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SENATE BILL No. 224

Proposed Changes to January 27, 2026 printing by AM022408

DIGEST OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT

River basin commissions. 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.

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
2 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. Except as otherwise
3 provided, the definitions in this article apply throughout this title **and**
4 **312 IAC.**

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

8 (1) For purposes of IC 14-13-9, the meaning set forth in
9 IC 14-13-9-1.

10 (2) For purposes of IC 14-25-1, the meaning set forth in section
11 1.2 of IC 14-25-15-1.

12 (3) For purposes of IC 14-25-17, the meaning set forth in
13 IC 14-25-17-3.

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

16 (5) For purposes of IC 14-30-3, the meaning set forth in
17 IC 14-30-3-1.

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

SECTION 3. 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.

(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.

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

1 SECTION ~~2~~[4]. IC 14-8-2-57 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. Sec. 57. "Corporation", for purposes of IC 14-12-3, has the meaning set forth in IC 14-12-3-1.

1 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.

1 SECTION ~~2~~[6]. IC 14-8-2-107, AS AMENDED BY

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1 P.L.127-2022, SECTION 7, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
2 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 107. "Fund" has the following
3 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) For purposes of IC 14-13-1, the meaning set forth in
19 IC 14-13-1-2.
20 (9) For purposes of IC 14-13-2, the meaning set forth in
21 IC 14-13-2-3.
22 (10) For purposes of IC 14-16-1, the meaning set forth in
23 IC 14-16-1-30.
24 (11) For purposes of IC 14-19-8, the meaning set forth in
25 IC 14-19-8-1.
26 (12) For purposes of IC 14-19-11, the meaning set forth in
27 IC 14-19-11-3-1.
28 (13) For purposes of IC 14-20-11, the meaning set forth in
29 IC 14-20-11-2.
30 (14) For purposes of IC 14-22-3, the meaning set forth in
31 IC 14-22-3-1.
32 (15) For purposes of IC 14-22-4, the meaning set forth in
33 IC 14-22-4-1.
34 (16) For purposes of IC 14-22-5, the meaning set forth in
35 IC 14-22-5-1.
36 (17) For purposes of IC 14-22-8, the meaning set forth in
37 IC 14-22-8-1.
38 (18) For purposes of IC 14-22-34, the meaning set forth in
39 IC 14-22-34-2.
40 (19) For purposes of IC 14-23-3, the meaning set forth in
41 IC 14-23-3-1.
42 (20) For purposes of IC 14-25-2-4, the meaning set forth in

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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

17 in 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.

[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.]

30 1 SECTION ~~44~~8. IC 14-8-2-170 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE
31 JULY 1, 2026]. See. 170. "Municipal corporation", for purposes of
32 IC 14-12-3, 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 FOLLOWING [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 198. "Participating
35 county" has the following meaning:

35 county, has the following meaning:

36 (1) For purposes of ~~IC 14-30-2~~ **IC 14-30-6**, the meaning set

36 (1) For purposes of IC 14-30-2, IC 14-30-3, the meaning set
37 forth 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 IE 14-30-3-3, IC 14-30-7-1.
40 (3) For purposes of IE 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



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.

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

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

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

[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.

1 SECTION ~~↔~~[15]. 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

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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
 16 CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 17 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 9. (a) A person who wishes to
 18 obtain judicial review of a final agency action under this title must
 19 serve copies of a 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
 25 served upon the department or state historic
 26 preservation review board, as applicable, to the address
 27 published on the 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
 30 petition required under IC 4-21.5-5-8(a)(4) must be
 31 served upon the Indiana board of licensure for
 32 professional geologists at the address published on the
 33 website of the state geologist.

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

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

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(1) The department.

(2) The state geologist.

(3) The office of the state chemist.

SECTION ~~18~~¹⁸, IC 14-11-2-1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.246-2005, SECTION 116, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. (a) The department may adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 for the conduct of the following:

(1) Department meetings.

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

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

(1) Programs of the department or the commission.

(2) Facilities owned or operated by the department or the commission or a lessee of the department or commission.

(3) Licenses issued by the commission, the department, or the director.

(4) Inspections or other similar services under this title performed by the department or an assistant or employee of the department.

