



January 27, 2026

SENATE BILL No. 224

DIGEST OF SB 224 (Updated January 27, 2026 1:46 pm - DI 150)

Citations Affected: IC 14-8; IC 14-10; IC 14-11; IC 14-12; IC 14-15; IC 14-16; IC 14-21; IC 14-22; IC 14-23; IC 14-30; IC 14-30.5; IC 14-33.

Synopsis: Department of natural resources. Defines various terms. Amends and removes various definitions. Makes various changes to natural resources commission procedures. Makes various changes to the department of natural resources (department) powers and duties. Removes the hometown Indiana grant program. Amends various boating and wakeboard regulations. Raises the financial threshold for certain actions in a boating accident from \$750 to \$2,000. Raises the financial threshold for certain actions in an off-road vehicle accident from \$750 to \$2,500. Establishes various restrictions on landowner liability to recreational users. Provides that various restrictions on landowner liability do not apply to a parcel of land assessed as residential land. Removes the penalty for a person who acts as a hunting guide without a guide license. Allows the division of water to perform certain functions on behalf of the natural resources commission. Requires the natural resources commission to coordinate with the department for purposes of a reporting requirement regarding conservancy districts. Makes conforming changes.

Effective: July 1, 2026.

Glick

January 8, 2026, read first time and referred to Committee on Natural Resources.
January 27, 2026, amended, reported favorably — Do Pass.

SB 224—LS 6685/DI 150



January 27, 2026

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.

SENATE BILL No. 224

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 14-8-1-1 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
2 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. Except as otherwise provided,
3 the definitions in this article apply throughout this title **and 312 IAC.**
4 SECTION 2. IC 14-8-2-57 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
5 2026]. ~~Sec. 57: "Corporation", for purposes of IC 14-12-3, has the~~
6 ~~meaning set forth in IC 14-12-3-1.~~
7 SECTION 3. IC 14-8-2-107, AS AMENDED BY P.L.127-2022,
8 SECTION 7, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
9 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 107. "Fund" has the following meaning:
10 (1) For purposes of IC 14-9-5, the meaning set forth in
11 IC 14-9-5-1.
12 (2) For purposes of IC 14-9-8-21, the meaning set forth in
13 IC 14-9-8-21.
14 (3) For purposes of IC 14-9-8-21.5, the meaning set forth in
15 IC 14-9-8-21.5.

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- 1 (4) For purposes of IC 14-9-9, the meaning set forth in
- 2 IC 14-9-9-3.
- 3 (5) For purposes of IC 14-12-1, the meaning set forth in
- 4 IC 14-12-1-1.
- 5 (6) For purposes of IC 14-12-2, the meaning set forth in
- 6 IC 14-12-2-2.
- 7 ~~(7) For purposes of IC 14-12-3, the meaning set forth in~~
- 8 ~~IC 14-12-3-2.~~
- 9 ~~(8)~~ (7) For purposes of IC 14-13-1, the meaning set forth in
- 10 IC 14-13-1-2.
- 11 ~~(9)~~ (8) For purposes of IC 14-13-2, the meaning set forth in
- 12 IC 14-13-2-3.
- 13 ~~(10)~~ (9) For purposes of IC 14-16-1, the meaning set forth in
- 14 IC 14-16-1-30.
- 15 ~~(11)~~ (10) For purposes of IC 14-19-8, the meaning set forth in
- 16 IC 14-19-8-1.
- 17 ~~(12)~~ (11) For purposes of IC 14-19-11, the meaning set forth in
- 18 IC 14-19-11-3.1.
- 19 ~~(13)~~ (12) For purposes of IC 14-20-11, the meaning set forth in
- 20 IC 14-20-11-2.
- 21 ~~(14)~~ (13) For purposes of IC 14-22-3, the meaning set forth in
- 22 IC 14-22-3-1.
- 23 ~~(15)~~ (14) For purposes of IC 14-22-4, the meaning set forth in
- 24 IC 14-22-4-1.
- 25 ~~(16)~~ (15) For purposes of IC 14-22-5, the meaning set forth in
- 26 IC 14-22-5-1.
- 27 ~~(17)~~ (16) For purposes of IC 14-22-8, the meaning set forth in
- 28 IC 14-22-8-1.
- 29 ~~(18)~~ (17) For purposes of IC 14-22-34, the meaning set forth in
- 30 IC 14-22-34-2.
- 31 ~~(19)~~ (18) For purposes of IC 14-23-3, the meaning set forth in
- 32 IC 14-23-3-1.
- 33 ~~(20)~~ (19) For purposes of IC 14-25-2-4, the meaning set forth in
- 34 IC 14-25-2-4.
- 35 ~~(21)~~ (20) For purposes of IC 14-25-10, the meaning set forth in
- 36 IC 14-25-10-1.
- 37 ~~(22)~~ (21) For purposes of IC 14-25.5, the meaning set forth in
- 38 IC 14-25.5-1-3.
- 39 ~~(23)~~ (22) For purposes of IC 14-31-2, the meaning set forth in
- 40 IC 14-31-2-5.
- 41 ~~(24)~~ (23) For purposes of IC 14-25-12, the meaning set forth in
- 42 IC 14-25-12-1.



