

HOUSE BILL No. 1379

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 2-5-52.5; IC 14-8-2; IC 14-25-4.5.

Synopsis: Ground water. Establishes the ground water and aquifer preservation task force to recommend water regulations to the legislative council. Creates a two year moratorium on the establishment of certain major ground water withdrawal facilities during the period beginning May 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028. Provides an exception to the moratorium.

Effective: Upon passage.

Campbell, Aylesworth

January 8, 2026, read first time and referred to Committee on Natural Resources.



Introduced

Second Regular Session of the 124th General Assembly (2026)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2025 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

HOUSE BILL No. 1379

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning natural and cultural resources.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 2-5-52.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
2 AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 UPON PASSAGE]:

4 **Chapter 52.5. Ground Water and Aquifer Preservation Task
5 Force**

6 **Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "task force" refers to the ground
7 water and aquifer preservation task force established by section 2
8 of this chapter.**

9 **Sec. 2. The ground water and aquifer preservation task force is
10 established as a temporary task force serving the general assembly.**

11 **Sec. 3. (a) The task force consists of the following thirteen (13)
12 members:**

13 **(1) The chair of the senate utilities committee appointed by
14 the president pro tempore.**

15 **(2) The chair of the senate natural resources committee
16 appointed by the president pro tempore.**

17 **(3) One (1) additional member of the senate appointed by the**



president pro tempore.

(4) The ranking minority member of the senate utilities committee appointed by the minority leader of the senate.

(5) The ranking minority member of the senate natural resources committee appointed by the minority leader of the senate.

(6) The chair of the house utilities, energy and telecommunications committee appointed by the speaker.

(7) The chair of the house natural resources committee appointed by the speaker.

(8) One (1) additional member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker.

(9) The ranking minority member of the house utilities, energy and telecommunications committee appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives.

(10) The ranking minority member of the house natural resources committee appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives.

(11) One (1) member who has experience in agriculture and irrigation appointed by the governor.

(12) One (1) member who has experience in economic development appointed by the governor.

(13) One (1) member who has experience in water conservation and ground water hydrology or hydrogeology appointed by the governor.

(b) A member appointed under subsection (a)(11) through (a)(13) may not be a member of the general assembly.

(c) If a vacancy occurs on the task force, the appointing authority that appointed the member whose position is vacant shall appoint an individual to fill the vacancy.

(d) An individual appointed to fill a vacancy must have the qualifications that the member appointed by the appointing authority possessed.

(e) An individual appointed to fill a vacancy serves for the remainder of the term of the member the individual is appointed to succeed.

Sec. 4. (a) Seven (7) members of the task force constitute a quorum.

(b) The affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the task force is necessary for the task force to take official action other than to meet and take testimony.

(c) The president pro tempore shall appoint one (1) member



1 **appointed under section 3(a)(1), 3(a)(2), or 3(a)(3) of this chapter**
2 **to serve as a co-chair. The speaker shall appoint one (1) member**
3 **appointed under section 3(a)(6), 3(a)(7), or 3(a)(8) of this chapter**
4 **to serve as a co-chair. The task force shall meet at the call of the**
5 **co-chairs.**

6 **Sec. 5. (a) The task force shall meet at least three (3) times in**
7 **calendar year 2026, and at least four (4) times in calendar year**
8 **2027.**

9 **(b) All meetings of the task force are open to the public in**
10 **accordance with and subject to IC 5-14-1.5. All records of the task**
11 **force are subject to the requirements of IC 5-14-3.**

12 **Sec. 6. The task force shall study the following issues:**

13 **(1) Ways to protect the public's interest against the potential**
14 **for excessive removal of ground water from one (1) part of**
15 **Indiana to another, including the criteria that should be**
16 **considered and the processes that should be followed before**
17 **large amounts of water can be moved.**

18 **(2) Strategies to improve ground water monitoring and to**
19 **track the supply and demand for water in Indiana and how to**
20 **pay for these tracking and monitoring networks.**

21 **(3) Whether the state should seek agreements with**
22 **neighboring states to protect water resources that cross state**
23 **boundaries.**

24 **(4) Whether the existing method of categorizing water users**
25 **as significant or nonsignificant is sufficient or whether new**
26 **categories of water users should be considered to distinguish**
27 **irrigators from major ground water users of the sort**
28 **associated with water intensive industries.**

29 **(5) How to balance conservation and stewardship of Indiana's**
30 **water resources with the opportunity to market Indiana's**
31 **water resources to compete for water intensive economic**
32 **activity.**