(c) The director shall:

(1) adopt provisional rules under IC 4-22-2-37.1;

(2) adopt interim rules under JC 4-22-2-37.2; and

(3) approve for preliminary adoption rules for readoption under IC 4-22-2.6 that do not contain changes to the rules.

SECTION 1 ~~↔~~ [9]. IC 14-11-2-2 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. A person who violates a rule adopted under this chapter commits a Class C infraction, unless otherwise specified by law.

SECTION ~~20~~²⁰, IC 14-11-4-1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.89-2016, SECTION 4, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. This chapter applies to applications for licenses under the following:

(1) IC 14-26-2 (lake preservation).

(2) IC 14-26-5 (dams). (lowering of Ten Acre Lake).

(3) IC 14-27 (levees, dams, and drainage).

(3) (4) \leftrightarrow IJC 14-28-1 (flood control).

(5) IC 14-29-1 (navigable waterways)

(4) (6) ~~L~~IIC 14-29-3 (removal of substances from streams): (sand and gravel permits)

(sand and gravel permits).

SECTION ~~22~~ [21] JC 14-12-3 IS REPEALED [E]

SECTION 12/21. IC 14-12-5 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE

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1 JULY 1, 2026]. (Hometown Indiana Grant Program).

2 [SECTION 22. IC 14-13-6-20, AS AMENDED BY P.L.118-2009,

3 SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE

4 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 20. The commission may use the Wabash River

5 heritage corridor commission fund to pay:

6 (1) reimbursement of the expenses of members under section 13

7 of this chapter;

8 (2) other administrative costs and expenses reasonably incurred

9 under this chapter, including expenses for publications and

10 postage; and

11 (3) costs incurred in fulfilling the directives of the Wabash River

12 heritage corridor commission master plan, including multicounty

13 projects and marketing and educational tools such as video tape

14 productions, signs, and promotional literature.

15 However, the commission may not use money in the fund for the upper

16 Wabash River basin commission established by IC 14-30-4-6.

17 **IC 14-30-6.**

18 **SECTION 23. IC 14-13-6-23, AS ADDED BY P.L.69-2009,**

19 **SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE**

20 **JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 23. (a) The Wabash River heritage corridor fund**

21 **is established for the purpose of:**

22 (1) providing grants to aid the sustainable development of

23 property under the Wabash River heritage corridor commission

24 master plan and purposes of the commission; and

25 (2) paying costs incurred in fulfilling the directives of the

26 Wabash River heritage corridor commission master plan,

27 including multicounty projects.

28 However, the commission may not use money in the fund for the upper

29 Wabash River basin commission established by IC 14-30-4-6.

30 **IC 14-30-6.**

31 (b) The fund shall be administered by the director under the

32 direction of the commission.

33 (c) The expenses of administering the fund shall be paid from

34 money in the fund.

35 (d) The fund consists of the following:

36 (1) Appropriations made by the general assembly.

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

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

39 (4) Money donated to the fund.

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

41 (e) The treasurer of state shall invest the money in the fund not

42 currently needed to meet the obligations of the fund in the same

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1 manner as other public funds may be invested. Interest that accrues
 2 from these investments shall be deposited in the fund.

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

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

7 1 SECTION ~~13~~²⁴ IC 14-15-3-19 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
 8 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 19. Provisions of this
 9 chapter concerning the operation of boats or motorboats apply as
 10 follows:

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

14 (2) To each object and person.

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

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

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

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

32 (1) Injury to or death of a person. or

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

35 shall provide the information required under subsection (b):

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

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

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

42 (1) Give notice of the accident to:

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- (A) the office of the sheriff of the county;
- (B) the nearest state police post; or
- (C) the central dispatch center for the law enforcement division of the department;

immediately and by the quickest means of communication.

(2) Mail to the department a written report of the accident or collision within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident or collision.

SECTION ~~16~~[27]. IC 14-16-1-24 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 24. (a) The operator of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in serious bodily injury to or death of an individual or property damage in an estimated amount of at least **seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500)** shall immediately, by the quickest means of communication, notify at least one (1) of the following:

(1) A state police officer or conservation officer.

(2) The sheriff's office of the county where the accident occurred

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

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

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

(2) Forward the report to the director.