- 1 ~~(25)~~ **(24)** For purposes of IC 14-32-8, the meaning set forth in
 2 IC 14-32-8-1.
 3 ~~(26)~~ **(25)** For purposes of IC 14-33-14, the meaning set forth in
 4 IC 14-33-14-3.
 5 ~~(27)~~ **(26)** For purposes of IC 14-33-21, the meaning set forth in
 6 IC 14-33-21-1.
 7 ~~(28)~~ **(27)** For purposes of IC 14-34-6-15, the meaning set forth in
 8 IC 14-34-6-15.
 9 ~~(29)~~ **(28)** For purposes of IC 14-34-14, the meaning set forth in
 10 IC 14-34-14-1.
 11 ~~(30)~~ **(29)** For purposes of IC 14-34-19-1.3, the meaning set forth
 12 in IC 14-34-19-1.3(a).
 13 ~~(31)~~ **(30)** For purposes of IC 14-34-19-1.5, the meaning set forth
 14 in IC 14-34-19-1.5(a).
 15 ~~(32)~~ **(31)** For purposes of IC 14-37-10, the meaning set forth in
 16 IC 14-37-10-1.
 17 SECTION 4. IC 14-8-2-170 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
 18 2026]. ~~Sec. 170: "Municipal corporation"; for purposes of IC 14-12-3;~~
 19 ~~has the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-3-3.~~
 20 SECTION 5. IC 14-8-2-216 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 21 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 216. (a) ~~"Program"; for~~
 22 ~~purposes of IC 14-12-3; has the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-3-4.~~
 23 ~~(b)~~ **(a)** "Program", for purposes of IC 14-23-6.5, has the meaning set
 24 forth in IC 14-23-6.5-1.
 25 ~~(c)~~ **(b)** "Program", for purposes of IC 14-32-8, has the meaning set
 26 forth in IC 14-32-8-3.
 27 SECTION 6. IC 14-8-2-320 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 28 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 320. "Wildlife" has the
 29 following meaning:
 30 (1) For purposes of IC 14-22, except as provided in subdivision
 31 (2), **means** all wild birds, **fish, crustaceans, mollusks,**
 32 **amphibians, reptiles,** and ~~wild~~ mammals.
 33 (2) For purposes of IC 14-22-34, the meaning set forth in
 34 IC 14-22-34-6.
 35 SECTION 7. IC 14-10-1-7 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 36 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 7. (a) The commission
 37 shall have at least four (4) regular meetings in each fiscal year and as
 38 many additional or special meetings as the commission's business,
 39 powers, or duties require.
 40 (b) The chairman:
 41 (1) may call a special meeting; and
 42 (2) shall call a special meeting at the request of any five (5)



members.

(c) A:

(1) meeting of the commission; or

(2) public hearing;

is subject to IC 5-14-1.5.

SECTION 8. IC 14-10-2-9 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 9. (a) A person who wishes to obtain judicial review of a final agency action under this title must serve copies of a petition for judicial review upon:

(1) each person described in IC 4-21.5-5-8; and

(2) the following persons under IC 4-21.5-5-8(a)(4):

(A) If the department or the state historic preservation review board is a party to a proceeding, a copy of the petition required under IC 4-21.5-5-8(a)(4) must be served upon the department or state historic preservation review board, as applicable, to the address published on the website of the department.

(B) If the Indiana board of licensure for professional geologists is a party to a proceeding, a copy of the petition required under IC 4-21.5-5-8(a)(4) must be served upon the Indiana board of licensure for professional geologists at the address published on the website of the state geologist.

(C) If the Indiana board of registration for soil scientists is a party to a proceeding, a copy of the petition required under IC 4-21.5-5-8(a)(4) must be served upon the Indiana board of registration for soil scientists to the address published on the website of the office of the state chemist.

(b) The following agencies shall publish their office address on their official website so a person may serve copies of judicial review:

(1) The department.

(2) The state geologist.

(3) The office of the state chemist.

SECTION 9. IC 14-11-2-1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.246-2005, SECTION 116, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. (a) The department may adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 for the conduct of the following:

(1) Department meetings.

(2) Upon the recommendation of the director, the work of the department and the divisions.



(b) The department may not adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 for the establishment of fees for the following:

- (1) Programs of the department or the commission.
- (2) Facilities owned or operated by the department or the commission or a lessee of the department or commission.
- (3) Licenses issued by the commission, the department, or the director.
- (4) Inspections or other similar services under this title performed by the department or an assistant or employee of the department.

(c) The director shall:

- (1) adopt provisional rules under IC 4-22-2-37.1;**
- (2) adopt interim rules under IC 4-22-2-37.2; and**
- (3) approve for preliminary adoption rules for readoption under IC 4-22-2.6 that do not contain changes to the rules.**

SECTION 10. IC 14-11-2-2 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. A person who violates a rule adopted under this chapter commits a Class C infraction, **unless otherwise specified by law.**

SECTION 11. IC 14-11-4-1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.89-2016, SECTION 4, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. This chapter applies to applications for licenses under the following:

- (1) IC 14-26-2 (lake preservation).
- (2) IC 14-26-5 (~~dams~~): **(lowering of Ten Acre Lake).**
- (3) IC 14-27 (levees, dams, and drainage).**
- ~~(4) IC 14-28-1 (flood control).~~
- (5) IC 14-29-1 (navigable waterways).**
- ~~(6) IC 14-29-3 (removal of substances from streams): (sand and gravel permits).~~
- ~~(7) IC 14-29-4 (construction of channels).~~

SECTION 12. IC 14-12-3 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. (Hometown Indiana Grant Program).

