



Reprinted
February 24, 2026

ENGROSSED SENATE BILL No. 224

DIGEST OF SB 224 (Updated February 23, 2026 5:04 pm - DI 148)

Citations Affected: IC 14-8; IC 14-10; IC 14-11; IC 14-12; IC 14-13; 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
(Continued next page)

Effective: July 1, 2026.

Glick, Tomes

(HOUSE SPONSORS — LINDAUER, ABBOTT)

January 8, 2026, read first time and referred to Committee on Natural Resources.
January 27, 2026, amended, reported favorably — Do Pass.
January 28, 2026, read second time, ordered engrossed. Engrossed.
January 29, 2026, read third time, passed. Yeas 48, nays 0.

HOUSE ACTION

February 2, 2026, read first time and referred to Committee on Natural Resources.
February 12, 2026, amended, reported — Do Pass.
February 23, 2026, read second time, amended, ordered engrossed.

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Digest Continued

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. Establishes a consolidated chapter for river basin commission administration. Repeals existing, separate chapters for the Maumee River basin commission, the St. Joseph River basin commission, and the Upper Wabash River basin commission. Creates a new chapter for a river basin commission's conversion into a watershed development commission. Makes technical and conforming changes.



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February 24, 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.

ENGROSSED 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 14-8-2-20, AS AMENDED BY P.L.99-2025,
5 SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
6 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 20. "Basin" has the following meaning:
7 (1) For purposes of IC 14-13-9, the meaning set forth in
8 IC 14-13-9-1.
9 (2) For purposes of IC 14-25-1, the meaning set forth in section
10 1.2 of IC 14-25-15-1.
11 (3) For purposes of IC 14-25-17, the meaning set forth in
12 IC 14-25-17-3.
13 (4) For purposes of IC 14-30-2, the meaning set forth in
14 IC 14-30-2-1.
15 (5) For purposes of IC 14-30-3, the meaning set forth in

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- 1 ~~IC 14-30-3-1.~~
 2 (6) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, the meaning set forth in
 3 ~~IC 14-30-4-1.~~
 4 SECTION 3. IC 14-8-2-48, AS AMENDED BY P.L.251-2023,
 5 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 6 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 48. (a) "Commission", except as provided in this
 7 section, refers to the natural resources commission.
 8 (b) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-1, has the meaning set
 9 forth in IC 14-13-1-1.
 10 (c) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-2, has the meaning set
 11 forth in IC 14-13-2-2.
 12 (d) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-4, has the meaning set
 13 forth in IC 14-13-4-1.
 14 (e) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-5, has the meaning set
 15 forth in IC 14-13-5-1.
 16 (f) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-6, has the meaning set
 17 forth in IC 14-13-6-2.
 18 (g) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-9, has the meaning set
 19 forth in IC 14-13-9-2.
 20 (h) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-20-11, has the meaning set
 21 forth in IC 14-20-11-1.
 22 (i) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-28-4, has the meaning set
 23 forth in IC 14-28-4-1.
 24 (j) "Commission", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, **IC 14-30-6**, has the
 25 meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-2-2~~. **IC 14-30-6-1.**
 26 (k) "Commission", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3~~, **IC 14-30-7-1**, has
 27 the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-3-2~~. **IC 14-30-7-1.**
 28 (l) "Commission", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, **IC 14-30-7-2**, has the
 29 meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-4-2~~. **IC 14-30-7-2.**
 30 **(m) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-30-7-3, has the**
 31 **meaning set forth in IC 14-30-7-3.**
 32 ~~(m)~~ **(n)** "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-30.5, has the meaning
 33 set forth in IC 14-30.5-1-2.
 34 ~~(m)~~ **(o)** "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-33-20, has the meaning
 35 set forth in IC 14-33-20-2.
 36 SECTION 4. IC 14-8-2-57 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
 37 2026]. Sec. 57. "Corporation", for purposes of ~~IC 14-12-3~~, has the
 38 meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-12-3-1~~.
 39 SECTION 5. IC 14-8-2-86.2, AS ADDED BY P.L.251-2023,
 40 SECTION 3, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 41 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 86.2. "Executive", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3-33~~
 42 and IC 14-30.5, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-30.5-1-4.



1 SECTION 6. IC 14-8-2-107, AS AMENDED BY P.L.127-2022,
 2 SECTION 7, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 3 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 107. "Fund" has the following meaning:

4 (1) For purposes of IC 14-9-5, the meaning set forth in
 5 IC 14-9-5-1.

6 (2) For purposes of IC 14-9-8-21, the meaning set forth in
 7 IC 14-9-8-21.

8 (3) For purposes of IC 14-9-8-21.5, the meaning set forth in
 9 IC 14-9-8-21.5.

10 (4) For purposes of IC 14-9-9, the meaning set forth in
 11 IC 14-9-9-3.

12 (5) For purposes of IC 14-12-1, the meaning set forth in
 13 IC 14-12-1-1.

14 (6) For purposes of IC 14-12-2, the meaning set forth in
 15 IC 14-12-2-2.

16 ~~(7) For purposes of IC 14-12-3, the meaning set forth in~~
 17 ~~IC 14-12-3-2.~~

18 ~~(8)~~ (7) For purposes of IC 14-13-1, the meaning set forth in
 19 IC 14-13-1-2.

20 ~~(9)~~ (8) For purposes of IC 14-13-2, the meaning set forth in
 21 IC 14-13-2-3.

22 ~~(10)~~ (9) For purposes of IC 14-16-1, the meaning set forth in
 23 IC 14-16-1-30.

24 ~~(11)~~ (10) For purposes of IC 14-19-8, the meaning set forth in
 25 IC 14-19-8-1.

26 ~~(12)~~ (11) For purposes of IC 14-19-11, the meaning set forth in
 27 IC 14-19-11-3.1.

28 ~~(13)~~ (12) For purposes of IC 14-20-11, the meaning set forth in
 29 IC 14-20-11-2.

30 ~~(14)~~ (13) For purposes of IC 14-22-3, the meaning set forth in
 31 IC 14-22-3-1.

32 ~~(15)~~ (14) For purposes of IC 14-22-4, the meaning set forth in
 33 IC 14-22-4-1.

34 ~~(16)~~ (15) For purposes of IC 14-22-5, the meaning set forth in
 35 IC 14-22-5-1.

36 ~~(17)~~ (16) For purposes of IC 14-22-8, the meaning set forth in
 37 IC 14-22-8-1.

38 ~~(18)~~ (17) For purposes of IC 14-22-34, the meaning set forth in
 39 IC 14-22-34-2.

40 ~~(19)~~ (18) For purposes of IC 14-23-3, the meaning set forth in
 41 IC 14-23-3-1.

42 ~~(20)~~ (19) For purposes of IC 14-25-2-4, the meaning set forth in



- 1 IC 14-25-2-4.
 2 ~~(21)~~ **(20)** For purposes of IC 14-25-10, the meaning set forth in
 3 IC 14-25-10-1.
 4 ~~(22)~~ **(21)** For purposes of IC 14-25.5, the meaning set forth in
 5 IC 14-25.5-1-3.
 6 ~~(23)~~ **(22)** For purposes of IC 14-31-2, the meaning set forth in
 7 IC 14-31-2-5.
 8 ~~(24)~~ **(23)** For purposes of IC 14-25-12, the meaning set forth in
 9 IC 14-25-12-1.
 10 ~~(25)~~ **(24)** For purposes of IC 14-32-8, the meaning set forth in
 11 IC 14-32-8-1.
 12 ~~(26)~~ **(25)** For purposes of IC 14-33-14, the meaning set forth in
 13 IC 14-33-14-3.
 14 ~~(27)~~ **(26)** For purposes of IC 14-33-21, the meaning set forth in
 15 IC 14-33-21-1.
 16 ~~(28)~~ **(27)** For purposes of IC 14-34-6-15, the meaning set forth in
 17 IC 14-34-6-15.
 18 ~~(29)~~ **(28)** For purposes of IC 14-34-14, the meaning set forth in
 19 IC 14-34-14-1.
 20 ~~(30)~~ **(29)** For purposes of IC 14-34-19-1.3, the meaning set forth
 21 in IC 14-34-19-1.3(a).
 22 ~~(31)~~ **(30)** For purposes of IC 14-34-19-1.5, the meaning set forth
 23 in IC 14-34-19-1.5(a).
 24 ~~(32)~~ **(31)** For purposes of IC 14-37-10, the meaning set forth in
 25 IC 14-37-10-1.

26 SECTION 7. IC 14-8-2-159 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 27 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 159. "Maumee River
 28 basin", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, **IC 14-30-6 and IC 14-30-7**, has the
 29 meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-2-3~~. **IC 14-30-7-1.**

30 SECTION 8. IC 14-8-2-170 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
 31 2026]. Sec. 170: "Municipal corporation"; for purposes of ~~IC 14-12-3~~;
 32 has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-12-3-3~~.

33 SECTION 9. IC 14-8-2-198 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 34 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 198. "Participating
 35 county" has the following meaning:

- 36 (1) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, **IC 14-30-6**, the meaning set forth
 37 in ~~IC 14-30-2-4~~. **IC 14-30-6-1.**
 38 (2) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3~~, **IC 14-30-7-1**, the meaning set
 39 forth in ~~IC 14-30-3-3~~. **IC 14-30-7-1.**
 40 (3) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, **IC 14-30-7-2**, the meaning set
 41 forth in ~~IC 14-30-4-3~~. **IC 14-30-7-2.**
 42 **(4) For purposes of IC 14-30-7-3, the meaning set forth in**



1 **IC 14-30-7-3.**

2 SECTION 10. IC 14-8-2-206 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
3 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 206. "Plan", ~~has the~~
4 ~~following meaning:~~

5 (1) for purposes of IC 14-21-1, ~~has~~ the meaning set forth in
6 IC 14-21-1-8.

7 (2) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, the meaning set forth in
8 ~~IC 14-30-2-5~~.

9 (3) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, the meaning set forth in
10 ~~IC 14-30-4-4~~.

11 SECTION 11. IC 14-8-2-208, AS AMENDED BY P.L.138-2018,
12 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
13 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 208. "Political subdivision" has the following
14 meaning:

15 (1) For purposes of IC 14-12-1, the meaning set forth in
16 IC 14-12-1-2.

17 (2) For purposes of IC 14-13-2, ~~and IC 14-30-3~~, the meaning set
18 forth in IC 36-1-2-13.

19 (3) For purposes of IC 14-32-8, the meaning set forth in
20 IC 14-32-8-2.

21 SECTION 12. IC 14-8-2-216 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
22 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 216. ~~(a) "Program", for~~
23 ~~purposes of IC 14-12-3; has the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-3-4.~~

24 ~~(b)~~ (a) "Program", for purposes of IC 14-23-6.5, has the meaning set
25 forth in IC 14-23-6.5-1.

26 ~~(c)~~ (b) "Program", for purposes of IC 14-32-8, has the meaning set
27 forth in IC 14-32-8-3.

28 SECTION 13. IC 14-8-2-263 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
29 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 263. "St. Joseph River
30 basin", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3~~, **IC 14-30-6 and IC 14-30-7**, has the
31 meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-3-4~~. **IC 14-30-7-2.**

32 SECTION 14. IC 14-8-2-291.5 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
33 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 291.5. "Upper Wabash
34 River basin", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, **IC 14-30-6 and IC 14-30-7**,
35 has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-4-5~~. **IC 14-30-7-3.**

36 SECTION 15. IC 14-8-2-320 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
37 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 320. "Wildlife" has the
38 following meaning:

39 (1) For purposes of IC 14-22, except as provided in subdivision

40 (2), **means** all wild birds, **fish, crustaceans, mollusks,**
41 **amphibians, reptiles,** and ~~wild~~ mammals.

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



1 IC 14-22-34-6.

2 SECTION 16. IC 14-10-1-7 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
3 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 7. (a) The commission
4 shall have at least four (4) regular meetings in each fiscal year and as
5 many additional or special meetings as the commission's business,
6 powers, or duties require.

7 (b) The chairman:

8 (1) may call a special meeting; and

9 (2) shall call a special meeting at the request of any five (5)
10 members.

11 (c) A:

12 (1) meeting of the commission; or

13 (2) public hearing;

14 is subject to IC 5-14-1.5.

15 SECTION 17. IC 14-10-2-9 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
16 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
17 1, 2026]: Sec. 9. (a) **A person who wishes to obtain judicial review
18 of a final agency action under this title must serve copies of a
19 petition for judicial review upon:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

42 (1) The department.

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- 1 **(2) The state geologist.**
 2 **(3) The office of the state chemist.**
 3 SECTION 18. IC 14-11-2-1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.246-2005,
 4 SECTION 116, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 5 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. (a) The department may adopt
 6 rules under IC 4-22-2 for ~~the conduct of~~ the following:
 7 (1) Department meetings.
 8 (2) Upon the recommendation of the director, the work of the
 9 department and the divisions.
 10 (b) The department may not adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 for the
 11 establishment of fees for the following:
 12 (1) Programs of the department or the commission.
 13 (2) Facilities owned or operated by the department or the
 14 commission or a lessee of the department or commission.
 15 (3) Licenses issued by the commission, the department, or the
 16 director.
 17 (4) Inspections or other similar services under this title performed
 18 by the department or an assistant or employee of the department.
 19 **(c) The director shall:**
 20 **(1) adopt provisional rules under IC 4-22-2-37.1;**
 21 **(2) adopt interim rules under IC 4-22-2-37.2; and**
 22 **(3) approve for preliminary adoption rules for readoption**
 23 **under IC 4-22-2.6 that do not contain changes to the rules.**
 24 SECTION 19. IC 14-11-2-2 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 25 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. A person who
 26 violates a rule adopted under this chapter commits a Class C infraction,
 27 **unless otherwise specified by law.**
 28 SECTION 20. IC 14-11-4-1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.89-2016,
 29 SECTION 4, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 30 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. This chapter applies to applications for licenses
 31 under the following:
 32 (1) IC 14-26-2 (lake preservation).
 33 (2) IC 14-26-5 (~~dams~~): **(lowering of Ten Acre Lake).**
 34 **(3) IC 14-27 (levees, dams, and drainage).**
 35 ~~(4)~~ **(4) IC 14-28-1 (flood control).**
 36 **(5) IC 14-29-1 (permanent structures along Lake Michigan**
 37 **only).**
 38 ~~(6)~~ **(6) IC 14-29-3 (removal of substances from streams): (sand**
 39 **and gravel permits).**
 40 ~~(7)~~ **(7) IC 14-29-4 (construction of channels).**
 41 SECTION 21. IC 14-12-3 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
 42 2026]. (Hometown Indiana Grant Program).