SECTION ~~27~~[28]. IC 14-21-1-25.1 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 25.1. An application for approval of a development plan under section 26.5 of this chapter must be filed with the division and include the following:

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

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

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

(C) The location of the project by sea

(C) The location of the project by section, township, range, county, and address.
(D) Information regarding any prior disturbance to the area

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

Mapping to show the location of the burial

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

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1 following:

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

4 (B) References to nearby landmarks.

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

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

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

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

14 (C) Historical information and documentation.

15 (D) Precise boundaries that reference nearby
 16 landmarks. If documentation is not available to identify
 17 the burial ground or cemetery boundaries, the applicant
 18 may be required to determine those boundaries through
 19 the following:

20 (i) Remote sensing.

21 (ii) Investigations by archeologists.

22 (iii) Another scientific method approved by the
 23 division.

24 (E) The physical condition of the burial ground or
 25 cemetery.

26 (4) A description of the grounds adjacent to and within one
 27 hundred (100) feet of the burial ground or cemetery,
 28 including the following:

29 (A) The nature, depth, and degree of previous
 30 disturbances, including those caused by:

31 (i) construction;

32 (ii) excavation;

33 (iii) grading; or

34 (iv) filling.

35 (B) A description of soil, by type, present at the site,
 36 including an explanation of how the soil would be:

37 (i) disturbed;

38 (ii) graded;

39 (iii) modified;

40 (iv) removed; or

41 (v) otherwise treated.

42 (C) A description of each structure.



(D) A description of the activities anticipated to:

- (i) erect;
- (ii) alter; or
- (iii) repair;

a structure.

(E) Each area that may contain new construction in connection with the proposed construction areas.

(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 ~~48~~²⁹ [29]. IC 14-21-1-25.5 IS REPEALED [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. See: 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:

(f) 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 ~~49~~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 fur-bearing animal from;

(B) remove a furbearing animal from;

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

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

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

6 (B) remove a furbearing animal from;

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

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

13 SECTION ~~20~~³¹. IC 14-22-10-2, AS AMENDED BY
 14 P.L.113-2019, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 15 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) As used in this section and
 16 section 2.5 of this chapter, "governmental entity" means any of the
 17 following:

18 (1) The government of the United States of America.

19 (2) The state.

20 (3) A county.

21 (4) A city.

22 (5) A town.

23 (6) A township.

24 (7) The following, if created by the Constitution of the United
 25 States, the Constitution of the State of Indiana, a statute, an
 26 ordinance, a rule, or an order:

27 (A) An agency.

28 (B) A board.

29 (C) A commission.

30 (D) A committee.

31 (E) A council.

32 (F) A department.

33 (G) A district.

34 (H) A public body corporate and politic.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION ~~21~~ [32]. IC 14-22-10-2.5 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2.5. (a) A person who goes upon or through the premises, including caves, of another:

(1) with or without permission; and

(2) either:

(A) without the payment of monetary consideration; or

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

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

(b) The owner of the premises does not:

(1) assume responsibility; or

(2) incur liability;

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

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

(1) Business invitees in commercial establishments.

(2) The attractive nuisance doctrine.

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

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

SECTION ~~22~~[33]. IC 14-22-15.5-7 IS REPEALED
[EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]. See. 7. An individual who acts as a
hunting guide without a hunting guide license in violation of section 2
of this chapter commits a Class B infraction.

SECTION ~~23~~[34]. IC 14-23-6.6-7, AS ADDED BY P.L.124-2025, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 7. (a) Subject to subsection (b), a certified prescribed burn manager who conducts the prescribed burning in accordance with section 6 of this chapter is immune from civil liability for harm caused by the:

(1) prescribed burn; or

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(2) smoke produced by the prescribed burn.

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

(1) negligence; or

(2) willful and wanton misconduct.

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

(1) prescribed burn; or

(2) smoke produced by the prescribed burn.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION ~~24. IC 14-30-3-16 IS AMENDED~~ [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]: ~~See. 16. (a) The commission, in coordination with the department, shall keep a record~~]

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;

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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 ~~adopt rules for the transaction of business:~~

~~SECTION 25~~ []

(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

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1 the member's duties as provided in the state travel policies and
 2 procedures established by the Indiana department of
 3 administration and approved by the budget agency. Money paid
 4 under subdivision (1) may only be paid from money available to
 5 the commission at the time of reimbursement.