SECTION 13. IC 14-15-3-19 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 19. Provisions of this chapter concerning the operation of boats or motorboats apply as follows:

- (1) Whether or not the boat or motorboat is towing a ~~water ski, a watersled, an aquaplane, or a similar object, including a person on the water ski, watersled, aquaplane, or similar~~ **any** object.
- (2) To each object and person.

SECTION 14. IC 14-15-3-20 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 20. A person operating



a motorboat may not tow a water ski, a watersled, **a wakeboard, barefoot water skis**, an aquaplane, or a similar object, including a person on the waterski, watersled, **wakeboard, barefoot water skis**, aquaplane, or similar object, unless:

- (1) the motorboat is occupied by at least one (1) other person who is giving the person's entire attention to watching the object, **wakeboard**, or person towed; and
- (2) the person operating the boat is giving the person's entire attention to the operation of the boat.

SECTION 15. IC 14-15-4-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.111-2016, SECTION 11, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) The operator of a boat involved in an accident or a collision ~~resulting in:~~ **shall provide the information required under subsection (b) if the following conditions occur:**

- (1) Injury to or death of a person. ~~or~~
- (2) Damage to a boat or other property to an apparent extent of at least **the greater of: seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750);** ~~shall provide the information required under subsection (b):~~

(A) two thousand dollars (\$2,000); or

(B) the amount for assessed damage under the United States Department of Homeland Security Boating Accident Report Database (BARD).

(b) An operator of a boat subject to subsection (a) shall do the following:

- (1) Give notice of the accident to:
 - (A) the office of the sheriff of the county;
 - (B) the nearest state police post; or
 - (C) the central dispatch center for the law enforcement division of the department;
 immediately and by the quickest means of communication.
- (2) Mail to the department a written report of the accident or collision within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident or collision.

SECTION 16. IC 14-16-1-24 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 24. (a) The operator of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in serious bodily injury to or death of an individual or property damage in an estimated amount of at least ~~seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750)~~ **two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500)** shall immediately, by the quickest means of communication, notify at least one (1) of the following:

- (1) A state police officer or conservation officer.
- (2) The sheriff's office of the county where the accident occurred.



(3) The office of the police department of the municipality where the accident occurred.

(b) The police agency receiving the notice shall do the following:

(1) Complete a report of the accident on forms prescribed by the director.

(2) Forward the report to the director.

SECTION 17. IC 14-21-1-25.1 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 25.1. An application for approval of a development plan under section 26.5 of this chapter must be filed with the division and include the following:**

(1) A signed cover letter from the applicant on letterhead with the following information:

(A) The identity of the person who will conduct the project.

(B) The overall nature and time frame of the project.

(C) The location of the project by section, township, range, county, and address.

(D) Information regarding any prior disturbance to the area.

(E) A statement regarding whether federal or state funds or licenses are involved in the project.

(2) Mapping to show the location of the burial ground or cemetery in relation to the project that includes the following:

(A) Construction details for any activity within one hundred (100) feet of the burial ground or cemetery.

(B) References to nearby landmarks.

(C) The location of the burial ground or cemetery and the project area on the appropriate U.S. Geological Survey U.S. TOPO: Maps for America.

(3) A description of the burial ground or cemetery sufficient to evaluate the likely impact of the project, including the following:

(A) Any name of the burial ground or cemetery.

(B) The dates the burial ground or cemetery has been used.

(C) Historical information and documentation.

(D) Precise boundaries that reference nearby landmarks.

If documentation is not available to identify the burial ground or cemetery boundaries, the applicant may be required to determine those boundaries through the following:

(i) Remote sensing.

(ii) Investigations by archeologists.



- 1 (iii) Another scientific method approved by the division.
- 2 (E) The physical condition of the burial ground or
- 3 cemetery.
- 4 (4) A description of the grounds adjacent to and within one
- 5 hundred (100) feet of the burial ground or cemetery, including
- 6 the following:
- 7 (A) The nature, depth, and degree of previous
- 8 disturbances, including those caused by:
- 9 (i) construction;
- 10 (ii) excavation;
- 11 (iii) grading; or
- 12 (iv) filling.
- 13 (B) A description of soil, by type, present at the site,
- 14 including an explanation of how the soil would be:
- 15 (i) disturbed;
- 16 (ii) graded;
- 17 (iii) modified;
- 18 (iv) removed; or
- 19 (v) otherwise treated.
- 20 (C) A description of each structure.
- 21 (D) A description of the activities anticipated to:
- 22 (i) erect;
- 23 (ii) alter; or
- 24 (iii) repair;
- 25 a structure.
- 26 (E) Each area that may contain new construction in
- 27 connection with the proposed construction areas.
- 28 (5) Recent photographs of the burial ground or cemetery and
- 29 the grounds adjacent to and within one hundred (100) feet of
- 30 the burial ground or cemetery.
- 31 SECTION 18. IC 14-21-1-25.5 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY
- 32 1, 2026]. Sec. 25-5: (a) If a Native American Indian burial ground is
- 33 discovered, the department shall immediately provide notice to the
- 34 Native American Indian affairs commission established by IC 4-23-32.
- 35 (b) If Native American Indian human remains are removed from a
- 36 burial ground, the department shall provide the following to the Native
- 37 American Indian affairs commission:
- 38 (1) Any written findings or reports that result from the analysis
- 39 and study of the human remains.
- 40 (2) Written notice to the Native American Indian affairs
- 41 commission that the analysis and study of the human remains are
- 42 complete.