1 SECTION 22. IC 14-13-6-20, AS AMENDED BY P.L.118-2009,
 2 SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 3 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 20. The commission may use the Wabash River
 4 heritage corridor commission fund to pay:

- 5 (1) reimbursement of the expenses of members under section 13
 6 of this chapter;
 7 (2) other administrative costs and expenses reasonably incurred
 8 under this chapter, including expenses for publications and
 9 postage; and
 10 (3) costs incurred in fulfilling the directives of the Wabash River
 11 heritage corridor commission master plan, including multicounty
 12 projects and marketing and educational tools such as video tape
 13 productions, signs, and promotional literature.

14 However, the commission may not use money in the fund for the upper
 15 Wabash River basin commission established by ~~IC 14-30-4-6.~~
 16 **IC 14-30-6.**

17 SECTION 23. IC 14-13-6-23, AS ADDED BY P.L.69-2009,
 18 SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 19 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 23. (a) The Wabash River heritage corridor fund
 20 is established for the purpose of:

- 21 (1) providing grants to aid the sustainable development of
 22 property under the Wabash River heritage corridor commission
 23 master plan and purposes of the commission; and
 24 (2) paying costs incurred in fulfilling the directives of the Wabash
 25 River heritage corridor commission master plan, including
 26 multicounty projects.

27 However, the commission may not use money in the fund for the upper
 28 Wabash River basin commission established by ~~IC 14-30-4-6.~~
 29 **IC 14-30-6.**

30 (b) The fund shall be administered by the director under the
 31 direction of the commission.

32 (c) The expenses of administering the fund shall be paid from
 33 money in the fund.

34 (d) The fund consists of the following:

- 35 (1) Appropriations made by the general assembly.
 36 (2) Interest as provided in subsection (e).
 37 (3) Funds deposited under IC 14-38-1-13(d).
 38 (4) Money donated to the fund.
 39 (5) Money transferred to the fund from other funds.

40 (e) The treasurer of state shall invest the money in the fund not
 41 currently needed to meet the obligations of the fund in the same
 42 manner as other public funds may be invested. Interest that accrues



1 from these investments shall be deposited in the fund.

2 (f) Money in the fund at the end of a fiscal year does not revert to
3 the state general fund.

4 (g) Money in the fund is annually appropriated to the department of
5 natural resources for its use in fulfilling the purposes of this section.

6 SECTION 24. IC 14-15-3-19 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
7 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 19. Provisions of this
8 chapter concerning the operation of boats or motorboats apply as
9 follows:

10 (1) Whether or not the boat or motorboat is towing a ~~water ski; a~~
11 ~~watersled; an aquaplane; or a similar object; including a person on~~
12 ~~the water ski; watersled; aquaplane; or similar any~~ object.

13 (2) To each object and person.

14 SECTION 25. IC 14-15-3-20 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
15 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 20. A person operating
16 a motorboat may not tow a water ski, a watersled, **a wakeboard,**
17 **barefoot water skis,** an aquaplane, or a similar object, including a
18 person on the waterski, watersled, **wakeboard, barefoot water skis,**
19 aquaplane, or similar object, unless:

20 (1) the motorboat is occupied by at least one (1) other person who
21 is giving the person's entire attention to watching the object,
22 **wakeboard,** or person towed; and

23 (2) the person operating the boat is giving the person's entire
24 attention to the operation of the boat.

25 SECTION 26. IC 14-15-4-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.111-2016,
26 SECTION 11, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
27 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) The operator of a boat involved in an
28 accident or a collision ~~resulting in:~~ **shall provide the information**
29 **required under subsection (b) if the following conditions occur:**

30 (1) Injury to or death of a person. ~~or~~

31 (2) Damage to a boat or other property to an apparent extent of at
32 least **the greater of: seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750);**

33 ~~shall provide the information required under subsection (b):~~

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

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

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

40 (1) Give notice of the accident to:

41 (A) the office of the sheriff of the county;

42 (B) the nearest state police post; or



- 1 (C) the central dispatch center for the law enforcement
- 2 division of the department;
- 3 immediately and by the quickest means of communication.
- 4 (2) Mail to the department a written report of the accident or
- 5 collision within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident or
- 6 collision.
- 7 SECTION 27. IC 14-16-1-24 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
- 8 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 24. (a) The operator of
- 9 a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in serious bodily injury to
- 10 or death of an individual or property damage in an estimated amount
- 11 of at least ~~seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750)~~ **two thousand five**
- 12 **hundred dollars (\$2,500)** shall immediately, by the quickest means of
- 13 communication, notify at least one (1) of the following:
- 14 (1) A state police officer or conservation officer.
- 15 (2) The sheriff's office of the county where the accident occurred.
- 16 (3) The office of the police department of the municipality where
- 17 the accident occurred.
- 18 (b) The police agency receiving the notice shall do the following:
- 19 (1) Complete a report of the accident on forms prescribed by the
- 20 director.
- 21 (2) Forward the report to the director.
- 22 SECTION 28. IC 14-21-1-25.1 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA
- 23 CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
- 24 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 25.1. An application for approval**
- 25 **of a development plan under section 26.5 of this chapter must be**
- 26 **filed with the division and include the following:**
- 27 (1) **A signed cover letter from the applicant on letterhead with**
- 28 **the following information:**
- 29 (A) **The identity of the person who will conduct the project.**
- 30 (B) **The overall nature and time frame of the project.**
- 31 (C) **The location of the project by section, township, range,**
- 32 **county, and address.**
- 33 (D) **Information regarding any prior disturbance to the**
- 34 **area.**
- 35 (E) **A statement regarding whether federal or state funds**
- 36 **or licenses are involved in the project.**
- 37 (2) **Mapping to show the location of the burial ground or**
- 38 **cemetery in relation to the project that includes the following:**
- 39 (A) **Construction details for any activity within one**
- 40 **hundred (100) feet of the burial ground or cemetery.**
- 41 (B) **References to nearby landmarks.**
- 42 (C) **The location of the burial ground or cemetery and the**



- 1 project area on the appropriate U.S. Geological Survey
 2 U.S. TOPO: Maps for America.
- 3 **(3) A description of the burial ground or cemetery sufficient**
 4 **to evaluate the likely impact of the project, including the**
 5 **following:**
- 6 **(A) Any name of the burial ground or cemetery.**
 7 **(B) The dates the burial ground or cemetery has been used.**
 8 **(C) Historical information and documentation.**
 9 **(D) Precise boundaries that reference nearby landmarks.**
 10 **If documentation is not available to identify the burial**
 11 **ground or cemetery boundaries, the applicant may be**
 12 **required to determine those boundaries through the**
 13 **following:**
- 14 **(i) Remote sensing.**
 15 **(ii) Investigations by archeologists.**
 16 **(iii) Another scientific method approved by the division.**
 17 **(E) The physical condition of the burial ground or**
 18 **cemetery.**
- 19 **(4) A description of the grounds adjacent to and within one**
 20 **hundred (100) feet of the burial ground or cemetery, including**
 21 **the following:**
- 22 **(A) The nature, depth, and degree of previous**
 23 **disturbances, including those caused by:**
- 24 **(i) construction;**
 25 **(ii) excavation;**
 26 **(iii) grading; or**
 27 **(iv) filling.**
- 28 **(B) A description of soil, by type, present at the site,**
 29 **including an explanation of how the soil would be:**
- 30 **(i) disturbed;**
 31 **(ii) graded;**
 32 **(iii) modified;**
 33 **(iv) removed; or**
 34 **(v) otherwise treated.**
- 35 **(C) A description of each structure.**
 36 **(D) A description of the activities anticipated to:**
- 37 **(i) erect;**
 38 **(ii) alter; or**
 39 **(iii) repair;**
 40 **a structure.**
- 41 **(E) Each area that may contain new construction in**
 42 **connection with the proposed construction areas.**



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(5) Recent photographs of the burial ground or cemetery and the grounds adjacent to and within one hundred (100) feet of the burial ground or cemetery.

SECTION 29. IC 14-21-1-25.5 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. Sec. 25-5: (a) If a Native American Indian burial ground is discovered, the department shall immediately provide notice to the Native American Indian affairs commission established by IC 4-23-32.

(b) If Native American Indian human remains are removed from a burial ground, the department shall provide the following to the Native American Indian affairs commission:

(1) Any written findings or reports that result from the analysis and study of the human remains.

(2) Written notice to the Native American Indian affairs commission that the analysis and study of the human remains are 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 30. 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.



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

5 SECTION 31. IC 14-22-10-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.113-2019,
 6 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 7 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) As used in this section and section 2.5 of
 8 this chapter, "governmental entity" means any of the following:

- 9 (1) The government of the United States of America.
 10 (2) The state.
 11 (3) A county.
 12 (4) A city.
 13 (5) A town.
 14 (6) A township.
 15 (7) The following, if created by the Constitution of the United
 16 States, the Constitution of the State of Indiana, a statute, an
 17 ordinance, a rule, or an order:
 18 (A) An agency.
 19 (B) A board.
 20 (C) A commission.
 21 (D) A committee.
 22 (E) A council.
 23 (F) A department.
 24 (G) A district.
 25 (H) A public body corporate and politic.

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

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

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

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

39 a tract of land.

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

- 42 (1) with or without permission; and



- 1 (2) either:
 2 (A) without the payment of monetary consideration; or
 3 (B) with the payment of monetary consideration directly or
 4 indirectly on the person's behalf by an agency of the state or
 5 federal government;
 6 for the purpose of swimming, camping, hiking, sightseeing, **exercising,**
 7 **cycling,** or accessing or departing from a trail, a greenway, or another
 8 similar area, or for any other purpose (other than the purposes
 9 described in section 2.5 of this chapter) ~~does not have an assurance that~~
 10 ~~the premises are safe for the purpose.~~ **is subject to the limitations of**
 11 **liability granted to the owner of the premises described in**
 12 **subsection (e).**
 13 (e) The owner of the premises does not
 14 ~~(1) assume responsibility; or~~
 15 ~~(2) incur liability;~~
 16 for an injury to a person or property caused by an act or failure to act
 17 of other persons using the premises: **assume responsibility or incur**
 18 **liability for an injury or damage to a:**
 19 (1) person caused by:
 20 (A) an act; or
 21 (B) the failure to act;
 22 **of another person using the premises;**
 23 (2) person caused by a condition on the land; or
 24 (3) person's property caused by:
 25 (A) the act of another person using the premises; or
 26 (B) a condition on the land.
 27 (f) This section does not affect the following:
 28 ~~(1) Existing Indiana case law on the liability of owners or~~
 29 ~~possessors of premises with respect to the following:~~
 30 ~~(A) Business invitees in commercial establishments.~~
 31 ~~(B) Invited guests.~~
 32 **(1) Business invitees in for-profit establishments.**
 33 (2) The attractive nuisance doctrine.
 34 (g) This section does not excuse the owner or occupant of premises
 35 from liability for injury to a person or property caused by a malicious
 36 or an illegal act of the owner or occupant.
 37 **(h) This section does not apply to a parcel of land assessed as**
 38 **residential land.**
 39 SECTION 32. IC 14-22-10-2.5 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 40 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2.5. (a) A person who
 41 goes upon or through the premises, including caves, of another:
 42 (1) with or without permission; and



1 (2) either:
 2 (A) without the payment of monetary consideration; or
 3 (B) with the payment of monetary consideration directly or
 4 indirectly on the person's behalf by an agency of the state or
 5 federal government;
 6 for the purpose of hunting, fishing, trapping, or preparing to hunt, fish,
 7 or trap, does not have an assurance that the premises are safe for that
 8 purpose.
 9 (b) The owner of the premises does not:
 10 (1) assume responsibility; or
 11 (2) incur liability;
 12 for an injury to a person or property caused by an act or failure to act
 13 of other persons using the premises.
 14 (c) This section does not affect Indiana case law on the liability of
 15 owners or possessors of premises with respect to the following:
 16 (1) Business invitees in commercial establishments.
 17 (2) The attractive nuisance doctrine.
 18 (d) This section does not excuse the owner or occupant of premises
 19 from liability for injury to a person or property caused by a malicious
 20 or an illegal act of the owner or occupant.
 21 **(e) This section does not apply to a parcel of land assessed as**
 22 **residential land.**
 23 SECTION 33. IC 14-22-15.5-7 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY
 24 1, 2026]. ~~Sec. 7: An individual who acts as a hunting guide without a~~
 25 ~~hunting guide license in violation of section 2 of this chapter commits~~
 26 ~~a Class B infraction.~~
 27 SECTION 34. IC 14-23-6.6-7, AS ADDED BY P.L.124-2025,
 28 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 29 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 7. (a) Subject to subsection (b), a certified
 30 prescribed burn manager who conducts the prescribed burning in
 31 accordance with section 6 of this chapter is immune from civil liability
 32 for harm caused by the:
 33 (1) prescribed burn; or
 34 (2) smoke produced by the prescribed burn.
 35 (b) The immunity described in subsection (a) does not apply if the
 36 harm was the result of the certified prescribed burn manager's:
 37 (1) negligence; or
 38 (2) willful and wanton misconduct.
 39 (c) Subject to subsection (d), a landowner or landowner's agent who
 40 conducts prescribed burning on the landowner's property in accordance
 41 with section 6 of this chapter is immune from civil liability for harm
 42 caused by the:



- 1 (1) prescribed burn; or
- 2 (2) smoke produced by the prescribed burn.
- 3 (d) The immunity described in subsection (c) does not apply if the
- 4 harm was the result of the:
 - 5 (1) negligence of the landowner or the landowner's agent; or
 - 6 (2) willful and wanton misconduct of the landowner or the
 - 7 landowner's agent.
- 8 (e) The ~~division of forestry's~~ **department's** officers, agents, and
- 9 employees are immune from civil liability, in accordance with
- 10 IC 34-13-3, arising out of any of the following:
 - 11 (1) Participation in planning, undertaking, or assisting with
 - 12 prescribed burning.
 - 13 (2) Administration of the prescribed burn certification program,
 - 14 including revocation of prescribed burn certifications issued
 - 15 under the program.
- 16 SECTION 35. IC 14-30-2 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
- 17 2026]. (Maumee River Basin Commission).
- 18 SECTION 36. IC 14-30-3 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
- 19 2026]. (St. Joseph River Basin Commission).
- 20 SECTION 37. IC 14-30-4 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
- 21 2026]. (Upper Wabash River Basin Commission).
- 22 SECTION 38. IC 14-30-6 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
- 23 AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
- 24 JULY 1, 2026]:
- 25 **Chapter 6. River Basin Commission Administration**
- 26 **Sec. 1. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions**
- 27 **apply:**
 - 28 (1) "Commission" refers to a river basin commission
 - 29 established by section 2 of this chapter.
 - 30 (2) "Participating county" refers to a county that:
 - 31 (A) joins a commission under section 4 of this chapter; and
 - 32 (B) has territory within the commission.
- 33 **Sec. 2. (a) The following river basin commissions are**
- 34 **established:**
 - 35 (1) The Maumee River basin commission.
 - 36 (2) The St. Joseph River basin commission.
 - 37 (3) The Upper Wabash River basin commission.
- 38 (b) After consulting with the surveyor of each county in a river
- 39 basin, the director shall certify the boundaries of a commission
- 40 established by subsection (a). However, a river basin commission
- 41 established by subsection (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) is not required to
- 42 recertify the commission's boundaries under this subsection.



- 1 **Sec. 3. A commission established by this chapter:**
 2 (1) is a separate municipal corporation; and
 3 (2) may sue and be sued.
- 4 **Sec. 4. The executive of a county that includes territory in a**
 5 **commission may do the following:**
 6 (1) Elect to participate in the commission by designating the
 7 county as a participating county.
 8 (2) Revoke the designation described in subdivision (1).
- 9 **Sec. 5. (a) Except as provided in subsection (d), the following**
 10 **shall serve as voting members of the commission:**
 11 (1) A member of the county executive for a participating
 12 county.
 13 (2) The executive director or, if a county does not have an
 14 executive director, the chairman or manager of a soil and
 15 water conservation district that:
 16 (A) is subject to IC 14-32;
 17 (B) includes territory in a participating county; and
 18 (C) includes territory in the basin.
 19 (3) The county surveyor of each participating county.
 20 (b) In addition to the members required under subsection (a),
 21 **the required members of a commission may appoint the following**
 22 **voting members:**
 23 (1) Each member of the county executive for a participating
 24 county.
 25 (2) The executive of each second class city within the territory
 26 of the commission.
 27 (3) If a participating county does not have a second class city,
 28 the executive of the municipality with the largest population
 29 located within the territory of the basin.
 30 (4) A participating county's health officer.
 31 (5) A representative of each soil and water conservation
 32 district that:
 33 (A) is subject to IC 14-32;
 34 (B) includes territory in a participating county; and
 35 (C) includes territory in the basin.
 36 (6) A representative of the department of natural resources.
 37 However, the representative may not be an employee or
 38 elected official of a city, town, or county governmental unit.
 39 (c) A representative described in subsection (b)(5) or (b)(6):
 40 (1) is chosen by the entity being represented;
 41 (2) serves a three (3) year term;
 42 (3) is eligible for reappointment; and



- 1 **(4) continues until a successor is appointed.**
 2 **(d) A commission that exists on or before June 30, 2026, retains**
 3 **the commission's existing voting members.**
 4 **Sec. 6. (a) A member of the commission may:**
 5 **(1) designate another individual to perform the duties of the**
 6 **member on the commission; and**
 7 **(2) revoke the designation described in subdivision (1).**
 8 **(b) A designation or a revocation of a designation under this**
 9 **section must be filed with the commission to be effective.**
 10 **Sec. 7. (a) A commission shall annually elect from among the**
 11 **voting members the following officers:**
 12 **(1) A chairperson.**
 13 **(2) A vice chairperson.**
 14 **(3) A secretary.**
 15 **(4) A treasurer.**
 16 **(b) The officers elected under subsection (a) shall perform the**
 17 **duties specified in the commission's bylaws.**
 18 **(c) A commission may establish other offices, including an**
 19 **executive director, and determine the means for filling the offices.**
 20 **Any salary or benefits provided to the individual must be paid by**
 21 **the commission that establishes the office.**
 22 **Sec. 8. (a) Either:**
 23 **(1) the commission; or**
 24 **(2) a participating county;**
 25 **but not both, may pay its members reimbursement for traveling**
 26 **expenses and other expenses actually incurred in connection with**
 27 **the member's duties as provided in the state travel policies and**
 28 **procedures established by the Indiana department of**
 29 **administration and approved by the budget agency. Money paid**
 30 **under subdivision (1) may only be paid from money available to**
 31 **the commission at the time of reimbursement.**
 32 **(b) A county may pay members of a commission the salary per**
 33 **diem provided by IC 4-10-11-2.1(b) for the performance of the**
 34 **member's duties on the commission.**
 35 **Sec. 9. (a) A commission shall meet at least four (4) times each**
 36 **calendar year.**
 37 **(b) The following may call a meeting:**
 38 **(1) The chairperson.**
 39 **(2) The executive director.**
 40 **(3) A quorum of the commission's members.**
 41 **(c) A commission shall adopt bylaws specifying a quorum**
 42 **requirement.**



1 (d) A member may waive notice of any meeting by filing a
2 written waiver with the secretary of the commission.

3 Sec. 10. (a) A commission may do the following:

4 (1) Manage the commission's internal affairs.

5 (2) Employ staff.

6 (3) Subject to section 12 of this chapter, enter into contracts
7 for purposes of this chapter.

8 (4) Exercise the powers of a political subdivision specified in
9 a cooperative agreement described in section 12 of this
10 chapter.

11 (5) Provide a forum for the discussion, study, and evaluation
12 of water resource issues of common concern in the river
13 basin.

14 (6) Facilitate and foster cooperative planning and coordinated
15 management of the basin's water and related land resources.

16 (7) Develop positions on major water resource issues and
17 serve as an advocate of the basin's interests before Congress
18 and federal, state, and local governmental agencies.

19 (8) Develop plans and tools to improve water quality or
20 mitigate flooding in the basin.

21 (9) Publicize, advertise, and distribute reports on the
22 commission's purposes, objectives, studies, and findings.

23 (10) When requested, make recommendations in matters
24 related to the commission's functions and objectives to
25 political subdivisions in the basin and to other public and
26 private agencies.

27 (11) When requested, act as a coordinating agency for
28 programs and activities of other public and private agencies
29 that are related to the commission's objectives.

30 (12) Invite government officials of other states within the river
31 basin to:

32 (A) attend the commission's meetings; and

33 (B) advise the commission upon the commission's request.

34 (b) A commission may not exercise any of the powers described
35 in subsection (a) within a nature preserve (as defined in
36 IC 14-31-1).

37 (c) This section does not exempt the commission from any other
38 statute.

39 Sec. 11. A commission shall do the following:

40 (1) Keep a record of the commission's resolutions,
41 transactions, and findings. A record under this subdivision is
42 a public record.



- 1 (2) Make an annual report of the commission's activities to
- 2 the executive of each participating county. The commission
- 3 shall upon request make an annual report to the following:
- 4 (A) The governor.
- 5 (B) Any member of the general assembly.
- 6 (3) Prepare and adopt an annual budget.
- 7 (4) Submit the budget described in subdivision (3) to the
- 8 executive of each participating county and, upon request,
- 9 make the budget available to each agency appropriating
- 10 money to the commission.

11 Sec. 12. (a) A political subdivision in a participating county may

12 under IC 36-1-7 enter into a cooperative agreement with a

13 commission and at least one (1) other legal entity, including a legal

14 entity in another state.

15 (b) If a commission intends to enter into a cooperative

16 agreement under subsection (a), the commission shall post public

17 notice of the proposed cooperative agreement at least ten (10)

18 business days before the meeting at which the cooperative

19 agreement is scheduled to be voted on by the commission.

20 (c) Before a commission may vote on the cooperative agreement

21 under this section, the cooperative agreement must be approved by

22 the department.

23 Sec. 13. A commission may adopt a resolution to do any one (1)

24 or more of the following:

- 25 (1) Require that increased water runoff resulting from new
- 26 construction be impounded on the construction site.
- 27 (2) Permit the requirement of onsite water impoundment
- 28 under subdivision (1) to be waived upon payment of a
- 29 reasonable fee by the developer of the new construction.
- 30 (3) Restrict construction within the one hundred (100) year
- 31 flood plains of the river basin.

32 Sec. 14. (a) The commission may establish an executive board

33 consisting of the following:

- 34 (1) The chairperson of the commission.
- 35 (2) One (1) member from each participating county that is not
- 36 represented by the chairperson, to be chosen in a manner
- 37 prescribed by the commission's bylaws.

38 (b) The commission may delegate to the executive board the

39 power to do the following:

- 40 (1) Recommend agenda items and activities to the
- 41 commission.
- 42 (2) Conduct hearings on proposed commission projects.



1 (3) Perform other administrative duties assigned by the
2 commission.
3 Sec. 15. (a) The commission may appoint an advisory committee
4 to assist the commission.
5 (b) A member of an advisory committee is not entitled to
6 compensation for serving on the advisory committee.
7 Sec. 16. The commission may adopt a bylaw to govern member
8 participation in:
9 (1) a commission's; or
10 (2) an executive board's;
11 meeting by electronic communication.
12 Sec. 17. (a) A commission may receive grants and
13 appropriations from the following:
14 (1) Federal, state, and local governments.
15 (2) Individuals, foundations, and other organizations.
16 However, a commission is not eligible for funding through the
17 Wabash River heritage corridor commission established by
18 IC 14-13-6-6.
19 (b) The commission may enter into an agreement or contract
20 regarding the acceptance or use of the grants and appropriations
21 described in subsection (a) for the purpose of carrying out the
22 commission's activities under this chapter.
23 Sec. 18. (a) A participating county may budget, appropriate, and
24 disburse money to carry out the purposes of the commission under
25 this chapter.
26 (b) The appropriation from the participating county that is
27 needed for all or part of the commission's budget must be either:
28 (1) apportioned among the participating counties in direct
29 relationship to the amount of land area in each participating
30 county certified under section 2 of this chapter; or
31 (2) divided equally among the participating counties.
32 (c) The appropriation that is needed under subsection (b) shall
33 be presented to the county executive at the same time that budgets
34 are presented by county officers.
35 Sec. 19. (a) The commission shall make expenditures only as
36 budgeted. However, the commission may revise the budget at any
37 time to authorize unbudgeted expenditures.
38 (b) Any appropriated amounts remaining unexpended or
39 unencumbered at the end of the fiscal year become part of a
40 nonreverting cumulative fund to be held in the name of the
41 commission. The commission may authorize unbudgeted
42 expenditures from this fund.



1 (c) The commission is responsible for the safekeeping and
 2 deposit of money the commission receives under this chapter. The
 3 state board of accounts shall:

- 4 (1) prescribe the methods and forms for keeping; and
 5 (2) periodically audit;
 6 the accounts, records, and books of the commission.

7 (d) The treasurer of the commission may receive, disburse, and
 8 handle money belonging to the commission, subject to the
 9 following:

- 10 (1) Applicable statutes.
 11 (2) Procedures established by the commission.

12 Sec. 20. (a) For the purposes of this chapter, the commission
 13 may do the following:

- 14 (1) Acquire by grant, gift, purchase, or devise, and dispose of,
 15 conservation easements under IC 32-23-5 in land:

16 (A) within; or

17 (B) adjacent to if part of the same parcel;

18 the one hundred (100) year flood plains and the wetlands in
 19 the basin.

- 20 (2) Acquire, by grant, gift, purchase, or devise, improvements:

21 (A) within; or

22 (B) adjacent to if part of the same parcel;

23 the one hundred (100) year flood plains of the basin for the
 24 purpose of removing those improvements.

- 25 (3) Acquire, dispose of, hold, use, improve, maintain, operate,
 26 own, manage, or lease real or personal property by grant, gift,
 27 purchase, or devise for the purposes of this chapter.

28 (b) The commission may exercise the powers granted by this
 29 section as follows:

- 30 (1) For purposes of IC 32-23-5.

- 31 (2) To contribute to the following:

32 (A) Flood mitigation.

33 (B) Flood damage reduction.

34 (C) Improvements in water quality.

35 (D) Soil conservation.

36 Sec. 21. (a) The commission, the executive board, or employees
 37 or authorized representatives of the commission acting under this
 38 chapter may:

- 39 (1) enter the land lying within the one hundred (100) year
 40 flood plain of any watercourse in the river basin; and

- 41 (2) enter land lying outside the one hundred (100) year flood
 42 plain to gain access to land lying within the one hundred (100)



1 year flood plain in the river basin;
 2 if necessary to investigate, examine, or survey the land or
 3 investigate suspected violations of the Indiana flood control laws.

