

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 414
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/4/17
Senate State and Local Government Committee Substitute Adopted 6/5/18

Short Title: Official Fly Fishing Museum/Outdoor Festival.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 22, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT DESIGNATING SWAIN COUNTY AS THE HOME TO THE FLY FISHING
2 MUSEUM OF THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS AND THE NORTH CAROLINA
3 OUTDOOR FESTIVAL HELD IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY AS THE OFFICIAL
4 NORTH CAROLINA OUTDOOR FESTIVAL.
5

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

47 Whereas, the North Carolina Outdoor Festival should be adopted as the official
48 outdoor festival of the State of North Carolina; Now, therefore,
49 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

1 **"§ 145-49. State Fly Fishing Museum.**

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

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

6 **"§ 145-50. North Carolina Outdoor Festival.**

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

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