(c) After receiving written notice under subsection (b)(2), the Native American Indian affairs commission shall make recommendations to the department regarding the final disposition of the Native American Indian human remains.

SECTION 19. IC 14-22-6-4, AS AMENDED BY P.L.144-2022, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 4. (a) For purposes of this section, a trap is designed to capture and kill a furbearing animal if the animal's death is the result of:

- (1) submerging the animal in water; or
- (2) crushing or asphyxiating the animal.

(b) A person may not do the following:

(1) Tend or visit a trap or remove a furbearing animal from a trap that is not the person's property without the permission of the owner.

(2) For a trap that is designed to capture but not kill a furbearing animal:

(A) fail to tend or visit; ~~or have tended or visited a trap~~ and

(B) remove a furbearing animal from;

a trap that is the person's property within a period not exceeding twenty-four (24) hours.

(3) For a trap that is designed to capture and kill a furbearing animal:

(A) fail to tend or visit; ~~or have tended or visited a trap~~ and

(B) remove a furbearing animal from;

a trap that is the person's property within a period not exceeding forty-eight (48) hours.

(c) The department shall publish a recommendation that the best practice to comply with this section is to tend or visit, or have tended or visited a furbearing trap that is the person's property within a period not to exceed twenty-four (24) hours.

SECTION 20. IC 14-22-10-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.113-2019, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) As used in this section and section 2.5 of this chapter, "governmental entity" means any of the following:

- (1) The government of the United States of America.
- (2) The state.
- (3) A county.
- (4) A city.
- (5) A town.
- (6) A township.
- (7) The following, if created by the Constitution of the United



States, the Constitution of the State of Indiana, a statute, an ordinance, a rule, or an order:

(A) An agency.

(B) A board.

(C) A commission.

(D) A committee.

(E) A council.

(F) A department.

(G) A district.

(H) A public body corporate and politic.

(b) As used in this section and section 2.5 of this chapter, "monetary consideration" means a fee or other charge for permission to go upon a tract of land. The term does not include:

(1) the gratuitous sharing of game, fish, or other products of the recreational use of the land;

(2) services rendered for the purpose of wildlife management; or

(3) contributions in kind made for the purpose of wildlife management.

(c) As used in this section and section 2.5 of this chapter, "owner" means a governmental entity or another person that:

(1) has a fee interest in;

(2) is a tenant, a lessee, or an occupant of; or

(3) is in control of;

a tract of land.

(d) A person who goes upon or through the premises, including caves, of another:

(1) with or without permission; and

(2) either:

(A) without the payment of monetary consideration; or

(B) with the payment of monetary consideration directly or indirectly on the person's behalf by an agency of the state or federal government;

for the purpose of swimming, camping, hiking, sightseeing, **exercising, cycling,** or accessing or departing from a trail, a greenway, or another similar area, or for any other purpose (other than the purposes described in section 2.5 of this chapter) ~~does not have an assurance that the premises are safe for the purpose: is subject to the limitations of liability granted to the owner of the premises described in subsection (e).~~

(e) The owner of the premises does not

~~(1) assume responsibility; or~~

~~(2) incur liability;~~



for an injury to a person or property caused by an act or failure to act of other persons using the premises. **assume responsibility or incur liability for an injury or damage to a:**

(1) **person caused by:**

(A) **an act; or**

(B) **the failure to act;**

of another person using the premises;

(2) **person caused by a condition on the land; or**

(3) **person's property caused by:**

(A) **the act of another person using the premises; or**

(B) **a condition on the land.**

(f) This section does not affect the following:

(†) ~~Existing Indiana case law on the liability of owners or possessors of premises with respect to the following:~~

(A) ~~Business invitees in commercial establishments.~~

(B) ~~Invited guests.~~

(1) Business invitees in for-profit establishments.

(2) The attractive nuisance doctrine.

(g) This section does not excuse the owner or occupant of premises from liability for injury to a person or property caused by a malicious or an illegal act of the owner or occupant.

(h) This section does not apply to a parcel of land assessed as residential land.

SECTION 21. IC 14-22-10-2.5 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2.5. (a) A person who goes upon or through the premises, including caves, of another:

(1) with or without permission; and

(2) either:

(A) without the payment of monetary consideration; or

(B) with the payment of monetary consideration directly or indirectly on the person's behalf by an agency of the state or federal government;

for the purpose of hunting, fishing, trapping, or preparing to hunt, fish, or trap, does not have an assurance that the premises are safe for that purpose.

(b) The owner of the premises does not:

(1) assume responsibility; or

(2) incur liability;

for an injury to a person or property caused by an act or failure to act of other persons using the premises.

(c) This section does not affect Indiana case law on the liability of owners or possessors of premises with respect to the following:



(1) Business invitees in commercial establishments.

