

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40233-LG-57 (03/13)

Short Title: Swain County/Official Trout Fishing Location. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Clampitt.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT DESIGNATING SWAIN COUNTY AS THE OFFICIAL LOCATION FOR TROUT
3 FISHING IN NORTH CAROLINA.

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

7 Whereas, Swain County holds 42% of the entire acreage of the Great Smoky
8 Mountains National Park and also holds over several hundred miles of trout fishing within the
9 National Park; and

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

13 Whereas, it is generally acknowledged that for stream-bred fish (rainbows, browns,
14 and speckled trout), the streams of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park provide a scenic
15 and wild destination unmatched in the eastern United States; and

16 Whereas, virtually all of Swain County's trout water is available to the general
17 public due to being located in the Nantahala National Forest or the Great Smoky Mountains
18 National Park; and

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

22 Whereas, the tail waters of the Nantahala River, the Nantahala Gorge, are entirely in
23 Swain County and hold a substantial population of wild fish even though it carries a "hatchery
24 supported" designation; and

25 Whereas, the tail waters of the Nantahala River, the Nantahala Gorge, are entirely in
26 Swain County and was named in Trout Unlimited's list of America's 100 greatest trout streams;
27 and

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

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

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



1 Whereas, Swain County has 42,550 stocked trout over 31.2 miles of stream, or
2 1,364 trout per mile; and

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

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

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

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

14 Whereas, Swain County is home to Cheoah Lake, which has over 6 varieties of fish,
15 including brook, brown, and rainbow trout; and

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

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

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

24 Whereas, Swain County deserves to be designated as the official trout fishing
25 location in North Carolina; Now, therefore,
26 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

29 **"§ 145-49. State trout fishing location.**

30 **Swain County is designated as the official location for trout fishing in the State of North**
31 **Carolina."**

32 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.