddling, disc golf, boating, rock hounding, camping, orienteering, horseback riding, a 40-mile supported hike of the Uwharrie trails, a 100-mile trail run known as Uwharrie 100, and various competitions such as mountain biking, kayaking, and fishing; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Outdoor Festival also provides musical acts, arts and crafts, antiques, food trucks, pottery demonstrations, vendors, and various children's events, such as scavenger hunts, games, and face painting; and

Whereas, there will also be an expo for State manufacturers to showcase their outdoor recreational products; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Outdoor Festival is a family friendly event and is expected to have an attendance of over 30,000 people from all over the country; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Outdoor Festival should be adopted as the official outdoor festival of the State of North Carolina; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

"§ 145-49. State Fly Fishing Museum.

Swain County is designated as the home of the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians, which is located in Bryson City in the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains."

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

"§ 145-50. North Carolina Outdoor Festival.

The North Carolina Outdoor Festival held in Montgomery County is adopted as the official outdoor festival of the State of North Carolina."

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

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 12th day of June, 2018.

s/ Philip E. Berger
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Roy Cooper
Governor

Approved _____m. this _____ day of _____, 2018