(2) The attractive nuisance doctrine.

(d) This section does not excuse the owner or occupant of premises from liability for injury to a person or property caused by a malicious or an illegal act of the owner or occupant.

(e) This section does not apply to a parcel of land assessed as residential land.

SECTION 22. IC 14-22-15.5-7 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. ~~Sec. 7. An individual who acts as a hunting guide without a hunting guide license in violation of section 2 of this chapter commits a Class B infraction.~~

SECTION 23. IC 14-23-6.6-7, AS ADDED BY P.L.124-2025, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 7. (a) Subject to subsection (b), a certified prescribed burn manager who conducts the prescribed burning in accordance with section 6 of this chapter is immune from civil liability for harm caused by the:

(1) prescribed burn; or

(2) smoke produced by the prescribed burn.

(b) The immunity described in subsection (a) does not apply if the harm was the result of the certified prescribed burn manager's:

(1) negligence; or

(2) willful and wanton misconduct.

(c) Subject to subsection (d), a landowner or landowner's agent who conducts prescribed burning on the landowner's property in accordance with section 6 of this chapter is immune from civil liability for harm caused by the:

(1) prescribed burn; or

(2) smoke produced by the prescribed burn.

(d) The immunity described in subsection (c) does not apply if the harm was the result of the:

(1) negligence of the landowner or the landowner's agent; or

(2) willful and wanton misconduct of the landowner or the landowner's agent.

(e) The ~~division of forestry's~~ **department's** officers, agents, and employees are immune from civil liability, in accordance with IC 34-13-3, arising out of any of the following:

(1) Participation in planning, undertaking, or assisting with prescribed burning.

(2) Administration of the prescribed burn certification program, including revocation of prescribed burn certifications issued under the program.



1 SECTION 24. IC 14-30-3-16 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 2 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 16. (a) The
 3 commission, **in coordination with the department**, shall keep a
 4 record of the commission's resolutions, transactions, and findings. This
 5 record is a public record.

6 (b) The commission may adopt rules for the transaction of business.

7 SECTION 25. IC 14-30.5-2-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.92-2025,
 8 SECTION 50, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 9 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) If one (1) county executive submits an
 10 ordinance and a written request for recognition of a proposed
 11 watershed development commission under section 1(c) of this chapter,
 12 the natural resources commission shall decide under subsections (c)
 13 through (e) whether to recognize the proposed commission.

14 (b) If the county executives of two (2) or more counties submit
 15 ordinances and written requests under section 1(c) of this chapter for
 16 recognition of a single proposed watershed development commission
 17 empowered to act in a single designated watershed that includes areas
 18 within both or all of the counties:

19 (1) the natural resources commission may not decide whether to
 20 recognize the proposed commission unless the provisions of the
 21 ordinances submitted under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter are
 22 essentially identical in:

23 (A) identifying the designated watershed; and

24 (B) stating the purposes of the proposed commission; and

25 (2) if the natural resources commission determines that the
 26 requirement set forth in subdivision (1) is met, the natural
 27 resources commission shall decide under subsections (c) through
 28 (e) whether to recognize the proposed commission.

29 (c) Before making a decision whether to recognize a proposed
 30 commission under this section, the **division of water, on behalf of the**
 31 natural resources commission, shall hold at least one (1) public hearing
 32 concerning the proposed commission in each county whose executive
 33 submitted an ordinance and a written request for recognition of the
 34 proposed commission under section 1(c) of this chapter. Any interested
 35 person attending a public hearing held under this subsection shall have
 36 the right to:

37 (1) address the natural resources commission; and

38 (2) provide written comments;

39 on whether the proposed commission should be established. The
 40 **division of water, on behalf of the** natural resources commission, may
 41 convene the meeting, record the testimony given, and receive the
 42 written comments provided.



(d) The **division of water, on behalf of the** natural resources commission, shall give notice of a public hearing to be held under subsection (c):

(1) by publication at least one (1) time in one (1) newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the hearing will be held; and

(2) through the website of the natural resources commission.

(e) In deciding whether to recognize a proposed commission, the natural resources commission shall determine the answer to each of the following questions:

(1) Are the purposes for which the proposed commission would be established, as set forth in the ordinance or ordinances under section 1(b)(3) of this chapter, within the purposes set forth in IC 14-30.5-3-1 for which a watershed development commission may be established?

(2) Do the purposes of the proposed commission, as set forth in the ordinance or ordinances under section 1(b)(3) of this chapter, correspond to legitimate flood damage reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or water infrastructure needs of each county seeking establishment of the commission, as set forth under section 1(b)(4) of this chapter?

(3) Is it reasonable to expect that the establishment of a commission having powers under this article only in the county or counties from which the ordinance or ordinances were submitted under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter would effectively address the flood damage reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or water infrastructure needs of each county that submitted an ordinance under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter?

(4) Is it reasonable to expect that the establishment of a commission that has powers under this article only in the area or areas inside the geographic boundaries of the designated watershed would effectively address the flood damage reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or water infrastructure needs of each county that submitted an ordinance under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter?

(5) Is the territory of the proposed commission at least as large as the entirety of the same eight (8) digit U.S. Geological Survey hydrologic unit code?