33 **Sec. 7. The task force shall:**

34 **(1) develop recommendations for the legislative council**
35 **concerning the issues set forth in section 6 of this chapter;**
36 **(2) prepare a report setting forth the task force's findings and**
37 **recommendations; and**

38 **(3) not later than December 1, 2027, submit the report to the**
39 **legislative council in an electronic format under IC 5-14-6.**

40 **Sec. 8. The legislative services agency shall provide staff support**
41 **to the task force.**

42 **Sec. 9. (a) Each member of the task force who is not a state**



1 **employee is entitled to receive the same per diem, mileage, and**
 2 **travel allowances paid to individuals who serve as legislative and**
 3 **lay members, respectively, of interim study committees established**
 4 **by the legislative council.**

5 **(b) Each member of the task force who is a state employee is**
 6 **entitled to reimbursement for traveling expenses as provided under**
 7 **IC 4-13-1-4 and other expenses actually incurred in connection**
 8 **with the member's duties as provided in the state policies and**
 9 **procedures established by the Indiana department of**
 10 **administration and approved by the budget agency.**

11 **(c) Each member of the task force who is a member of the**
 12 **general assembly is entitled to receive the same per diem, mileage,**
 13 **and travel allowances paid to members of the general assembly**
 14 **serving on interim study committees established by the legislative**
 15 **council.**

16 **(d) Per diem, mileage, and travel allowances paid under this**
 17 **chapter shall be paid from appropriations made to the legislative**
 18 **council or the legislative services agency.**

19 **Sec. 10. This chapter expires July 1, 2028.**

20 **SECTION 2. IC 14-8-2-61.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE**
 21 **AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE**
 22 **UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 61.5. "County executive", for purposes of**
 23 **IC 14-25-4.5, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-25-4.5-1.**

24 **SECTION 3. IC 14-8-2-118.2 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA**
 25 **CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS**
 26 **[EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 118.2. "Ground water**
 27 **withdrawal facility", for purposes of IC 14-25-4.5, has the meaning**
 28 **set forth in IC 14-25-4.5-2.**

29 **SECTION 4. IC 14-8-2-157.7 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA**
 30 **CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS**
 31 **[EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 157.7. "Major ground water**
 32 **withdrawal facility", for purposes of IC 14-25-4.5, has the meaning**
 33 **set forth in IC 14-25-4.5-3.**

34 **SECTION 5. IC 14-8-2-202, AS AMENDED BY P.L.39-2018,**
 35 **SECTION 4, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE**
 36 **UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 202. (a) "Person" means, except as provided**
 37 **in subsections (b) through (f); (j), an individual, a partnership, an**
 38 **association, a fiduciary, an executor or administrator, a limited liability**
 39 **company, or a corporation.**

40 **(b) "Person", for purposes of IC 14-12-2, has the meaning set forth**
 41 **in IC 14-12-2-3.**

42 **(c) "Person", for purposes of IC 14-16, IC 14-22-28, IC 14-24,**



1 IC 14-26-2, IC 14-28-1, and IC 14-38-2, means an individual, a
 2 partnership, an association, a fiduciary, an executor or administrator,
 3 a limited liability company, a corporation, other legal entity, the state,
 4 or an agency, a political subdivision, or another instrumentality of the
 5 state.

6 (d) "Person", for purposes of IC 14-12-1, IC 14-12-2, IC 14-21,
 7 IC 14-25 through IC 14-29, except as otherwise provided in this
 8 section, IC 14-33, IC 14-34, and IC 14-37, means an individual, a
 9 partnership, an association, a fiduciary, an executor or administrator,
 10 a limited liability company, a corporation, or a governmental entity.

11 (e) "Person", for purposes of IC 14-22-31.5, has the meaning set
 12 forth in IC 14-22-31.5-2.

13 (f) "Person", for purposes of IC 14-25-3, has the meaning set forth
 14 in IC 14-25-3-1.

15 (g) **"Person", for purposes of IC 14-25-4.5, has the meaning set
 16 forth in IC 14-25-4.5-4.**

17 (g) (h) "Person", for the purposes of IC 14-25-7, has the meaning set
 18 forth in IC 14-25-7-5.

19 (i) "Person", for purposes of IC 14-34, means an individual, a
 20 partnership, a limited liability company, an association, a society, a
 21 joint stock company, a firm, a company, a corporation, or other
 22 business organization.

23 (j) "Person", for purposes of IC 14-38-1, has the meaning set
 24 forth in IC 14-38-1-2.