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

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

11 (b) The following may call a meeting:

12 (1) The chairperson.

13 (2) The executive director.

14 (3) A quorum of the commission's members.

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

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

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

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

21 (2) Employ staff.

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

24 (4) Exercise the powers of a political subdivision specified in
 25 a cooperative agreement described in section 12 of this
 26 chapter.

27 (5) Provide a forum for the discussion, study, and evaluation
 28 of water resource issues of common concern in the river
 29 basin.

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

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

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

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

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



1 private agencies.

2 (11) When requested, act as a coordinating agency for

3 programs and activities of other public and private agencies

4 that are related to the commission's objectives.

5 (12) Invite government officials of other states within the

6 river basin to:

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

8 (B) advise the commission upon the commission's

9 request.

10 (b) A commission may not exercise any of the powers

11 described in subsection (a) within a nature preserve (as defined in

12 IC 14-31-1).

13 (c) This section does not exempt the commission from any

14 other statute.

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

16 (1) Keep a record of the commission's resolutions,

17 transactions, and findings. A record under this subdivision

18 is a public record.

19 (2) Make an annual report of the commission's activities to

20 the executive of each participating county. The commission

21 shall upon request make an annual report to the following:

22 (A) The governor.

23 (B) Any member of the general assembly.

24 (3) Prepare and adopt an annual budget.

25 (4) Submit the budget described in subdivision (3) to the

26 executive of each participating county and, upon request,

27 make the budget available to each agency appropriating

28 money to the commission.

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

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

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

32 entity in another state.

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

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

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

36 business days before the meeting at which the cooperative

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

38 (c) Before a commission may vote on the cooperative

39 agreement under this section, the cooperative agreement must be

40 approved by the department.

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

42 or more of the following:

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1 (1) Require that increased water runoff resulting from new
 2 construction be impounded on the construction site.

3 (2) Permit the requirement of onsite water impoundment
 4 under subdivision (1) to be waived upon payment of a
 5 reasonable fee by the developer of the new construction.

6 (3) Restrict construction within the one hundred (100) year
 7 flood plains of the river basin.

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

10 (1) The chairperson of the commission.

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

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

16 (1) Recommend agenda items and activities to the
 17 commission.

18 (2) Conduct hearings on proposed commission projects.

19 (3) Perform other administrative duties assigned by the
 20 commission.

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

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

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

27 (1) a commission's; or

28 (2) an executive board's;

29 meeting by electronic communication.

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

32 (1) Federal, state, and local governments.

33 (2) Individuals, foundations, and other organizations.

34 However, a commission is not eligible for funding through the
 35 Wabash River heritage corridor commission established by
 36 IC 14-13-6-6.

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

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

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1 under this chapter.

2 (b) The appropriation from the participating county that is

3 needed for all or part of the commission's budget must be either:

4 (1) apportioned among the participating counties in direct

5 relationship to the amount of land area in each participating

6 county certified under section 2 of this chapter; or

7 (2) divided equally among the participating counties.

8 (c) The appropriation that is needed under subsection (b) shall

9 be presented to the county executive at the same time that budgets

10 are presented by county officers.

11 Sec. 19. (a) The commission shall make expenditures only as

12 budgeted. However, the commission may revise the budget at any

13 time to authorize unbudgeted expenditures.

14 (b) Any appropriated amounts remaining unexpended or

15 unencumbered at the end of the fiscal year become part of a

16 nonreverting cumulative fund to be held in the name of the

17 commission. The commission may authorize unbudgeted

18 expenditures from this fund.

19 (c) The commission is responsible for the safekeeping and

20 deposit of money the commission receives under this chapter. The

21 state board of accounts shall:

22 (1) prescribe the methods and forms for keeping; and

23 (2) periodically audit;

24 the accounts, records, and books of the commission.

25 (d) The treasurer of the commission may receive, disburse, and

26 handle money belonging to the commission, subject to the

27 following:

28 (1) Applicable statutes.

29 (2) Procedures established by the commission.