(6) Has a regional watershed study or watershed management plan been conducted in consultation with the Indiana finance authority and the department of natural resources that assesses



water use, water quality, drinking water systems, wastewater management systems, storm water management, flood control, drainage management, recreational uses, natural resources, and water infrastructure needs of the watershed of the proposed commission? If so, can the establishment of the proposed commission be expected to address the needs identified in that study or management plan?

(f) If:

(1) one (1) county's executive submits an ordinance and a request for recognition of a proposed commission under section 1(c) of this chapter; and

(2) the natural resources commission answers all of the questions set forth in subsection (e) favorably;

the natural resources commission shall issue an order recognizing the watershed development commission and recognizing the county referred to in subdivision (1) as a member of the watershed development commission.

(g) If:

(1) executives of two (2) or more counties submit ordinances and requests for recognition of a proposed watershed development commission under section 1(c) of this chapter; and

(2) the natural resources commission answers all of the questions set forth in subsection (e) favorably with respect to at least one (1) of the counties;

the natural resources commission shall issue an order recognizing the watershed development commission and recognizing as a member of the watershed development commission each county with respect to which the natural resources commission answered all of the questions set forth in subsection (e) favorably.

(h) If the natural resources commission does not answer all of the questions set forth in subsection (e) favorably with respect to a county, the natural resources commission shall:

(1) inform the executive of the county in writing of its decision; and

(2) specify in the writing the reason or reasons for each unfavorable answer.

(i) The action of the natural resources commission under this section in declining to recognize a proposed watershed development commission for a particular watershed does not preclude the later submission of one (1) or more new ordinances and written requests for recognition of a proposed watershed development commission for the same designated watershed.



(j) An action of the natural resources commission under this section declining to recognize a particular county as a member of a watershed development commission does not preclude the later submission of:

- (1) another ordinance and written request under section 1(c) of this chapter for recognition of the county as a member of another proposed watershed development commission; or
- (2) an ordinance and written request under section 4 or 5 of this chapter proposing the county for membership in an established watershed development commission.

SECTION 26. IC 14-30.5-2-6, AS AMENDED BY P.L.92-2025, SECTION 51, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 6. (a) A county to which section 4 or 5 of this chapter applies may not become a member of an existing watershed development commission unless:

- (1) the executives of all of the counties that are members of the existing commission adopt ordinances accepting the county as a member county of the existing commission; and
- (2) the natural resources commission issues an order under this section recognizing the county as a member county of the existing commission.

(b) Before making a decision whether to recognize a county as a member county of an existing commission under this section, the natural resources commission shall hold at least one (1) public hearing in the county concerning the proposed membership of the county in the existing commission. Any interested person attending a public hearing held under this subsection shall have the right to:

- (1) address the natural resources commission; and
- (2) provide written comments;

concerning the proposed membership of the county in the existing commission. The **division of water, on behalf of the** natural resources commission, may convene the meeting, record the testimony given, and receive the written comments provided.

(c) The **division of water, on behalf of the** natural resources commission, shall give notice of a public hearing to be held under subsection (b):

- (1) by publication at least one (1) time in one (1) newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the hearing will be held; and
- (2) through the website of the natural resources commission.

(d) In deciding whether to recognize a county to which section 4 or 5 of this chapter applies as a member of an existing commission, the natural resources commission shall determine the answer to each of the



1 following questions:

2 (1) Do the stated purposes for which the watershed development
3 commission was established correspond to the flood damage
4 reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or
5 water infrastructure needs of the county, as stated under section
6 4(b)(3) or 5(b)(3) of this chapter?

7 (2) Is it reasonable to expect that the county's flood damage
8 reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or
9 water infrastructure needs, as stated under section 4(b)(3) or
10 5(b)(3) of this chapter, would be addressed more effectively if the
11 county were a member of the existing commission than those
12 needs have previously been addressed?

13 (3) Would the county's membership in the existing commission
14 diminish the effectiveness of the existing watershed development
15 commission in addressing the flood damage reduction, drainage,
16 storm water management, recreation, or water infrastructure
17 needs of other member counties?

18 (4) Is the territory of the proposed commission at least as large as
19 the entirety of the same eight (8) digit U.S. Geological Survey
20 hydrologic unit code?

21 (5) Has a regional watershed study or watershed management
22 plan been conducted in consultation with Indiana finance
23 authority and the department of natural resources that assesses
24 water use, water quality, drinking water systems, wastewater
25 management systems, storm water management, flood control,
26 drainage management, recreational uses, natural resources, and
27 water infrastructure needs of the watershed of the proposed
28 commission? If so, can the establishment of the proposed
29 commission be expected to address the needs identified in that
30 study or management plan?

31 (e) If the natural resources commission answers all of the questions
32 set forth in subsection (d) favorably, the natural resources commission
33 shall issue an order recognizing the membership of the county in the
34 existing commission.

35 (f) If the natural resources commission does not answer all of the
36 questions set forth in subsection (d) favorably, the natural resources
37 commission shall inform the executive of the county to which section
38 4 or 5 of this chapter applies in writing of its decision and specify in the
39 writing the reason or reasons for each unfavorable answer.

40 (g) An action of the natural resources commission under this section
41 declining to recognize a county as a member of an established
42 watershed development commission does not preclude the later



1 submission of another ordinance under section 4 or 5 of this chapter
 2 seeking membership for the county in an existing commission.

3 SECTION 27. IC 14-33-2-19 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 4 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 19. (a) In determining
 5 the facts, the **division of water, on behalf of the** commission, shall **do**
 6 **the following:**

7 (1) Hold hearings at which the ~~commission~~ **division of water**
 8 shall give any interested person the right to be heard.

9 (2) At the request of an interested person, ~~the commission shall~~
 10 hold hearings at the county seat of a county containing land in the
 11 proposed district.

12 (3) ~~The commission shall~~ Choose the county seat.

13 (b) The ~~commission~~ **division of water** shall give notice of the
 14 hearings by publication at least one (1) time in one (1) newspaper of
 15 general circulation in each county containing land in the proposed
 16 district.

17 SECTION 28. IC 14-33-2-22 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 18 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 22. The commission,
 19 **in coordination with the department**, shall make a report of the
 20 commission's findings to the court, including findings on the territorial
 21 limits of the proposed district. The commission shall make this report
 22 within one hundred twenty (120) days after the petition is referred to
 23 the commission, unless the commission requests and receives approval
 24 from the court for additional periods of thirty (30) days each.



COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. President: The Senate Committee on Natural Resources, to which was referred Senate Bill No. 224, has had the same under consideration and begs leave to report the same back to the Senate with the recommendation that said bill be AMENDED as follows:

Page 1, delete lines 4 through 7.

Page 1, delete lines 11 through 15, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 4. IC 14-8-2-107, AS AMENDED BY P.L.127-2022, SECTION 7, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 107. "Fund" has the following meaning:

- (1) For purposes of IC 14-9-5, the meaning set forth in IC 14-9-5-1.
- (2) For purposes of IC 14-9-8-21, the meaning set forth in IC 14-9-8-21.
- (3) For purposes of IC 14-9-8-21.5, the meaning set forth in IC 14-9-8-21.5.
- (4) For purposes of IC 14-9-9, the meaning set forth in IC 14-9-9-3.
- (5) For purposes of IC 14-12-1, the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-1-1.
- (6) For purposes of IC 14-12-2, the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-2-2.
- ~~(7) For purposes of IC 14-12-3, the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-3-2.~~
- ~~(8)~~ (7) For purposes of IC 14-13-1, the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-1-2.
- ~~(9)~~ (8) For purposes of IC 14-13-2, the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-2-3.
- ~~(10)~~ (9) For purposes of IC 14-16-1, the meaning set forth in IC 14-16-1-30.
- ~~(11)~~ (10) For purposes of IC 14-19-8, the meaning set forth in IC 14-19-8-1.
- ~~(12)~~ (11) For purposes of IC 14-19-11, the meaning set forth in IC 14-19-11-3.1.
- ~~(13)~~ (12) For purposes of IC 14-20-11, the meaning set forth in IC 14-20-11-2.
- ~~(14)~~ (13) For purposes of IC 14-22-3, the meaning set forth in IC 14-22-3-1.
- ~~(15)~~ (14) For purposes of IC 14-22-4, the meaning set forth in IC 14-22-4-1.



~~(16)~~ **(15)** For purposes of IC 14-22-5, the meaning set forth in IC 14-22-5-1.

~~(17)~~ **(16)** For purposes of IC 14-22-8, the meaning set forth in IC 14-22-8-1.

~~(18)~~ **(17)** For purposes of IC 14-22-34, the meaning set forth in IC 14-22-34-2.

~~(19)~~ **(18)** For purposes of IC 14-23-3, the meaning set forth in IC 14-23-3-1.

~~(20)~~ **(19)** For purposes of IC 14-25-2-4, the meaning set forth in IC 14-25-2-4.

~~(21)~~ **(20)** For purposes of IC 14-25-10, the meaning set forth in IC 14-25-10-1.

~~(22)~~ **(21)** For purposes of IC 14-25.5, the meaning set forth in IC 14-25.5-1-3.

~~(23)~~ **(22)** For purposes of IC 14-31-2, the meaning set forth in IC 14-31-2-5.

~~(24)~~ **(23)** For purposes of IC 14-25-12, the meaning set forth in IC 14-25-12-1.

~~(25)~~ **(24)** For purposes of IC 14-32-8, the meaning set forth in IC 14-32-8-1.

~~(26)~~ **(25)** For purposes of IC 14-33-14, the meaning set forth in IC 14-33-14-3.

~~(27)~~ **(26)** For purposes of IC 14-33-21, the meaning set forth in IC 14-33-21-1.

~~(28)~~ **(27)** For purposes of IC 14-34-6-15, the meaning set forth in IC 14-34-6-15.

~~(29)~~ **(28)** For purposes of IC 14-34-14, the meaning set forth in IC 14-34-14-1.

~~(30)~~ **(29)** For purposes of IC 14-34-19-1.3, the meaning set forth in IC 14-34-19-1.3(a).

~~(31)~~ **(30)** For purposes of IC 14-34-19-1.5, the meaning set forth in IC 14-34-19-1.5(a).

~~(32)~~ **(31)** For purposes of IC 14-37-10, the meaning set forth in IC 14-37-10-1."

Delete page 2.

Page 3, delete lines 1 through 33.