25 SECTION 6. IC 14-8-2-299.2 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA
 26 CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 27 [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 299.2. **"Wabash River basin",**
 28 **for purposes of IC 14-25-4.5, has the meaning set forth in
 29 IC 14-25-4.5-5.**

30 SECTION 7. IC 14-25-4.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
 31 AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 32 UPON PASSAGE]:

33 **Chapter 4.5. Moratorium on New Major Ground Water
 34 Withdrawal Facilities**

35 **Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "county executive" means the
 36 board of commissioners of a county elected under IC 36-2-2-2.**

37 **Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, "ground water withdrawal
 38 facility" means a facility that meets all of the following conditions:**

39 **(1) The facility includes:**

40 **(A) one (1) well; or**

41 **(B) two (2) or more wells under common ownership or
 42 control.**



(2) The well or wells described in subdivision (1) have, in the aggregate, from all sources and by all methods, the capability of withdrawing not more than nine million nine hundred ninety-nine thousand nine hundred ninety-nine (9,999,999) gallons of ground water from one (1) or more aquifers in one (1) day.

(3) Either:

- (A) the facility is connected to existing pipeline facilities; or
- (B) plans for the facility include the connection of the facility to pipeline facilities;

through which not more than four million nine hundred ninety-nine thousand nine hundred ninety-nine (4,999,999) gallons of ground water withdrawn by the well or wells to which subdivision (1) refers could be transported in one (1) day to a destination located at least twenty (20) miles from the well or wells.

Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, "major ground water withdrawal facility" means a facility that meets all of the following conditions:

(1) The facility includes:

(A) one (1) well; or

(B) two (2) or more wells under common ownership or control.

(2) The well or wells described in subdivision (1) have, in the aggregate, from all sources and by all methods, the capability of withdrawing at least ten million (10,000,000) gallons of ground water from one (1) or more aquifers in one (1) day.

(3) Either:

- (A) the facility is connected to existing pipeline facilities; or
- (B) plans for the facility include the connection of the facility to pipeline facilities;

through which at least five million (5,000,000) gallons of ground water withdrawn by the well or wells to which subdivision (1) refers could be transported in one (1) day to a destination located at least twenty (20) miles from the well or wells.

Sec. 4. As used in this chapter, "person" means any of the following:

(1) An individual.

(2) A corporation, including a body corporate and politic exercising public functions.

(3) A limited liability company, partnership, trust, or unincorporated association.



- (4) The state.**
- (5) A unit (as defined in IC 36-1-2-23).**
- (6) A board, a bureau, a commission, a division, a department, an officer, an agency, an authority, or an instrumentality of the state or of a unit.**
- (7) Two (2) or more of the persons identified in subdivisions (1) through (6) acting in concert.**

Sec. 5. As used in this chapter, "Wabash River basin" means the area in:

- (1) Tippecanoe County;
- (2) Warren County;
- (3) Vermillion County;
- (4) Fountain County;
- (5) Parke County; and
- (6) Montgomery County

that is drained by the Wabash River and the tributaries of the Wabash River.

Sec. 6. Except as provided in sections 8, 9, and 10 of this chapter, a person shall not establish a major ground water withdrawal facility in the Wabash River basin during the period beginning May 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028.

Sec. 7. Except as provided in section 9 of this chapter, no person shall use state funding to plan the establishment of a major ground water withdrawal facility in the Wabash River basin during the period beginning May 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028.

Sec. 8. A county executive of a county located in the Wabash River basin may adopt an order allowing a person to establish a major ground water withdrawal facility in the county during the period beginning May 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028. However, if the proposed major ground water withdrawal facility will withdraw water from or transport water through two (2) or more counties, the county executive of each of these counties must adopt an order allowing the establishment of a major ground water withdrawal facility to proceed.

Sec. 9. The prohibitions in sections 6 and 7 of this chapter do not apply to an operating ground water withdrawal facility that increases its current:

- (1) withdrawal; or
- (2) pipeline;

capability by not more than two million (2,000,000) gallons of ground water per day.

Sec. 10. The prohibitions in sections 6 and 7 of this chapter do



1 **not apply to the establishment or planning of a major ground**
2 **water withdrawal facility in the Wabash River basin for which a**
3 **contract concerning the establishment or planning of the major**
4 **ground water withdrawal facility was entered into before January**
5 **1, 2026.**

6 **Sec. 11. This chapter expires July 1, 2029.**

7 **SECTION 8. An emergency is declared for this act.**

