

1 H.188

2 Introduced by Representatives Devereux of Mount Holly, Jerman of Essex,
3 and Stevens of Shoreham

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: General provisions; state fossils

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to designate the
8 current state fossil, the white whale fossilized skeleton, as the state marine
9 fossil, and to designate the Mount Holly mammoth tooth and tusk as the state
10 terrestrial fossil.

11 An act relating to designating the Mount Holly mammoth tooth and tusk as
12 the official state terrestrial fossil

13 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

14 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

15 (a) Two excellent historical discoveries were made in the late 1840s during
16 excavation for the Rutland and Burlington Railroad. The first, in 1848, was
17 the discovery of the fossilized mammoth tooth and tusk in Mount Holly, and
18 the second, in 1849, was the discovery of the fossilized white whale skeleton in
19 Charlotte.

1 (b) The white whale fossilized skeleton, which was found in Charlotte in
2 1849 embedded in clay at the depth of about eight feet below the natural
3 surface of the ground, was designated the state fossil in 1993.

4 (c)(1) The remains of the mammoth were found in 1848 during excavation
5 for the Railroad where, at an elevation of 1,415 feet above sea level, the
6 Railroad was to cross the ridge of the Green Mountains in Mount Holly.
7 There, at the bottom of an 11-foot muck bed, workers found, resting upon
8 gravel, a huge molar tooth weighing nearly eight pounds and having a grinding
9 surface of approximately eight by four inches. Shortly thereafter, the workers
10 found a large fossilized tusk of the mammoth that measured along its outer
11 curve a length of 80 inches, and 12 inches at its greatest circumference.

12 (2) The Mount Holly mammoth tooth and tusk are now on display at the
13 Mount Holly Community Historical Museum.

14 (3) Scientists believe the mammoth fossils were buried at the summit of
15 the Green Mountains for more than 8,000 years, and that an adult mammoth
16 would have been more than eight feet tall and 10 feet long, and would have
17 weighed approximately 1.7 tons.

18 Sec. 2. 1 V.S.A. § 509 is amended to read:

19 § 509. STATE ~~FOSSIL~~ FOSSILS

20 (a) The state marine fossil shall be the white whale fossilized skeleton at
21 the University of Vermont's Perkins Geology Museum.

1 (b) The state terrestrial fossil shall be the Mount Holly mammoth tooth and
2 tusk at the Mount Holly Community Historical Museum.

3 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

4 This act shall take effect on passage.