

AN ACT TO ADOPT THE PINE BARRENS TREEFROG (*Hyla andersonii*) AS THE OFFICIAL STATE FROG FOR THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

PART I. JUSTIFICATION FOR AN AMPHIBIAN.

WHEREAS, North Carolina and the Southeast region of the United States lead the world in amphibian diversity;

WHEREAS, amphibians are part of North Carolina's natural history from mountains to sea;

WHEREAS, 12 families and approximately 90 species of amphibians call North Carolina home;

WHEREAS, amphibians play important roles in the natural systems of the state and serve as indicators of environmental health;

WHEREAS, public awareness continues to grow regarding the well-documented global decline in amphibians;

WHEREAS, frog calls herald the coming of spring and are much enjoyed by the state's citizenry; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina does not have an official State Amphibian;

PART II. PINE BARRENS TREEFROG (*Hyla andersonii*) AS STATE FROG.

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog is identified as a priority species for population monitoring and conservation in the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission's *North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan* (2005);

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog is distributed in the Sandhills and Coastal Plain of North Carolina and is considered rare;

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog is arguably one of the most striking and beautiful frogs in the Southeast;

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog is unique in its life history strategies and habitat requirements,

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog by name reflects one of North Carolina's signature trees and ecosystems that have been a vital part of North Carolina's economic, cultural, and natural history since colonial times;

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog by name is linked to North Carolina's official State Tree (Pine);

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog by name is part of North Carolina's official State Toast :

“...Here's to the land of the long leaf pine, . . . 'Neath the murmuring pines of the Old North State!...”;

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog by name is linked to North Carolina's official State Nickname (“The Tar Heel State), which scholars say was created because of North Carolina's early history of being the country's top producer of naval stores (tar, pitch, rosin, turpentine) from the state's historically extensive pine forests;

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog presents opportunities for conservation education and outreach to students and the general public regarding the plight of amphibians locally and globally; and

WHEREAS, Pine Barrens Treefrog received a majority of votes (1171 out of 3038 or 39%) cast for frogs in a choice for State Amphibian in online polling of North Carolina's citizens, young and old alike, conducted by the North Carolina Herpetological Society;
Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts: