

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 353
Senate State and Local Government Committee Substitute Adopted 6/21/17

Short Title: Authorize State Park System Expansion.-AB

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 15, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITION OF BOB'S POCKET STATE NATURAL
2 AREA, WARWICK MILL BAY STATE NATURAL AREA, AND SALMON CREEK
3 STATE NATURAL AREA TO THE STATE PARKS SYSTEM, AS RECOMMENDED
4 BY THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, AND TO
5 DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT TO STUDY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE
6 PARK ON THE BLACK RIVER.
7

8 Whereas, Section 5 of Article XIV of the North Carolina Constitution states that it
9 shall be a proper function of the State of North Carolina to acquire and preserve park,
10 recreational, and scenic areas and, in every other appropriate way, to preserve as a part of the
11 common heritage of this State its open lands and places of beauty; and

12 Whereas, the General Assembly enacted the State Parks Act in 1987, declaring that
13 the State of North Carolina offers unique archaeological, geological, biological, scenic, and
14 recreational resources and that such resources are part of the heritage of the people of the State
15 to be preserved and managed by those people for their use and for the use of their visitors and
16 descendants; and

17 Whereas, the Bob's Pocket area in McDowell County is significant for its scenic
18 beauty, high-quality natural communities, rare and unusual natural features, and opportunities
19 for natural resource preservation, outdoor recreation, and regional trail connections; and

20 Whereas, Warwick Mill Bay in Robeson County is a large Carolina Bay with one of
21 the State's largest inland heronries, providing habitat for herons, egrets, moorhens, anhingas,
22 ibises, wood storks, alligators, and many other species of wildlife and plants, and preservation
23 of Warwick Mill Bay would protect an important ecological and scientific resource for future
24 North Carolinians; and

25 Whereas, the Salmon Creek area in Bertie County is ecologically significant for its
26 high-quality natural communities and also contains important prehistoric and historic
27 archaeological sites offering opportunities for important archaeological discoveries, including
28 an Indian occupation site containing evidence of late 16th or early 17th century English
29 presence; Now, therefore,

30 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

31 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly authorizes the Department of Natural and
32 Cultural Resources to add Bob's Pocket State Natural Area, Warwick Mill Bay State Natural
33 Area, and Salmon Creek State Natural Area to the State Parks System as provided in
34 G.S. 143B-135.54(b).

35 **SECTION 2.** The State may receive donations of appropriate land and may
36 purchase other needed lands for Bob's Pocket State Natural Area, Warwick Mill Bay State



1 Natural Area, and Salmon Creek State Natural Area with existing funds in the Clean Water
2 Management Trust Fund, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the federal Land and Water
3 Trust Fund, and other available sources of funding.

4 **SECTION 3.** The Division of Parks and Recreation of the Department of Natural
5 and Cultural Resources shall study the feasibility and the desirability of acquiring land and
6 establishing a State Park on the Black River. The study shall include public input and shall
7 estimate the cost of developing the proposed park. In addition, the study shall include an
8 assessment of actions the State can take to improve the navigability of the Black River. The
9 Division shall report its findings and recommendations, including any legislative proposals, to
10 the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic
11 Resources on or before March 1, 2018.

12 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.