

HOUSE BILL No. 1414

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 14-23.

Synopsis: Forest management. Requires the department of natural resources (department) to establish recreational fees for the access and use of state forest land. Provides that the department shall ensure that at all times: (1) 10% of state forest land consists of forests that are 100 years or older; and (2) 10% of state forest land consists of forests that are 20 years or younger. Provides that money in the state forestry fund does not revert to the state general fund.

Effective: July 1, 2026.

Baird

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



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. 1414

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 14-23-1-1 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
2 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. The department shall
3 do the following:

4 (1) Have the care, custody, and control of the forest land owned
5 by the state, exclusive of state parks.

6 (2) Adopt necessary rules to properly enforce this chapter.

7 (3) Establish, operate, and maintain nurseries for the production
8 of trees to be used in reforestation. The trees may be:

9 (A) used to reforest land owned by the state;

10 (B) supplied to owners of private land at a price not exceeding
11 cost of production; or

12 (C) used for planting on public roads or land under the terms
13 that are considered by the department to be for the public
14 benefit.

15 (4) Prepare, print, post, or distribute printed matter relating to
16 forestry.

17 (5) Make investigations or experiments with regard to forestry



questions.

(6) Subject to the approval of the governor, purchase land and forests. For the purpose of acquiring land and forests, the commission may exercise the right of eminent domain in the manner provided in IC 14-17-3.

(7) Receive and accept, in the name of the people of Indiana, by gift or devise, the fee or other estate in land or forests.

(8) Examine the forest land owned by the state or by a state institution for the purpose of advising and cooperating in securing proper forest management of the land.

(9) Employ, with approval of the authorities having control of the state penal institutions, convicts committed to a penal institution for the purpose of producing or planting trees, building roads, or doing other work in the forests and in clearing, draining, or developing land purchased or acquired by the state for forestry purposes.

(10) Propagate trees and shrubs for state institutions or for planting along highways. A common carrier may transport trees or shrubs grown by the state at a rate less than the established tariff to and from points within Indiana.

(11) Have the custody of all abstracts of title, papers, contracts, or related memoranda, except original deeds to the state, for land purchased or received under this section.

(12) Examine private forest land:

(A) upon request of; and

(B) at the expense of;

the owner for the purpose of advising the owner on the proper methods of forest management.

(13) Establish recreational fees for individuals accessing and using state forest land.

(14) Investigate new revenue raising methods to help carry out the purposes described in IC 14-23-3-4.

(15) Ensure at all times that ten percent (10%) of state forest acreage consists of forests that are one hundred (100) years or older.

(16) Ensure at all times that ten percent (10%) of state forest acreage consists of forests that are twenty (20) years or younger.

SECTION 2. IC 14-23-3-5 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 5. **(a)** All income derived from:

(1) the sale of state forest land; ~~or~~



- 1 **(2) the sale of products of from state forest land; or**
- 2 **(3) recreational fees for accessing and using state forest land;**
- 3 shall be deposited in the fund.
- 4 **(b) Money in the fund at the end of a state fiscal year does not**
- 5 **revert to the state general fund.**