4 (b) The commission must give twenty-one (21) days written
 5 notice to:

- 6 (1) an owner of the affected land;
 7 (2) a contract purchaser of the affected land; or
 8 (3) if the land is municipal property (as described in
 9 IC 6-1.1-10-5(a)), the executive of the municipality;

10 before exercising the right to enter land under this section. The
 11 notice must state the purpose of the entry and that there is a right
 12 of appeal under this section.

13 (c) A person described in subsection (b)(1) through (b)(3) may,
 14 within the twenty-one (21) day notice period required by
 15 subsection (b), appeal the proposed entry under subsection (a) to
 16 the commission on the grounds that the proposed entry is not
 17 necessary. If a person appeals under this subsection, the
 18 commission shall hold a hearing on the necessity of the entry before
 19 the right of entry is exercised.

20 (d) A person entering land under this section must use due care
 21 to avoid damage to:

- 22 (1) crops; or
 23 (2) fences, buildings, and other structures.

24 (e) Neither the commission, the executive board, nor employees
 25 or authorized representatives of the commission acting under this
 26 chapter commits criminal trespass under IC 35-43-2-2 by entering
 27 land described in subsection (a) for a purpose set forth in
 28 subsection (a).

29 SECTION 39. IC 14-30-7 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
 30 AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 31 JULY 1, 2026]:

32 **Chapter 7. Conversion to Watershed Development Commission**

33 **Sec. 1. (a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions**
 34 **apply:**

- 35 (1) "Commission" refers to the Maumee River basin
 36 commission.
 37 (2) "Maumee River basin" means the area in Adams County,
 38 Allen County, DeKalb County, Noble County, Steuben
 39 County, and Wells County that drains into the Maumee River
 40 and the tributaries of the Maumee River.
 41 (3) "Participating county" refers to a county that has joined
 42 the Maumee River basin commission under IC 14-30-6-4.



1 **(b) The commission:**
2 **(1) may; but**
3 **(2) is not required to;**
4 **consider a proposal to transform the commission from a river**
5 **basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed**
6 **development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.**
7 **(c) For the commission to be transformed from a river basin**
8 **commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development**
9 **commission subject to IC 14-30.5:**
10 **(1) the county executives of all participating counties:**
11 **(A) must approve the proposal described in subsection (b);**
12 **and**
13 **(B) must adopt substantively identical ordinances that set**
14 **forth the flood damage reduction, drainage, storm water**
15 **management, or soil and water conservation purposes for**
16 **which the proposed watershed development commission**
17 **would be established, and, for purposes of IC 14-30.5-2-0.5,**
18 **the designated watershed within which the proposed**
19 **watershed development commission would exercise its**
20 **powers; and**
21 **(2) a majority of the voting members of the commission must**
22 **vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a**
23 **watershed development commission in accordance with the**
24 **ordinances adopted under subdivision (1)(B) and the**
25 **provisions of this section.**
26 **(d) For the county executive of a participating county to**
27 **approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection**
28 **(c)(1)(A), at least two (2) of the three (3) members of the county**
29 **executive must vote in favor of the proposal.**
30 **(e) If a member of the county executive of a participating county**
31 **has designated another individual under IC 14-30-6-6 to perform**
32 **the member's duties on the commission, the individual designated**
33 **to perform the duties of the member of the county executive may**
34 **vote under subsection (c)(2) on the proposal described in**
35 **subsection (b).**
36 **(f) If the county executives of all participating counties approve**
37 **a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A)**
38 **and adopt substantively identical ordinances under subsection**
39 **(c)(1)(B), a majority of the voting members of the commission vote**
40 **in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed**
41 **development commission under subsection (c)(2), and the**
42 **department approves the transformation of the commission into a**



1 watershed development commission with the purposes set forth in
 2 the ordinances adopted under subsection (c)(1)(B), the following
 3 apply:

4 (1) The commission shall notify the department of the
 5 approval of the proposal.

6 (2) The officers of the commission elected under IC 14-30-6-7
 7 shall take the actions necessary and appropriate to the
 8 transformation of the commission from a river basin
 9 commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed
 10 development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

11 (3) The board of the watershed development commission
 12 consists of the following:

13 (A) The director of the department or the director's
 14 designee.

15 (B) The county surveyor of each county participating in
 16 the commission.

17 (C) A member of the county executive from each county
 18 participating in the commission or the member's designee.

19 (D) One (1) individual to represent each second class city
 20 that is located in a participating county and within the
 21 Maumee River basin, appointed by:

22 (i) the board of storm water management (as described
 23 in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the second class city; or

24 (ii) if the second class city has no board of storm water
 25 management, the executive of the second class city.

26 (E) A member of the county soil and water conservation
 27 district board from each participating county within the
 28 Maumee River basin or the member's designee.

29 (4) The director of the department or the director's designee:
 30 (A) shall advise the commission on the transformation of
 31 the commission into a watershed development commission
 32 subject to IC 14-30.5; and

33 (B) when the board of the watershed development
 34 commission is formed, shall assume the position on the
 35 board of the watershed development commission specified
 36 in IC 14-30.5-4-1(a)(1)(A).

37 (5) The watershed development commission board may not
 38 meet until the department has given the approval referred to
 39 in this subsection. Upon the convening of the first meeting
 40 under IC 14-30.5-4 of the board of the watershed development
 41 commission:

42 (A) the Maumee River basin commission ceases to exist as



- 1 a separate municipal corporation under IC 14-30-6;
 2 (B) the Maumee watershed development commission is
 3 established as a public body corporate and politic under
 4 IC 14-30.5;
 5 (C) the participating counties of the Maumee River basin
 6 commission become member counties of the Maumee
 7 watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5; and
 8 (D) each participating county of the Maumee River basin
 9 commission is authorized to appoint a member of the
 10 county executive or the member's designee under
 11 IC 14-30.5-4-1 to represent the county on the board of the
 12 Maumee watershed development commission.
- 13 (g) If established under this section, the Maumee watershed
 14 development commission:
 15 (1) is a continuation of;
 16 (2) retains the property and rights of; and
 17 (3) is responsible for the actions and subject to the liabilities
 18 of;
 19 the former Maumee River basin commission.
- 20 (h) If established under this section, the Maumee watershed
 21 development commission has all of the powers and duties of a
 22 watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5 in the areas
 23 of the watershed of the Maumee River and the tributaries of the
 24 Maumee River that are within the boundaries of the member
 25 counties of the Maumee watershed development commission. For
 26 the purposes of IC 14-30.5, the areas of the watershed of the
 27 Maumee River and the tributaries of the Maumee River that are
 28 within the boundaries of the member counties of the Maumee
 29 watershed development commission comprise the designated
 30 watershed of the Maumee watershed development commission.
- 31 (i) If the Maumee watershed development commission is
 32 established under this section, the board of the Maumee watershed
 33 development commission shall appoint an executive director under
 34 IC 14-30.5-4-2(e). An individual who was the executive director of
 35 the Maumee River basin commission may be appointed executive
 36 director of the Maumee watershed development commission under
 37 this subsection.
- 38 (j) If the Maumee watershed development commission is
 39 established under this section, all property, records, and funds of
 40 the former Maumee River basin commission:
 41 (1) become property, records, and funds of the Maumee
 42 watershed development commission; and



1 (2) shall be transmitted to the Maumee watershed
2 development commission not more than sixty (60) days after
3 the appointment of the executive director under subsection (i).

4 **Sec. 2. (a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions**
5 **apply:**

6 (1) "Commission" refers to the St. Joseph River basin
7 commission.

8 (2) "Participating county" refers to a county that has joined
9 the St. Joseph River basin commission under IC 14-30-6-4.

10 (3) "St. Joseph River basin" means the area in Elkhart
11 County, Kosciusko County, LaGrange County, Noble County,
12 St. Joseph County, and Steuben County that drains into the
13 St. Joseph River.

14 **(b) The commission:**

15 (1) may; but

16 (2) is not required to;

17 consider a proposal to transform the commission from a river
18 basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed
19 development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

20 (c) For the commission to be transformed from a river basin
21 commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development
22 commission subject to IC 14-30.5:

23 (1) the county executives of all participating counties:

24 (A) must approve the proposal described in subsection (b);
25 and

26 (B) must adopt substantively identical ordinances that set
27 forth the information required by IC 14-30.5-2-1(b),
28 including, for purposes of IC 14-30.5-2-0.5, the designated
29 watershed within which the proposed watershed
30 development commission would exercise its powers; and

31 (2) a majority of the voting members of the commission must
32 vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a
33 watershed development commission in accordance with the
34 ordinances adopted under subdivision (1)(B) and the
35 provisions of this section.

36 (d) For the county executive of a participating county to
37 approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection
38 (c)(1)(A), at least two (2) of the three (3) members of the county
39 executive must vote in favor of the proposal.

40 (e) If a member of the county executive of a participating county
41 has designated another individual under IC 14-30-6-6 to fill the
42 member's position on the commission, the individual designated to



1 fill the member's position may vote under subsection (c)(2) on the
2 proposal described in subsection (b).

3 (f) If the county executives of all participating counties approve
4 a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A)
5 and adopt substantively identical ordinances under subsection
6 (c)(1)(B), a majority of the voting members of the commission vote
7 in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed
8 development commission under subsection (c)(2), and the
9 department approves the transformation of the commission into a
10 watershed development commission with the purposes set forth in
11 the ordinances adopted under subsection (c)(1)(B), the following
12 apply:

13 (1) The commission shall notify the department of the
14 approval of the proposal.

15 (2) The officers of the commission elected under IC 14-30-6-7
16 shall take the actions necessary and appropriate to the
17 transformation of the commission from a river basin
18 commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed
19 development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

20 (3) The board of the watershed development commission
21 consists of the following:

22 (A) The director of the department or the director's
23 designee.

24 (B) The county surveyor of each county participating in
25 the commission.

26 (C) An individual other than the county surveyor
27 representing each county participating in the commission,
28 appointed by the county executive.

29 (D) Either:

30 (i) one (1) individual appointed to represent each second
31 class city that is located in a participating county and
32 within the St. Joseph River basin; or

33 (ii) if a participating county does not include a second
34 class city that is located within the St. Joseph River
35 basin, one (1) individual appointed to represent the
36 municipality that has the largest population of all
37 municipalities that are located in the participating
38 county and within the St. Joseph River basin.

39 An individual appointed to represent a second class city
40 under item (i) shall be appointed by the board of storm
41 water management (as described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the
42 second class city or, if the second class city has no board of



- 1 storm water management, by the executive of the second
 2 class city. An individual appointed under item (ii) to
 3 represent the municipality that has the largest population
 4 of all municipalities that are located in the participating
 5 county and within the St. Joseph River basin shall be
 6 appointed by the board of storm water management (as
 7 described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the municipality or, if the
 8 municipality has no board of storm water management, by
 9 the executive of the municipality.
- 10 (4) The director of the department or the director's designee:
 11 (A) shall advise the commission on the transformation of
 12 the commission into a watershed development commission
 13 subject to IC 14-30.5; and
 14 (B) when the board of the watershed development
 15 commission is formed, shall assume the position on the
 16 board of the watershed development commission specified
 17 in IC 14-30.5-4-1(a)(2)(A).
- 18 (5) The watershed development commission board may not
 19 meet until the department has given the approval referred to
 20 in this subsection. Upon the convening of the first meeting
 21 under IC 14-30.5-4 of the board of the watershed development
 22 commission:
 23 (A) the St. Joseph River basin commission ceases to exist
 24 as a separate municipal corporation under IC 14-30-6;
 25 (B) the St. Joseph watershed development commission is
 26 established as a public body corporate and politic under
 27 IC 14-30.5;
 28 (C) the participating counties of the St. Joseph River basin
 29 commission become member counties of the St. Joseph
 30 watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5; and
 31 (D) each participating county of the St. Joseph River basin
 32 commission is authorized to appoint an individual
 33 described in subdivision (3)(C) to represent the county on
 34 the board of the St. Joseph watershed development
 35 commission.
- 36 (g) If established under this section, the St. Joseph watershed
 37 development commission:
 38 (1) is a continuation of;
 39 (2) retains the property and rights of; and
 40 (3) is responsible for the actions and subject to the liabilities
 41 of;
 42 the former St. Joseph River basin commission.



