

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007**

**HOUSE BILL 2496
RATIFIED BILL**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Whereas, the area known as Yellow Mountain in Avery and Mitchell Counties near the Roan Mountain massif is known to be nationally significant for its Grassy Bald and Heath Bald natural community types, as well as its assemblage of other outstanding high elevation natural communities; and

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

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

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

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

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

SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 14th day of
July, 2008.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____m. this _____ day of _____, 2008