Page 4, delete lines 2 through 30, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 12. IC 14-8-2-320 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 320. "Wildlife" has the following meaning:

- (1) For purposes of IC 14-22, except as provided in subdivision
- (2), **means** all wild birds, **fish, crustaceans, mollusks,**



amphibians, reptiles, and ~~wild~~ mammals.

(2) For purposes of IC 14-22-34, the meaning set forth in IC 14-22-34-6."

Page 5, delete lines 2 through 39.

Page 6, delete lines 28 through 39.

Page 7, delete lines 23 through 35.

Page 8, delete lines 6 through 42.

Delete pages 9 through 12.

Page 13, delete lines 1 through 18.

Page 14, delete lines 37 through 42.

Delete pages 15 through 16.

Page 17, delete lines 1 through 36.

Page 19, delete lines 35 through 42.

Delete page 20.

Page 21, delete lines 1 through 31.

Page 22, delete lines 17 through 42.

Delete pages 23 through 24.

Page 25, delete lines 1 through 19, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 54. IC 14-22-10-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.113-2019, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) As used in this section and section 2.5 of this chapter, "governmental entity" means any of the following:

- (1) The government of the United States of America.
- (2) The state.
- (3) A county.
- (4) A city.
- (5) A town.
- (6) A township.
- (7) The following, if created by the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Indiana, a statute, an ordinance, a rule, or an order:
 - (A) An agency.
 - (B) A board.
 - (C) A commission.
 - (D) A committee.
 - (E) A council.
 - (F) A department.
 - (G) A district.
 - (H) A public body corporate and politic.

(b) As used in this section and section 2.5 of this chapter, "monetary consideration" means a fee or other charge for permission to go upon



a tract of land. The term does not include:

- (1) the gratuitous sharing of game, fish, or other products of the recreational use of the land;
- (2) services rendered for the purpose of wildlife management; or
- (3) contributions in kind made for the purpose of wildlife management.

(c) As used in this section and section 2.5 of this chapter, "owner" means a governmental entity or another person that:

- (1) has a fee interest in;
- (2) is a tenant, a lessee, or an occupant of; or
- (3) is in control of;

a tract of land.

(d) A person who goes upon or through the premises, including caves, of another:

- (1) with or without permission; and
- (2) either:
 - (A) without the payment of monetary consideration; or
 - (B) with the payment of monetary consideration directly or indirectly on the person's behalf by an agency of the state or federal government;

for the purpose of swimming, camping, hiking, sightseeing, **exercising, cycling,** or accessing or departing from a trail, a greenway, or another similar area, or for any other purpose (other than the purposes described in section 2.5 of this chapter) ~~does not have an assurance that the premises are safe for the purpose:~~ **is subject to the limitations of liability granted to the owner of the premises described in subsection (e).**

(e) The owner of the premises does not

- ~~(1) assume responsibility; or~~
- ~~(2) incur liability;~~

~~for an injury to a person or property caused by an act or failure to act of other persons using the premises: assume responsibility or incur liability for an injury or damage to a:~~

- (1) person caused by:**
 - (A) an act; or**
 - (B) the failure to act;****of another person using the premises;**
- (2) person caused by a condition on the land; or**
- (3) person's property caused by:**
 - (A) the act of another person using the premises; or**
 - (B) a condition on the land.**

(f) This section does not affect the following:



~~(1) Existing Indiana case law on the liability of owners or possessors of premises with respect to the following:~~

~~(A) Business invitees in commercial establishments.~~

~~(B) Invited guests.~~

(1) Business invitees in for-profit establishments.

(2) The attractive nuisance doctrine.

(g) This section does not excuse the owner or occupant of premises from liability for injury to a person or property caused by a malicious or an illegal act of the owner or occupant.

(h) This section does not apply to a parcel of land assessed as residential land.

SECTION 55. IC 14-22-10-2.5 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2.5. (a) A person who goes upon or through the premises, including caves, of another:

(1) with or without permission; and

(2) either:

(A) without the payment of monetary consideration; or

(B) with the payment of monetary consideration directly or indirectly on the person's behalf by an agency of the state or federal government;

for the purpose of hunting, fishing, trapping, or preparing to hunt, fish, or trap, does not have an assurance that the premises are safe for that purpose.

(b) The owner of the premises does not:

(1) assume responsibility; or

(2) incur liability;

for an injury to a person or property caused by an act or failure to act of other persons using the premises.

(c) This section does not affect Indiana case law on the liability of owners or possessors of premises with respect to the following:

(1) Business invitees in commercial establishments.

(2) The attractive nuisance doctrine.

(d) This section does not excuse the owner or occupant of premises from liability for injury to a person or property caused by a malicious or an illegal act of the owner or occupant.

(e) This section does not apply to a parcel of land assessed as residential land."

Page 25, delete lines 24 through 42.

Delete pages 26 through 28.

Page 29, delete lines 1 through 18.

Page 30, delete lines 8 through 26.

Page 35, delete lines 29 through 42.



Delete pages 36 through 41.

Page 42, delete lines 1 through 28.

Page 43, delete lines 9 through 42.

Delete pages 44 through 47.

Renumber all SECTIONS consecutively.

and when so amended that said bill do pass.

(Reference is to SB 224 as introduced.)

GLICK, Chairperson

Committee Vote: Yeas 9, Nays 0.