1 **(h) If established under this section, the St. Joseph watershed**
 2 **development commission has all of the powers and duties of a**
 3 **watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5 in the areas**
 4 **of the watershed of the St. Joseph River and the tributaries of the**
 5 **St. Joseph River that are within the boundaries of the member**
 6 **counties of the St. Joseph watershed development commission. For**
 7 **the purposes of IC 14-30.5, the areas of the watershed of the St.**
 8 **Joseph River and the tributaries of the St. Joseph River that are**
 9 **within the boundaries of the member counties of the St. Joseph**
 10 **watershed development commission comprise the designated**
 11 **watershed of the St. Joseph watershed development commission.**

12 **(i) If the St. Joseph watershed development commission is**
 13 **established under this section, the board of the St. Joseph**
 14 **watershed development commission shall appoint an executive**
 15 **director under IC 14-30.5-4-2(e). An individual who was the**
 16 **executive director of the St. Joseph River basin commission may be**
 17 **appointed executive director of the St. Joseph watershed**
 18 **development commission under this subsection.**

19 **(j) If the St. Joseph watershed development commission is**
 20 **established under this section, the following apply:**

21 **(1) All property, records, and funds of the St. Joseph River**
 22 **basin commission:**

23 **(A) become property, records, and funds of the St. Joseph**
 24 **watershed development commission; and**

25 **(B) shall be transmitted to the St. Joseph watershed**
 26 **development commission not more than sixty (60) days**
 27 **after the appointment of the executive director under**
 28 **subsection (i).**

29 **(2) Any advisory committee appointed under IC 14-30-6-15 is**
 30 **dissolved.**

31 **(3) The individuals serving as members of the St. Joseph**
 32 **River basin commission under IC 14-30-6 become the**
 33 **members of the advisory committee of the St. Joseph**
 34 **watershed development commission. Upon the expiration**
 35 **under IC 14-30-6-5 or other termination of the term of office**
 36 **of an individual described in this subdivision, the office of the**
 37 **individual shall be filled by a successor according to**
 38 **subdivision (4).**

39 **(4) As provided in subdivision (3) and IC 14-30.5-4-5(c)(3),**
 40 **upon the termination of the terms of office of all of the**
 41 **individuals who become members of the advisory committee**
 42 **under subdivision (3), the advisory committee of the St.**



1 **Joseph watershed development commission shall consist of the**
 2 **following members:**

3 **(A) From each participating county the following:**

4 **(i) The executive of each second class city that is located**
 5 **in the participating county and within the St. Joseph**
 6 **River basin, or the executive's designee.**

7 **(ii) If the county does not have a second class city that is**
 8 **located within the St. Joseph River basin, the executive**
 9 **of the municipality that has the largest population of all**
 10 **municipalities that are located in the participating**
 11 **county and within the St. Joseph River basin, or the**
 12 **executive's designee.**

13 **(B) A member of the county executive or the county**
 14 **executive's designee from each participating county.**

15 **(C) The county health officer or the health officer's**
 16 **designee from each participating county.**

17 **(D) The county surveyor of each participating county or**
 18 **the county surveyor's designee.**

19 **(E) A representative of each soil and water conservation**
 20 **district that:**

21 **(i) is subject to IC 14-32;**

22 **(ii) includes territory in a participating county; and**

23 **(iii) includes territory in the St. Joseph River basin.**

24 **(F) The director of the St. Joseph watershed development**
 25 **commission or the director's designee.**

26 **Sec. 3. (a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions**
 27 **apply:**

28 **(1) "Commission" refers to the Upper Wabash River basin**
 29 **commission.**

30 **(2) "Participating county" refers to a county that has joined**
 31 **the Upper Wabash River basin commission under**
 32 **IC 14-30-6-4.**

33 **(3) "Upper Wabash River basin" means the area located in**
 34 **Adams County, Huntington County, Jay County, or Wells**
 35 **County that is drained by the Wabash River, including the**
 36 **tributaries of the Wabash River.**

37 **(b) The commission:**

38 **(1) may; but**

39 **(2) is not required to;**

40 **consider a proposal to transform the commission from a river**
 41 **basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed**
 42 **development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.**



1 (c) For the commission to be transformed from a river basin
2 commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development
3 commission subject to IC 14-30.5:

4 (1) the county executives of all participating counties:

5 (A) must approve the proposal described in subsection (b);
6 and

7 (B) must adopt substantively identical ordinances that set
8 forth the information required by IC 14-30.5-2-1(b),
9 including, for the purposes of IC 14-30.5-2-0.5, the
10 designated watershed within which the proposed
11 watershed development commission would exercise its
12 powers; and

13 (2) a majority of the voting members of the commission must
14 vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a
15 watershed development commission in accordance with the
16 ordinances adopted under subdivision (1)(B) and the
17 provisions of this section.

18 (d) For the county executive of a participating county to
19 approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection
20 (c)(1)(A), at least two (2) of the three (3) members of the county
21 executive must vote in favor of the proposal.

22 (e) If a member of the county executive of a participating county
23 has designated another individual under IC 14-30-6-6 to perform
24 the member's duties on the commission, the individual designated
25 to perform the member's duties may vote under subsection (c)(2)
26 on the proposal described in subsection (b).

27 (f) If the county executives of all participating counties approve
28 a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A)
29 and adopt substantively identical ordinances under subsection
30 (c)(1)(B), a majority of the voting members of the commission vote
31 in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed
32 development commission under subsection (c)(2), and the
33 department approves the transformation of the commission into a
34 watershed development commission with the purposes set forth in
35 the ordinances adopted under subsection (c)(1)(B), the following
36 apply:

37 (1) The commission shall notify the department of the
38 approval of the proposal.

39 (2) The officers of the commission elected under IC 14-30-6-7
40 shall take the actions necessary and appropriate to the
41 transformation of the commission from a river basin
42 commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed



1 development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

2 (3) The board of the watershed development commission
3 consists of the following:

4 (A) The director of the department or the director's
5 designee.

6 (B) The county surveyor of each county participating in
7 the commission.

8 (C) An individual other than the county surveyor
9 representing each county participating in the commission,
10 appointed by the county executive.

11 (D) Either:

12 (i) one (1) individual appointed to represent each second
13 class city that is located in a participating county and
14 within the upper Wabash River basin; or

15 (ii) if a participating county does not include a second
16 class city that is located within the upper Wabash River
17 basin, one (1) individual appointed to represent the
18 municipality that has the largest population of all
19 municipalities that are located in the participating
20 county and within the upper Wabash River basin.

21 An individual appointed to represent a second class city
22 under item (i) shall be appointed by the board of storm
23 water management (as described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the
24 second class city or, if the second class city has no board of
25 storm water management, by the executive of the second
26 class city. An individual appointed under item (ii) to
27 represent the municipality that has the largest population
28 of all municipalities that are located in the participating
29 county and within the upper Wabash River basin shall be
30 appointed by the board of storm water management (as
31 described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the municipality or, if the
32 municipality has no board of storm water management, by
33 the executive of the municipality.

34 (4) The director of the department or the director's designee:

35 (A) shall advise the commission on the transformation of
36 the commission into a watershed development commission
37 subject to IC 14-30.5; and

38 (B) when the board of the watershed development
39 commission is formed, shall assume the position on the
40 board of the watershed development commission specified
41 in IC 14-30.5-4-1(a)(2)(A).

42 (5) The watershed development commission board may not



1 meet until the department has given the approval referred to
 2 in this subsection. Upon the convening of the first meeting
 3 under IC 14-30.5-4 of the board of the watershed development
 4 commission:

5 (A) the Upper Wabash River basin commission ceases to
 6 exist as a separate municipal corporation under
 7 IC 14-30-6;

8 (B) the Upper Wabash watershed development commission
 9 is established as a public body corporate and politic under
 10 IC 14-30.5;

11 (C) the participating counties of the Upper Wabash River
 12 basin commission become member counties of the Upper
 13 Wabash watershed development commission under
 14 IC 14-30.5; and

15 (D) each participating county of the Upper Wabash River
 16 basin commission is authorized to appoint an individual
 17 described in subdivision (3)(C) to represent the county on
 18 the board of the Upper Wabash watershed development
 19 commission.

20 (g) If established under this section, the Upper Wabash
 21 watershed development commission:

22 (1) is a continuation of;

23 (2) retains the property and rights of; and

24 (3) is responsible for the actions and subject to the liabilities
 25 of;

26 the former Upper Wabash River basin commission.

27 (h) If established under this section, the Upper Wabash
 28 watershed development commission has all of the powers and
 29 duties of a watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5
 30 in the areas of the watershed of the Wabash River and the
 31 tributaries of the Wabash River that are within the boundaries of
 32 the member counties of the Upper Wabash watershed development
 33 commission. For the purposes of IC 14-30.5, the areas of the
 34 watershed of the Wabash River and the tributaries of the Wabash
 35 River that are within the boundaries of the member counties of the
 36 Upper Wabash watershed development commission comprise the
 37 designated watershed of the Upper Wabash watershed
 38 development commission.

39 (i) If the Upper Wabash watershed development commission is
 40 established under this section, the board of the Upper Wabash
 41 watershed development commission shall appoint an executive
 42 director under IC 14-30.5-4-2(e). An individual who was the



1 executive director of the Upper Wabash River basin commission
 2 may be appointed executive director of the Upper Wabash
 3 watershed development commission under this subsection.

4 (j) If the Upper Wabash watershed development commission is
 5 established under this section, all property, records, and funds of
 6 the former Upper Wabash River basin commission:

7 (1) become property, records, and funds of the Upper Wabash
 8 watershed development commission; and

9 (2) shall be transmitted to the Upper Wabash watershed
 10 development commission not more than sixty (60) days after
 11 the appointment of the executive director under subsection (i).

12 SECTION 40. IC 14-30.5-2-0.5, AS ADDED BY P.L.251-2023,
 13 SECTION 13, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 14 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 0.5. (a) Notwithstanding subsection (b), this
 15 chapter does not authorize the creation of a watershed development
 16 commission if the area in which the watershed development
 17 commission could exercise the powers conferred by this article would
 18 include any part of the area in which a river basin commission
 19 established under: by IC 14-30-6-2

20 (+) IC 14-30-2;

21 (2) IC 14-30-3; or

22 (3) IC 14-30-4;

23 is authorized to exercise its powers.

24 (b) This section does not prohibit:

25 (1) the transformation of the Maumee River basin commission
 26 into a watershed development commission under ~~IC 14-30-2-25;~~
 27 **IC 14-30-7-1;**

28 (2) the transformation of the St. Joseph River basin commission
 29 into a watershed development commission under ~~14-30-3-33;~~
 30 **IC 14-30-7-2;** or

31 (3) the transformation of the upper Wabash River basin
 32 commission into a watershed development commission under
 33 ~~IC 14-30-4-20;~~ **IC 14-30-7-3;**

34 on the grounds that the watershed development commission resulting
 35 from the transformation would be authorized to exercise its powers in
 36 all or any part of the area in which the transformed river basin
 37 commission was authorized to exercise its powers before the
 38 transformation.

39 SECTION 41. IC 14-30.5-2-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.92-2025,
 40 SECTION 50, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 41 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) If one (1) county executive submits an
 42 ordinance and a written request for recognition of a proposed



1 watershed development commission under section 1(c) of this chapter,
 2 the natural resources commission shall decide under subsections (c)
 3 through (e) whether to recognize the proposed commission.

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

9 (1) the natural resources commission may not decide whether to
 10 recognize the proposed commission unless the provisions of the
 11 ordinances submitted under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter are
 12 essentially identical in:

13 (A) identifying the designated watershed; and

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

15 (2) if the natural resources commission determines that the
 16 requirement set forth in subdivision (1) is met, the natural
 17 resources commission shall decide under subsections (c) through
 18 (e) whether to recognize the proposed commission.

19 (c) Before making a decision whether to recognize a proposed
 20 commission under this section, the **division of water, on behalf of the**
 21 natural resources commission, shall hold at least one (1) public hearing
 22 concerning the proposed commission in each county whose executive
 23 submitted an ordinance and a written request for recognition of the
 24 proposed commission under section 1(c) of this chapter. Any interested
 25 person attending a public hearing held under this subsection shall have
 26 the right to:

27 (1) address the natural resources commission; and

28 (2) provide written comments;

29 on whether the proposed commission should be established. The
 30 **division of water, on behalf of the** natural resources commission, may
 31 convene the meeting, record the testimony given, and receive the
 32 written comments provided.

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

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

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

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



- 1 (1) Are the purposes for which the proposed commission would
 2 be established, as set forth in the ordinance or ordinances under
 3 section 1(b)(3) of this chapter, within the purposes set forth in
 4 IC 14-30.5-3-1 for which a watershed development commission
 5 may be established?
 6 (2) Do the purposes of the proposed commission, as set forth in
 7 the ordinance or ordinances under section 1(b)(3) of this chapter,
 8 correspond to legitimate flood damage reduction, drainage, storm
 9 water management, recreation, or water infrastructure needs of
 10 each county seeking establishment of the commission, as set forth
 11 under section 1(b)(4) of this chapter?
 12 (3) Is it reasonable to expect that the establishment of a
 13 commission having powers under this article only in the county
 14 or counties from which the ordinance or ordinances were
 15 submitted under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter would effectively
 16 address the flood damage reduction, drainage, storm water
 17 management, recreation, or water infrastructure needs of each
 18 county that submitted an ordinance under section 1(c)(1) of this
 19 chapter?
 20 (4) Is it reasonable to expect that the establishment of a
 21 commission that has powers under this article only in the area or
 22 areas inside the geographic boundaries of the designated
 23 watershed would effectively address the flood damage reduction,
 24 drainage, storm water management, recreation, or water
 25 infrastructure needs of each county that submitted an ordinance
 26 under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter?
 27 (5) Is the territory of the proposed commission at least as large as
 28 the entirety of the same eight (8) digit U.S. Geological Survey
 29 hydrologic unit code?
 30 (6) Has a regional watershed study or watershed management
 31 plan been conducted in consultation with the Indiana finance
 32 authority and the department of natural resources that assesses
 33 water use, water quality, drinking water systems, wastewater
 34 management systems, storm water management, flood control,
 35 drainage management, recreational uses, natural resources, and
 36 water infrastructure needs of the watershed of the proposed
 37 commission? If so, can the establishment of the proposed
 38 commission be expected to address the needs identified in that
 39 study or management plan?
 40 (f) If:
 41 (1) one (1) county's executive submits an ordinance and a request
 42 for recognition of a proposed commission under section 1(c) of



- 1 this chapter; and
- 2 (2) the natural resources commission answers all of the questions
- 3 set forth in subsection (e) favorably;
- 4 the natural resources commission shall issue an order recognizing the
- 5 watershed development commission and recognizing the county
- 6 referred to in subdivision (1) as a member of the watershed
- 7 development commission.
- 8 (g) If:
- 9 (1) executives of two (2) or more counties submit ordinances and
- 10 requests for recognition of a proposed watershed development
- 11 commission under section 1(c) of this chapter; and
- 12 (2) the natural resources commission answers all of the questions
- 13 set forth in subsection (e) favorably with respect to at least one (1)
- 14 of the counties;
- 15 the natural resources commission shall issue an order recognizing the
- 16 watershed development commission and recognizing as a member of
- 17 the watershed development commission each county with respect to
- 18 which the natural resources commission answered all of the questions
- 19 set forth in subsection (e) favorably.
- 20 (h) If the natural resources commission does not answer all of the
- 21 questions set forth in subsection (e) favorably with respect to a county,
- 22 the natural resources commission shall:
- 23 (1) inform the executive of the county in writing of its decision;
- 24 and
- 25 (2) specify in the writing the reason or reasons for each
- 26 unfavorable answer.
- 27 (i) The action of the natural resources commission under this section
- 28 in declining to recognize a proposed watershed development
- 29 commission for a particular watershed does not preclude the later
- 30 submission of one (1) or more new ordinances and written requests for
- 31 recognition of a proposed watershed development commission for the
- 32 same designated watershed.
- 33 (j) An action of the natural resources commission under this section
- 34 declining to recognize a particular county as a member of a watershed
- 35 development commission does not preclude the later submission of:
- 36 (1) another ordinance and written request under section 1(c) of
- 37 this chapter for recognition of the county as a member of another
- 38 proposed watershed development commission; or
- 39 (2) an ordinance and written request under section 4 or 5 of this
- 40 chapter proposing the county for membership in an established
- 41 watershed development commission.
- 42 SECTION 42. IC 14-30.5-2-6, AS AMENDED BY P.L.92-2025,



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

5 (1) the executives of all of the counties that are members of the
6 existing commission adopt ordinances accepting the county as a
7 member county of the existing commission; and

8 (2) the natural resources commission issues an order under this
9 section recognizing the county as a member county of the existing
10 commission.

