

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 180

Short Title: Adopt Haywood County as Elk Capital of NC. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Pless.

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: State Government, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

February 27, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT ADOPTING HAYWOOD COUNTY AS THE ELK CAPITAL OF THE STATE OF
NORTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, due to overhunting and habitat loss in the mid-1800s, the elk population was drastically reduced in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; and

Whereas, in 2001, an initial 52 elk were released in Cataloochee Valley, a section of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, located in Haywood County as an experimental project to reintroduce elk in the area; and

Whereas, reintroducing the elk has been a resounding success in Haywood County, resulting in a herd that has grown to over 200 elk; and

Whereas, the herd can be spotted in Cataloochee Valley, Maggie Valley, and other parts of Haywood County; and

Whereas, the elk project has played a large role in tourism to Haywood County; and

Whereas, local restaurants and shops in Haywood County proudly post pictures of the elk in front of their establishments and on social media to attract more customers; and

Whereas, the elk is a great part of Haywood County's brand and is used heavily in its logo and marketing; and

Whereas, Haywood County created the Smoky Mountain Elk Fest, an annual festival to celebrate the reintroduction of the elk and the conservation and habitat of the elk; and

Whereas, Haywood County should be adopted as the official elk capital of the State of North Carolina; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

"§ 145-52. State elk capital.

Haywood County is adopted as the official elk capital of the State of North Carolina."

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

