

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017**

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**HOUSE BILL 414
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/4/17**

Short Title: Swain County/Official Fly Fishing Museum.

(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.
3

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

7 Whereas, Swain County holds 52% 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 streams of both Hazel Creek and Deep Creek and the complete length of the
12 Oconaluftee River and its tributaries; and

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

16 Whereas, virtually all of Swain County's wild fish waters are 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 and the Nantahala Gorge are entirely
20 in Swain County and enjoy the rare attribute of being wadeable during times of power
21 generation as well as when upstream dam gates are shut and also enjoy year-round levels of
22 water; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 Whereas, Swain County is the home of the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern
22 Appalachians, which is devoted to the history and teaching of the art of fly fishing and
23 nationally recognized as being the top museum of its type; Now, therefore,
24 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

27 "**§ 145-49. State Fly Fishing Museum.**

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

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