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

17 (1) address the natural resources commission; and

18 (2) provide written comments;

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

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

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

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

30 (d) In deciding whether to recognize a county to which section 4 or
31 5 of this chapter applies as a member of an existing commission, the
32 natural resources commission shall determine the answer to each of the
33 following questions:

34 (1) Do the stated purposes for which the watershed development
35 commission was established correspond to the flood damage
36 reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or
37 water infrastructure needs of the county, as stated under section
38 4(b)(3) or 5(b)(3) of this chapter?

39 (2) Is it reasonable to expect that the county's flood damage
40 reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or
41 water infrastructure needs, as stated under section 4(b)(3) or
42 5(b)(3) of this chapter, would be addressed more effectively if the



- 1 county were a member of the existing commission than those
 2 needs have previously been addressed?
- 3 (3) Would the county's membership in the existing commission
 4 diminish the effectiveness of the existing watershed development
 5 commission in addressing the flood damage reduction, drainage,
 6 storm water management, recreation, or water infrastructure
 7 needs of other member counties?
- 8 (4) Is the territory of the proposed commission at least as large as
 9 the entirety of the same eight (8) digit U.S. Geological Survey
 10 hydrologic unit code?
- 11 (5) Has a regional watershed study or watershed management
 12 plan been conducted in consultation with Indiana finance
 13 authority and the department of natural resources that assesses
 14 water use, water quality, drinking water systems, wastewater
 15 management systems, storm water management, flood control,
 16 drainage management, recreational uses, natural resources, and
 17 water infrastructure needs of the watershed of the proposed
 18 commission? If so, can the establishment of the proposed
 19 commission be expected to address the needs identified in that
 20 study or management plan?
- 21 (e) If the natural resources commission answers all of the questions
 22 set forth in subsection (d) favorably, the natural resources commission
 23 shall issue an order recognizing the membership of the county in the
 24 existing commission.
- 25 (f) If the natural resources commission does not answer all of the
 26 questions set forth in subsection (d) favorably, the natural resources
 27 commission shall inform the executive of the county to which section
 28 4 or 5 of this chapter applies in writing of its decision and specify in the
 29 writing the reason or reasons for each unfavorable answer.
- 30 (g) An action of the natural resources commission under this section
 31 declining to recognize a county as a member of an established
 32 watershed development commission does not preclude the later
 33 submission of another ordinance under section 4 or 5 of this chapter
 34 seeking membership for the county in an existing commission.
- 35 SECTION 43. IC 14-30.5-4-5, AS ADDED BY P.L.251-2023,
 36 SECTION 13, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 37 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 5. (a) There is established for each watershed
 38 development commission an advisory committee to provide counsel to
 39 the board of the commission.
- 40 (b) Except as provided in subsection (c), a watershed development
 41 commission advisory committee established under this section consists
 42 of a member or representative of the board of supervisors of the soil



1 and water conservation district of each county that is a member of the
2 commission, selected by the board of supervisors.

3 (c) If the St. Joseph watershed development commission is
4 established under ~~IC 14-30-3-33~~; **IC 14-30-7-2**:

5 (1) the individuals serving as members of the St. Joseph River
6 basin commission under ~~IC 14-30-3-8~~ **IC 14-30-6-5** become
7 members of the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed
8 development commission;

9 (2) the term of office of an individual who becomes a member of
10 the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed development
11 commission under subdivision (1) is as provided in ~~IC 14-30-3-9~~;
12 **IC 14-30-7-2**; and

13 (3) upon:

14 (A) the expiration under ~~IC 14-30-3-9~~; **IC 14-30-6-5**; or

15 (B) the termination under any other circumstances;

16 of the term of office of an individual described in subdivision (1),
17 the office of the individual shall be filled by a successor according
18 to ~~IC 14-30-3-33(i)(4)~~; **IC 14-30-7-2(j)(4)**.

19 SECTION 44. IC 14-33-2-19 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
20 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 19. (a) In determining
21 the facts, the **division of water, on behalf of the** commission, shall **do**
22 **the following**:

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

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

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

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

33 SECTION 45. IC 14-33-2-22 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
34 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 22. The commission,
35 **in coordination with the department**, shall make a report of the
36 commission's findings to the court, including findings on the territorial
37 limits of the proposed district. The commission shall make this report
38 within one hundred twenty (120) days after the petition is referred to
39 the commission, unless the commission requests and receives approval
40 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:



(†) 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.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Speaker: Your Committee on Natural Resources, to which was referred Senate Bill 224, has had the same under consideration and begs leave to report the same back to the House with the recommendation that said bill be amended as follows:

Page 1, between lines 3 and 4, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 3. IC 14-8-2-20, AS AMENDED BY P.L.99-2025, SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 20. "Basin" has the following meaning:

- (1) For purposes of IC 14-13-9, the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-9-1.
- (2) For purposes of IC 14-25-1, the meaning set forth in section 1.2 of IC 14-25-15-1.
- (3) For purposes of IC 14-25-17, the meaning set forth in IC 14-25-17-3.
- ~~(4) For purposes of IC 14-30-2, the meaning set forth in IC 14-30-2-1.~~
- ~~(5) For purposes of IC 14-30-3, the meaning set forth in IC 14-30-3-1.~~
- ~~(6) For purposes of IC 14-30-4, the meaning set forth in IC 14-30-4-1.~~

SECTION 4. IC 14-8-2-48, AS AMENDED BY P.L.251-2023, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 48. (a) "Commission", except as provided in this section, refers to the natural resources commission.

(b) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-1, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-1-1.

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(c) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-2, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-2-2.

(d) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-4, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-4-1.

(e) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-5, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-5-1.

(f) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-6, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-6-2.

(g) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-13-9, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-13-9-2.

(h) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-20-11, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-20-11-1.

(i) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-28-4, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-28-4-1.

(j) "Commission", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, **IC 14-30-6**, has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-2-2~~. **IC 14-30-6-1**.

(k) "Commission", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3~~, **IC 14-30-7-1**, has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-3-2~~. **IC 14-30-7-1**.

(l) "Commission", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, **IC 14-30-7-2**, has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-4-2~~. **IC 14-30-7-2**.

(m) "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-30-7-3, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-30-7-3.

~~(m)~~ **(n)** "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-30.5, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-30.5-1-2.

~~(n)~~ **(o)** "Commission", for purposes of IC 14-33-20, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-33-20-2."

Page 1, between lines 6 and 7, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 5. IC 14-8-2-86.2, AS ADDED BY P.L.251-2023, SECTION 3, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 86.2. "Executive", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3-33~~ **and** IC 14-30.5, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-30.5-1-4."

Page 3, between lines 16 and 17, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 7. IC 14-8-2-159 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 159. "Maumee River basin", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, **IC 14-30-6 and IC 14-30-7**, has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-2-3~~. **IC 14-30-7-1**."

Page 3, between lines 19 and 20, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 9. IC 14-8-2-198 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 198. "Participating county" has the following meaning:

(1) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, **IC 14-30-6**, the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-2-4~~. **IC 14-30-6-1**.



(2) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3~~, **IC 14-30-7-1**, the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-3-3~~. **IC 14-30-7-1**.

(3) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, **IC 14-30-7-2**, the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-4-3~~. **IC 14-30-7-2**.

(4) For purposes of IC 14-30-7-3, the meaning set forth in IC 14-30-7-3.

SECTION 10. IC 14-8-2-206 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 206. "Plan", ~~has the following meaning:~~

(1) for purposes of IC 14-21-1, ~~has~~ the meaning set forth in IC 14-21-1-8.

(2) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~, the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-2-5~~.

(3) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-4-4~~.

SECTION 11. IC 14-8-2-208, AS AMENDED BY P.L.138-2018, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 208. "Political subdivision" has the following meaning:

(1) For purposes of IC 14-12-1, the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-1-2.

(2) For purposes of IC 14-13-2, ~~and IC 14-30-3~~, the meaning set forth in IC 36-1-2-13.

(3) For purposes of IC 14-32-8, the meaning set forth in IC 14-32-8-2."

Page 3, between lines 26 and 27, begin a new paragraph and insert: "SECTION 13. IC 14-8-2-263 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 263. "St. Joseph River basin", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-3~~, **IC 14-30-6 and IC 14-30-7**, has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-3-4~~. **IC 14-30-7-2**.

SECTION 14. IC 14-8-2-291.5 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 291.5. "Upper Wabash River basin", for purposes of ~~IC 14-30-4~~, **IC 14-30-6 and IC 14-30-7**, has the meaning set forth in ~~IC 14-30-4-5~~. **IC 14-30-7-3**."

Page 5, between lines 32 and 33, begin a new paragraph and insert: "SECTION 22. IC 14-13-6-20, AS AMENDED BY P.L.118-2009, SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 20. The commission may use the Wabash River heritage corridor commission fund to pay:

(1) reimbursement of the expenses of members under section 13 of this chapter;

(2) other administrative costs and expenses reasonably incurred



under this chapter, including expenses for publications and postage; and

(3) costs incurred in fulfilling the directives of the Wabash River heritage corridor commission master plan, including multicounty projects and marketing and educational tools such as video tape productions, signs, and promotional literature.

However, the commission may not use money in the fund for the upper Wabash River basin commission established by ~~IC 14-30-4-6~~.
IC 14-30-6.

SECTION 23. IC 14-13-6-23, AS ADDED BY P.L.69-2009, SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 23. (a) The Wabash River heritage corridor fund is established for the purpose of:

(1) providing grants to aid the sustainable development of property under the Wabash River heritage corridor commission master plan and purposes of the commission; and

(2) paying costs incurred in fulfilling the directives of the Wabash River heritage corridor commission master plan, including multicounty projects.

However, the commission may not use money in the fund for the upper Wabash River basin commission established by ~~IC 14-30-4-6~~.
IC 14-30-6.

(b) The fund shall be administered by the director under the direction of the commission.

(c) The expenses of administering the fund shall be paid from money in the fund.

(d) The fund consists of the following:

(1) Appropriations made by the general assembly.

(2) Interest as provided in subsection (e).

(3) Funds deposited under IC 14-38-1-13(d).

(4) Money donated to the fund.

(5) Money transferred to the fund from other funds.

(e) The treasurer of state shall invest the money in the fund not currently needed to meet the obligations of the fund in the same manner as other public funds may be invested. Interest that accrues from these investments shall be deposited in the fund.

(f) Money in the fund at the end of a fiscal year does not revert to the state general fund.

(g) Money in the fund is annually appropriated to the department of natural resources for its use in fulfilling the purposes of this section."

Page 13, delete lines 1 through 6, begin a new paragraph and insert:
"SECTION 35. IC 14-30-2 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1,



2026]. (Maumee River Basin Commission).

SECTION 36. IC 14-30-3 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. (St. Joseph River Basin Commission).

SECTION 37. IC 14-30-4 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. (Upper Wabash River Basin Commission).

SECTION 38. IC 14-30-6 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]:

Chapter 6. River Basin Commission Administration

Sec. 1. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Commission" refers to a river basin commission established by section 2 of this chapter.
- (2) "Participating county" refers to a county that:
 - (A) joins a commission under section 4 of this chapter; and
 - (B) has territory within the commission.

Sec. 2. (a) The following river basin commissions are established:

- (1) The Maumee River basin commission.
- (2) The St. Joseph River basin commission.
- (3) The Upper Wabash River basin commission.

(b) After consulting with the surveyor of each county in a river basin, the director shall certify the boundaries of a commission established by subsection (a). However, a river basin commission established by subsection (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) is not required to recertify the commission's boundaries under this subsection.

Sec. 3. A commission established by this chapter:

- (1) is a separate municipal corporation; and
- (2) may sue and be sued.

Sec. 4. The executive of a county that includes territory in a commission may do the following:

- (1) Elect to participate in the commission by designating the county as a participating county.
- (2) Revoke the designation described in subdivision (1).

Sec. 5. (a) Except as provided in subsection (d), the following shall serve as voting members of the commission:

- (1) A member of the county executive for a participating county.
- (2) The executive director or, if a county does not have an executive director, the chairman or manager of a soil and water conservation district that:
 - (A) is subject to IC 14-32;



(B) includes territory in a participating county; and

(C) includes territory in the basin.

(3) The county surveyor of each participating county.

(b) In addition to the members required under subsection (a), the required members of a commission may appoint the following voting members:

(1) Each member of the county executive for a participating county.

(2) The executive of each second class city within the territory of the commission.

(3) If a participating county does not have a second class city, the executive of the municipality with the largest population located within the territory of the basin.

(4) A participating county's health officer.

(5) A representative of each soil and water conservation district that:

(A) is subject to IC 14-32;

(B) includes territory in a participating county; and

(C) includes territory in the basin.

(6) A representative of the department of natural resources. However, the representative may not be an employee or elected official of a city, town, or county governmental unit.

