

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007**

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HOUSE BILL 2496

Short Title: State Parks System Additions. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Tarleton, Allen, Gibson, and Harrison (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Environment and Natural Resources, if favorable, Appropriations.

May 26, 2008

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1
2 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITION OF BEAR PAW STATE NATURAL
3 AREA AND YELLOW MOUNTAIN STATE NATURAL AREA TO THE STATE
4 PARKS SYSTEM, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL
5 REVIEW COMMISSION.

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

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

15 Whereas, an area on the Avery and Watauga County line, including Hanging
16 Rock Ridge and the headwaters of Dutch Creek, is known to be nationally significant
17 for its excellent examples of the rare High Elevation Rocky Summit community type
18 and other exemplary natural communities; and

19 Whereas, rare species found at the site include Heller's blazing star, Blue
20 Ridge goldenrod, spreading avens, American speedwell, wretched sedge, Roan
21 rattlesnakeroot, and golden tundra-moss; and

22 Whereas, this site was known by the Cherokee as Yonah-wayah, or Bear's
23 Paw; and

24 Whereas, the Bear Paw State Natural Area has been found to possess
25 biological resources of statewide significance; and

26 Whereas, the area known as Yellow Mountain in Avery and Mitchell
27 Counties near the Roan Mountain massif is known to be nationally significant for its

1 Grassy Bald and Heath Bald natural community types, as well as its assemblage of other
2 outstanding high elevation natural communities; and

3 Whereas, the site supports dozens of rare plant and animal species, including
4 the northern flying squirrel, the spruce-fir moss spider, Gray's lily, Roan Mountain
5 bluet, and the rock gnome lichen; and

6 Whereas, the Yellow Mountain State Natural Area has been found to possess
7 biological resources of statewide significance; and

8 Whereas, both of these natural areas are valuable for scientific research and
9 education, and as examples of the diverse natural resources of North Carolina; Now,
10 therefore,

11 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

12 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly authorizes the Department of
13 Environment and Natural Resources to add Bear Paw State Natural Area to the State
14 Parks System as provided in G.S. 113-44.14(b).

15 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly authorizes the Department of
16 Environment and Natural Resources to add Yellow Mountain State Natural Area to the
17 State Parks System as provided in G.S. 113-44.14(b).

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