(c) A representative described in subsection (b)(5) or (b)(6):

(1) is chosen by the entity being represented;

(2) serves a three (3) year term;

(3) is eligible for reappointment; and

(4) continues until a successor is appointed.

(d) A commission that exists on or before June 30, 2026, retains the commission's existing voting members.

Sec. 6. (a) A member of the commission may:

(1) designate another individual to perform the duties of the member on the commission; and

(2) revoke the designation described in subdivision (1).

(b) A designation or a revocation of a designation under this section must be filed with the commission to be effective.

Sec. 7. (a) A commission shall annually elect from among the voting members the following officers:

(1) A chairperson.

(2) A vice chairperson.

(3) A secretary.

(4) A treasurer.

(b) The officers elected under subsection (a) shall perform the



duties specified in the commission's bylaws.

(c) A commission may establish other offices, including an executive director, and determine the means for filling the offices. Any salary or benefits provided to the individual must be paid by the commission that establishes the office.

Sec. 8. (a) Either:

- (1) the commission; or
- (2) a participating county;

but not both, may pay its members reimbursement for traveling expenses and other expenses actually incurred in connection with the member's duties as provided in the state travel policies and procedures established by the Indiana department of administration and approved by the budget agency. Money paid under subdivision (1) may only be paid from money available to the commission at the time of reimbursement.

(b) A county may pay members of a commission the salary per diem provided by IC 4-10-11-2.1(b) for the performance of the member's duties on the commission.

Sec. 9. (a) A commission shall meet at least four (4) times each calendar year.

(b) The following may call a meeting:

- (1) The chairperson.
- (2) The executive director.
- (3) A quorum of the commission's members.

(c) A commission shall adopt bylaws specifying a quorum requirement.

(d) A member may waive notice of any meeting by filing a written waiver with the secretary of the commission.

Sec. 10. (a) A commission may do the following:

- (1) Manage the commission's internal affairs.
- (2) Employ staff.
- (3) Subject to section 12 of this chapter, enter into contracts for purposes of this chapter.
- (4) Exercise the powers of a political subdivision specified in a cooperative agreement described in section 12 of this chapter.
- (5) Provide a forum for the discussion, study, and evaluation of water resource issues of common concern in the river basin.
- (6) Facilitate and foster cooperative planning and coordinated management of the basin's water and related land resources.
- (7) Develop positions on major water resource issues and



serve as an advocate of the basin's interests before Congress and federal, state, and local governmental agencies.

(8) Develop plans and tools to improve water quality or mitigate flooding in the basin.

(9) Publicize, advertise, and distribute reports on the commission's purposes, objectives, studies, and findings.

(10) When requested, make recommendations in matters related to the commission's functions and objectives to political subdivisions in the basin and to other public and private agencies.

(11) When requested, act as a coordinating agency for programs and activities of other public and private agencies that are related to the commission's objectives.

(12) Invite government officials of other states within the river basin to:

(A) attend the commission's meetings; and

(B) advise the commission upon the commission's request.

(b) A commission may not exercise any of the powers described in subsection (a) within a nature preserve (as defined in IC 14-31-1).

(c) This section does not exempt the commission from any other statute.

Sec. 11. A commission shall do the following:

(1) Keep a record of the commission's resolutions, transactions, and findings. A record under this subdivision is a public record.

(2) Make an annual report of the commission's activities to the executive of each participating county. The commission shall upon request make an annual report to the following:

(A) The governor.

(B) Any member of the general assembly.

(3) Prepare and adopt an annual budget.

(4) Submit the budget described in subdivision (3) to the executive of each participating county and, upon request, make the budget available to each agency appropriating money to the commission.

Sec. 12. (a) A political subdivision in a participating county may under IC 36-1-7 enter into a cooperative agreement with a commission and at least one (1) other legal entity, including a legal entity in another state.

(b) If a commission intends to enter into a cooperative agreement under subsection (a), the commission shall post public



notice of the proposed cooperative agreement at least ten (10) business days before the meeting at which the cooperative agreement is scheduled to be voted on by the commission.

(c) Before a commission may vote on the cooperative agreement under this section, the cooperative agreement must be approved by the department.

Sec. 13. A commission may adopt a resolution to do any one (1) or more of the following:

- (1) Require that increased water runoff resulting from new construction be impounded on the construction site.
- (2) Permit the requirement of onsite water impoundment under subdivision (1) to be waived upon payment of a reasonable fee by the developer of the new construction.
- (3) Restrict construction within the one hundred (100) year flood plains of the river basin.

Sec. 14. (a) The commission may establish an executive board consisting of the following:

- (1) The chairperson of the commission.
- (2) One (1) member from each participating county that is not represented by the chairperson, to be chosen in a manner prescribed by the commission's bylaws.

(b) The commission may delegate to the executive board the power to do the following:

- (1) Recommend agenda items and activities to the commission.
- (2) Conduct hearings on proposed commission projects.
- (3) Perform other administrative duties assigned by the commission.

Sec. 15. (a) The commission may appoint an advisory committee to assist the commission.

(b) A member of an advisory committee is not entitled to compensation for serving on the advisory committee.

Sec. 16. The commission may adopt a bylaw to govern member participation in:

- (1) a commission's; or
- (2) an executive board's;

meeting by electronic communication.

Sec. 17. (a) A commission may receive grants and appropriations from the following:

- (1) Federal, state, and local governments.
- (2) Individuals, foundations, and other organizations.

However, a commission is not eligible for funding through the



Wabash River heritage corridor commission established by IC 14-13-6-6.

(b) The commission may enter into an agreement or contract regarding the acceptance or use of the grants and appropriations described in subsection (a) for the purpose of carrying out the commission's activities under this chapter.

Sec. 18. (a) A participating county may budget, appropriate, and disburse money to carry out the purposes of the commission under this chapter.

(b) The appropriation from the participating county that is needed for all or part of the commission's budget must be either:

- (1) apportioned among the participating counties in direct relationship to the amount of land area in each participating county certified under section 2 of this chapter; or**
- (2) divided equally among the participating counties.**

(c) The appropriation that is needed under subsection (b) shall be presented to the county executive at the same time that budgets are presented by county officers.

Sec. 19. (a) The commission shall make expenditures only as budgeted. However, the commission may revise the budget at any time to authorize unbudgeted expenditures.

(b) Any appropriated amounts remaining unexpended or unencumbered at the end of the fiscal year become part of a nonreverting cumulative fund to be held in the name of the commission. The commission may authorize unbudgeted expenditures from this fund.

(c) The commission is responsible for the safekeeping and deposit of money the commission receives under this chapter. The state board of accounts shall:

- (1) prescribe the methods and forms for keeping; and**
- (2) periodically audit;**

the accounts, records, and books of the commission.

(d) The treasurer of the commission may receive, disburse, and handle money belonging to the commission, subject to the following:

- (1) Applicable statutes.**
- (2) Procedures established by the commission.**

Sec. 20. (a) For the purposes of this chapter, the commission may do the following:

- (1) Acquire by grant, gift, purchase, or devise, and dispose of, conservation easements under IC 32-23-5 in land:**
 - (A) within; or**



(B) adjacent to if part of the same parcel;
the one hundred (100) year flood plains and the wetlands in
the basin.

(2) Acquire, by grant, gift, purchase, or devise, improvements:

(A) within; or

(B) adjacent to if part of the same parcel;
the one hundred (100) year flood plains of the basin for the
purpose of removing those improvements.

(3) Acquire, dispose of, hold, use, improve, maintain, operate,
own, manage, or lease real or personal property by grant, gift,
purchase, or devise for the purposes of this chapter.

(b) The commission may exercise the powers granted by this
section as follows:

(1) For purposes of IC 32-23-5.

(2) To contribute to the following:

(A) Flood mitigation.

(B) Flood damage reduction.

(C) Improvements in water quality.

(D) Soil conservation.

Sec. 21. (a) The commission, the executive board, or employees
or authorized representatives of the commission acting under this
chapter may:

(1) enter the land lying within the one hundred (100) year
flood plain of any watercourse in the river basin; and

(2) enter land lying outside the one hundred (100) year flood
plain to gain access to land lying within the one hundred (100)
year flood plain in the river basin;

if necessary to investigate, examine, or survey the land or
investigate suspected violations of the Indiana flood control laws.

(b) The commission must give twenty-one (21) days written
notice to:

(1) an owner of the affected land;

(2) a contract purchaser of the affected land; or

(3) if the land is municipal property (as described in
IC 6-1.1-10-5(a)), the executive of the municipality;

before exercising the right to enter land under this section. The
notice must state the purpose of the entry and that there is a right
of appeal under this section.

(c) A person described in subsection (b)(1) through (b)(3) may,
within the twenty-one (21) day notice period required by
subsection (b), appeal the proposed entry under subsection (a) to
the commission on the grounds that the proposed entry is not



necessary. If a person appeals under this subsection, the commission shall hold a hearing on the necessity of the entry before the right of entry is exercised.

(d) A person entering land under this section must use due care to avoid damage to:

- (1) crops; or
- (2) fences, buildings, and other structures.

(e) Neither the commission, the executive board, nor employees or authorized representatives of the commission acting under this chapter commits criminal trespass under IC 35-43-2-2 by entering land described in subsection (a) for a purpose set forth in subsection (a).

SECTION 39. IC 14-30-7 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]:

Chapter 7. Conversion to Watershed Development Commission

Sec. 1. (a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Commission" refers to the Maumee River basin commission.
- (2) "Maumee River basin" means the area in Adams County, Allen County, DeKalb County, Noble County, Steuben County, and Wells County that drains into the Maumee River and the tributaries of the Maumee River.
- (3) "Participating county" refers to a county that has joined the Maumee River basin commission under IC 14-30-6-4.

(b) The commission:

- (1) may; but
- (2) is not required to;

consider a proposal to transform the commission from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

(c) For the commission to be transformed from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5:

- (1) the county executives of all participating counties:
 - (A) must approve the proposal described in subsection (b); and
 - (B) must adopt substantively identical ordinances that set forth the flood damage reduction, drainage, storm water management, or soil and water conservation purposes for which the proposed watershed development commission



would be established, and, for purposes of IC 14-30.5-2-0.5, the designated watershed within which the proposed watershed development commission would exercise its powers; and

(2) a majority of the voting members of the commission must vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission in accordance with the ordinances adopted under subdivision (1)(B) and the provisions of this section.

(d) For the county executive of a participating county to approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A), at least two (2) of the three (3) members of the county executive must vote in favor of the proposal.

(e) If a member of the county executive of a participating county has designated another individual under IC 14-30-6-6 to perform the member's duties on the commission, the individual designated to perform the duties of the member of the county executive may vote under subsection (c)(2) on the proposal described in subsection (b).

(f) If the county executives of all participating counties approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A) and adopt substantively identical ordinances under subsection (c)(1)(B), a majority of the voting members of the commission vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission under subsection (c)(2), and the department approves the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission with the purposes set forth in the ordinances adopted under subsection (c)(1)(B), the following apply:

(1) The commission shall notify the department of the approval of the proposal.

(2) The officers of the commission elected under IC 14-30-6-7 shall take the actions necessary and appropriate to the transformation of the commission from a river basin commission subject to this chapter into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

(3) The board of the watershed development commission consists of the following:

(A) The director of the department or the director's designee.

(B) The county surveyor of each county participating in the commission.



- (C) A member of the county executive from each county participating in the commission or the member's designee.
- (D) One (1) individual to represent each second class city that is located in a participating county and within the Maumee River basin, appointed by:
- (i) the board of storm water management (as described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the second class city; or
 - (ii) if the second class city has no board of storm water management, the executive of the second class city.
- (E) A member of the county soil and water conservation district board from each participating county within the Maumee River basin or the member's designee.
- (4) The director of the department or the director's designee:
- (A) shall advise the commission on the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5; and
 - (B) when the board of the watershed development commission is formed, shall assume the position on the board of the watershed development commission specified in IC 14-30.5-4-1(a)(1)(A).
- (5) The watershed development commission board may not meet until the department has given the approval referred to in this subsection. Upon the convening of the first meeting under IC 14-30.5-4 of the board of the watershed development commission:
- (A) the Maumee River basin commission ceases to exist as a separate municipal corporation under IC 14-30-6;
 - (B) the Maumee watershed development commission is established as a public body corporate and politic under IC 14-30.5;
 - (C) the participating counties of the Maumee River basin commission become member counties of the Maumee watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5; and
 - (D) each participating county of the Maumee River basin commission is authorized to appoint a member of the county executive or the member's designee under IC 14-30.5-4-1 to represent the county on the board of the Maumee watershed development commission.
- (g) If established under this section, the Maumee watershed development commission:
- (1) is a continuation of;
 - (2) retains the property and rights of; and



(3) is responsible for the actions and subject to the liabilities of;
the former Maumee River basin commission.

(h) If established under this section, the Maumee watershed development commission has all of the powers and duties of a watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5 in the areas of the watershed of the Maumee River and the tributaries of the Maumee River that are within the boundaries of the member counties of the Maumee watershed development commission. For the purposes of IC 14-30.5, the areas of the watershed of the Maumee River and the tributaries of the Maumee River that are within the boundaries of the member counties of the Maumee watershed development commission comprise the designated watershed of the Maumee watershed development commission.

(i) If the Maumee watershed development commission is established under this section, the board of the Maumee watershed development commission shall appoint an executive director under IC 14-30.5-4-2(e). An individual who was the executive director of the Maumee River basin commission may be appointed executive director of the Maumee watershed development commission under this subsection.

(j) If the Maumee watershed development commission is established under this section, all property, records, and funds of the former Maumee River basin commission:

- (1) become property, records, and funds of the Maumee watershed development commission; and
- (2) shall be transmitted to the Maumee watershed development commission not more than sixty (60) days after the appointment of the executive director under subsection (i).

Sec. 2. (a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Commission" refers to the St. Joseph River basin commission.
- (2) "Participating county" refers to a county that has joined the St. Joseph River basin commission under IC 14-30-6-4.
- (3) "St. Joseph River basin" means the area in Elkhart County, Kosciusko County, LaGrange County, Noble County, St. Joseph County, and Steuben County that drains into the St. Joseph River.

(b) The commission:

- (1) may; but
- (2) is not required to;



consider a proposal to transform the commission from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

(c) For the commission to be transformed from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5:

- (1) the county executives of all participating counties:
 - (A) must approve the proposal described in subsection (b); and
 - (B) must adopt substantively identical ordinances that set forth the information required by IC 14-30.5-2-1(b), including, for purposes of IC 14-30.5-2-0.5, the designated watershed within which the proposed watershed development commission would exercise its powers; and
- (2) a majority of the voting members of the commission must vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission in accordance with the ordinances adopted under subdivision (1)(B) and the provisions of this section.

(d) For the county executive of a participating county to approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A), at least two (2) of the three (3) members of the county executive must vote in favor of the proposal.

(e) If a member of the county executive of a participating county has designated another individual under IC 14-30-6-6 to fill the member's position on the commission, the individual designated to fill the member's position may vote under subsection (c)(2) on the proposal described in subsection (b).

(f) If the county executives of all participating counties approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A) and adopt substantively identical ordinances under subsection (c)(1)(B), a majority of the voting members of the commission vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission under subsection (c)(2), and the department approves the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission with the purposes set forth in the ordinances adopted under subsection (c)(1)(B), the following apply:

- (1) The commission shall notify the department of the approval of the proposal.
- (2) The officers of the commission elected under IC 14-30-6-7 shall take the actions necessary and appropriate to the



transformation of the commission from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

(3) The board of the watershed development commission consists of the following:

(A) The director of the department or the director's designee.

(B) The county surveyor of each county participating in the commission.

(C) An individual other than the county surveyor representing each county participating in the commission, appointed by the county executive.

(D) Either:

(i) one (1) individual appointed to represent each second class city that is located in a participating county and within the St. Joseph River basin; or

(ii) if a participating county does not include a second class city that is located within the St. Joseph River basin, one (1) individual appointed to represent the municipality that has the largest population of all municipalities that are located in the participating county and within the St. Joseph River basin.

An individual appointed to represent a second class city under item (i) shall be appointed by the board of storm water management (as described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the second class city or, if the second class city has no board of storm water management, by the executive of the second class city. An individual appointed under item (ii) to represent the municipality that has the largest population of all municipalities that are located in the participating county and within the St. Joseph River basin shall be appointed by the board of storm water management (as described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the municipality or, if the municipality has no board of storm water management, by the executive of the municipality.

(4) The director of the department or the director's designee:

(A) shall advise the commission on the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5; and

(B) when the board of the watershed development commission is formed, shall assume the position on the board of the watershed development commission specified



in IC 14-30.5-4-1(a)(2)(A).

(5) The watershed development commission board may not meet until the department has given the approval referred to in this subsection. Upon the convening of the first meeting under IC 14-30.5-4 of the board of the watershed development commission:

(A) the St. Joseph River basin commission ceases to exist as a separate municipal corporation under IC 14-30-6;

(B) the St. Joseph watershed development commission is established as a public body corporate and politic under IC 14-30.5;

(C) the participating counties of the St. Joseph River basin commission become member counties of the St. Joseph watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5; and

(D) each participating county of the St. Joseph River basin commission is authorized to appoint an individual described in subdivision (3)(C) to represent the county on the board of the St. Joseph watershed development commission.

(g) If established under this section, the St. Joseph watershed development commission:

(1) is a continuation of;

(2) retains the property and rights of; and

(3) is responsible for the actions and subject to the liabilities of;

the former St. Joseph River basin commission.

(h) If established under this section, the St. Joseph watershed development commission has all of the powers and duties of a watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5 in the areas of the watershed of the St. Joseph River and the tributaries of the St. Joseph River that are within the boundaries of the member counties of the St. Joseph watershed development commission. For the purposes of IC 14-30.5, the areas of the watershed of the St. Joseph River and the tributaries of the St. Joseph River that are within the boundaries of the member counties of the St. Joseph watershed development commission comprise the designated watershed of the St. Joseph watershed development commission.

(i) If the St. Joseph watershed development commission is established under this section, the board of the St. Joseph watershed development commission shall appoint an executive director under IC 14-30.5-4-2(e). An individual who was the executive director of the St. Joseph River basin commission may be



appointed executive director of the St. Joseph watershed development commission under this subsection.

(j) If the St. Joseph watershed development commission is established under this section, the following apply:

(1) All property, records, and funds of the St. Joseph River basin commission:

(A) become property, records, and funds of the St. Joseph watershed development commission; and

(B) shall be transmitted to the St. Joseph watershed development commission not more than sixty (60) days after the appointment of the executive director under subsection (i).

(2) Any advisory committee appointed under IC 14-30-6-15 is dissolved.

(3) The individuals serving as members of the St. Joseph River basin commission under IC 14-30-6 become the members of the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed development commission. Upon the expiration under IC 14-30-6-5 or other termination of the term of office of an individual described in this subdivision, the office of the individual shall be filled by a successor according to subdivision (4).

(4) As provided in subdivision (3) and IC 14-30.5-4-5(c)(3), upon the termination of the terms of office of all of the individuals who become members of the advisory committee under subdivision (3), the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed development commission shall consist of the following members:

(A) From each participating county the following:

(i) The executive of each second class city that is located in the participating county and within the St. Joseph River basin, or the executive's designee.

(ii) If the county does not have a second class city that is located within the St. Joseph River basin, the executive of the municipality that has the largest population of all municipalities that are located in the participating county and within the St. Joseph River basin, or the executive's designee.

(B) A member of the county executive or the county executive's designee from each participating county.

(C) The county health officer or the health officer's designee from each participating county.



(D) The county surveyor of each participating county or the county surveyor's designee.

(E) A representative of each soil and water conservation district that:

(i) is subject to IC 14-32;

(ii) includes territory in a participating county; and

(iii) includes territory in the St. Joseph River basin.

(F) The director of the St. Joseph watershed development commission or the director's designee.

Sec. 3. (a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Commission" refers to the Upper Wabash River basin commission.

(2) "Participating county" refers to a county that has joined the Upper Wabash River basin commission under IC 14-30-6-4.

(3) "Upper Wabash River basin" means the area located in Adams County, Huntington County, Jay County, or Wells County that is drained by the Wabash River, including the tributaries of the Wabash River.

(b) The commission:

(1) may; but

(2) is not required to;

consider a proposal to transform the commission from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

(c) For the commission to be transformed from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5:

(1) the county executives of all participating counties:

(A) must approve the proposal described in subsection (b); and

(B) must adopt substantively identical ordinances that set forth the information required by IC 14-30.5-2-1(b), including, for the purposes of IC 14-30.5-2-0.5, the designated watershed within which the proposed watershed development commission would exercise its powers; and

(2) a majority of the voting members of the commission must vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission in accordance with the ordinances adopted under subdivision (1)(B) and the



provisions of this section.

(d) For the county executive of a participating county to approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A), at least two (2) of the three (3) members of the county executive must vote in favor of the proposal.

(e) If a member of the county executive of a participating county has designated another individual under IC 14-30-6-6 to perform the member's duties on the commission, the individual designated to perform the member's duties may vote under subsection (c)(2) on the proposal described in subsection (b).

(f) If the county executives of all participating counties approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection (c)(1)(A) and adopt substantively identical ordinances under subsection (c)(1)(B), a majority of the voting members of the commission vote in favor of the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission under subsection (c)(2), and the department approves the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission with the purposes set forth in the ordinances adopted under subsection (c)(1)(B), the following apply:

(1) The commission shall notify the department of the approval of the proposal.

(2) The officers of the commission elected under IC 14-30-6-7 shall take the actions necessary and appropriate to the transformation of the commission from a river basin commission subject to IC 14-30-6 into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5.

(3) The board of the watershed development commission consists of the following:

(A) The director of the department or the director's designee.

(B) The county surveyor of each county participating in the commission.

(C) An individual other than the county surveyor representing each county participating in the commission, appointed by the county executive.

(D) Either:

(i) one (1) individual appointed to represent each second class city that is located in a participating county and within the upper Wabash River basin; or

(ii) if a participating county does not include a second class city that is located within the upper Wabash River



basin, one (1) individual appointed to represent the municipality that has the largest population of all municipalities that are located in the participating county and within the upper Wabash River basin.

An individual appointed to represent a second class city under item (i) shall be appointed by the board of storm water management (as described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the second class city or, if the second class city has no board of storm water management, by the executive of the second class city. An individual appointed under item (ii) to represent the municipality that has the largest population of all municipalities that are located in the participating county and within the upper Wabash River basin shall be appointed by the board of storm water management (as described in IC 8-1.5-5-4) of the municipality or, if the municipality has no board of storm water management, by the executive of the municipality.

- (4) The director of the department or the director's designee:
- (A) shall advise the commission on the transformation of the commission into a watershed development commission subject to IC 14-30.5; and
 - (B) when the board of the watershed development commission is formed, shall assume the position on the board of the watershed development commission specified in IC 14-30.5-4-1(a)(2)(A).
- (5) The watershed development commission board may not meet until the department has given the approval referred to in this subsection. Upon the convening of the first meeting under IC 14-30.5-4 of the board of the watershed development commission:
- (A) the Upper Wabash River basin commission ceases to exist as a separate municipal corporation under IC 14-30-6;
 - (B) the Upper Wabash watershed development commission is established as a public body corporate and politic under IC 14-30.5;
 - (C) the participating counties of the Upper Wabash River basin commission become member counties of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5; and
 - (D) each participating county of the Upper Wabash River basin commission is authorized to appoint an individual



described in subdivision (3)(C) to represent the county on the board of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission.

(g) If established under this section, the Upper Wabash watershed development commission:

- (1) is a continuation of;
- (2) retains the property and rights of; and
- (3) is responsible for the actions and subject to the liabilities of;

the former Upper Wabash River basin commission.

(h) If established under this section, the Upper Wabash watershed development commission has all of the powers and duties of a watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5 in the areas of the watershed of the Wabash River and the tributaries of the Wabash River that are within the boundaries of the member counties of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission. For the purposes of IC 14-30.5, the areas of the watershed of the Wabash River and the tributaries of the Wabash River that are within the boundaries of the member counties of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission comprise the designated watershed of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission.

(i) If the Upper Wabash watershed development commission is established under this section, the board of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission shall appoint an executive director under IC 14-30.5-4-2(e). An individual who was the executive director of the Upper Wabash River basin commission may be appointed executive director of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission under this subsection.

(j) If the Upper Wabash watershed development commission is established under this section, all property, records, and funds of the former Upper Wabash River basin commission:

- (1) become property, records, and funds of the Upper Wabash watershed development commission; and
- (2) shall be transmitted to the Upper Wabash watershed development commission not more than sixty (60) days after the appointment of the executive director under subsection (i).

SECTION 40. IC 14-30.5-2-0.5, AS ADDED BY P.L.251-2023, SECTION 13, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 0.5. (a) Notwithstanding subsection (b), this chapter does not authorize the creation of a watershed development commission if the area in which the watershed development



commission could exercise the powers conferred by this article would include any part of the area in which a river basin commission established ~~under~~ **by IC 14-30-6-2**

- (1) ~~IC 14-30-2;~~
- (2) ~~IC 14-30-3; or~~
- (3) ~~IC 14-30-4;~~

is authorized to exercise its powers.

(b) This section does not prohibit:

- (1) the transformation of the Maumee River basin commission into a watershed development commission under ~~IC 14-30-2-25;~~ **IC 14-30-7-1;**
- (2) the transformation of the St. Joseph River basin commission into a watershed development commission under ~~14-30-3-33;~~ **IC 14-30-7-2;** or
- (3) the transformation of the upper Wabash River basin commission into a watershed development commission under ~~IC 14-30-4-20;~~ **IC 14-30-7-3;**

on the grounds that the watershed development commission resulting from the transformation would be authorized to exercise its powers in all or any part of the area in which the transformed river basin commission was authorized to exercise its powers before the transformation."

Page 18, between lines 2 and 3, begin a new paragraph and insert:

"SECTION 43. IC 14-30.5-4-5, AS ADDED BY P.L.251-2023, SECTION 13, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 5. (a) There is established for each watershed development commission an advisory committee to provide counsel to the board of the commission.

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c), a watershed development commission advisory committee established under this section consists of a member or representative of the board of supervisors of the soil and water conservation district of each county that is a member of the commission, selected by the board of supervisors.

(c) If the St. Joseph watershed development commission is established under ~~IC 14-30-3-33;~~ **IC 14-30-7-2:**

- (1) the individuals serving as members of the St. Joseph River basin commission under ~~IC 14-30-3-8~~ **IC 14-30-6-5** become members of the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed development commission;
- (2) the term of office of an individual who becomes a member of the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed development commission under subdivision (1) is as provided in ~~IC 14-30-3-9;~~



IC 14-30-7-2; and

(3) upon:

(A) the expiration under ~~IC 14-30-3-9~~; **IC 14-30-6-5**; or

(B) the termination under any other circumstances;
of the term of office of an individual described in subdivision (1),
the office of the individual shall be filled by a successor according
to ~~IC 14-30-3-33(i)(4)~~; **IC 14-30-7-2(j)(4)**."

Renumber all SECTIONS consecutively.

and when so amended that said bill do pass.

(Reference is to SB 224 as printed January 27, 2026.)

LINDAUER

Committee Vote: yeas 11, nays 0.

HOUSE MOTION

Mr. Speaker: I move that Engrossed Senate Bill 224 be amended to read as follows:

Page 7, line 36, delete "(navigable waterways)." and insert "**(permanent structures along Lake Michigan only)**".

Page 25, line 8, delete "this chapter" and insert "**IC 14-30-6**".

(Reference is to ESB 224 as printed February 12, 2026.)

LINDAUER