30 Sec. 20. (a) For the purposes of this chapter, the commission

31 may do the following:

32 (1) Acquire by grant, gift, purchase, or devise, and dispose

33 of, conservation easements under IC 32-23-5 in land:

34 (A) within; or

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

36 the one hundred (100) year flood plains and the wetlands in

37 the basin.

38 (2) Acquire, by grant, gift, purchase, or devise,

39 improvements:

40 (A) within; or

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

42 the one hundred (100) year flood plains of the basin for the

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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

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(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, recreation, water infrastructure, 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

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(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 natural resources commission 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 natural resources commission and 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

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(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 natural resources commission 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:

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

4 the former Maumee River basin commission.

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

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

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

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

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

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

42 (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 natural resources commission 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 natural resources

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1 commission and the department of the approval of the
 2 proposal.

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

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

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

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

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

17 (D) Either:

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

13 (A) the St. Joseph River basin commission ceases to exist
 14 as a separate municipal corporation under IC 14-30-6;
 15 (B) the St. Joseph watershed development commission
 16 is established as a public body corporate and politic
 17 under IC 14-30.5;

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

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

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

29 (1) is a continuation of;

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

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

33 the former St. Joseph River basin commission.

34 (h) If established under this section, the St. Joseph watershed
 35 development commission has all of the powers and duties of a
 36 watershed development commission under IC 14-30.5 in the areas
 37 of the watershed of the St. Joseph River and the tributaries of the
 38 St. Joseph River that are within the boundaries of the member
 39 counties of the St. Joseph watershed development commission. For
 40 the purposes of IC 14-30.5, the areas of the watershed of the St.
 41 Joseph River and the tributaries of the St. Joseph River that are
 42 within the boundaries of the member counties of the St. Joseph



1 watershed development commission comprise the designated
 2 watershed of the St. Joseph watershed development commission.

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

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

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

14 (A) become property, records, and funds of the St.
 15 Joseph watershed development commission; and
 16 (B) shall be transmitted to the St. Joseph watershed
 17 development commission not more than sixty (60) days
 18 after the appointment of the executive director under
 19 subsection (i).

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

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

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

36 (A) From each participating county the following:

37 (i) The executive of each second class city that is
 38 located in the participating county and within the
 39 St. Joseph River basin, or the executive's designee.
 40 (ii) If the county does not have a second class city
 41 that is located within the St. Joseph River basin, the
 42 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 sub

(ii) includes territory in a

(iii) includes territory in a participating country; 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) "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.

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

(b) The commission:

(1) may; but

Section 11(2)(b)

17.13.10.4 Required for
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



1 designated watershed within which the proposed
 2 watershed development commission would exercise its
 3 powers; and

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

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

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

18 (f) If the county executives of all participating counties
 19 approve a proposal described in subsection (b) under subsection
 20 (c)(1)(A) and adopt substantively identical ordinances under
 21 subsection (c)(1)(B), a majority of the voting members of the
 22 commission vote in favor of the transformation of the commission
 23 into a watershed development commission under subsection (c)(2),
 24 and the natural resources commission approves the transformation
 25 of the commission into a watershed development commission with
 26 the purposes set forth in the ordinances adopted under subsection
 27 (c)(1)(B), the following apply:

28 (1) The commission shall notify the natural resources
 29 commission and the department of the approval of the
 30 proposal.

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

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

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

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

42 (C) An individual other than the county surveyor



1 representing each county participating in the
 2 commission, appointed by the county executive.

3 (D) Either:

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

8 (ii) if a participating county does not include a
 9 second class city that is located within the upper
 10 Wabash River basin, one (1) individual appointed to
 11 represent the municipality that has the largest
 12 population of all municipalities that are located in
 13 the participating county and within the upper
 14 Wabash River basin.

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

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
 32 commission 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
 36 specified in IC 14-30.5-4-1(a)(2)(A).

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

42 (A) the Upper Wabash River basin commission ceases to



1 exist as a separate municipal corporation under
 2 IC 14-30-6;

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

6 (C) the participating counties of the Upper Wabash
 7 River basin commission become member counties of the
 8 Upper Wabash watershed development commission
 9 under IC 14-30.5; and

10 (D) each participating county of the Upper Wabash
 11 River basin commission is authorized to appoint an
 12 individual described in subdivision (3)(C) to represent
 13 the county on the board of the Upper Wabash watershed
 14 development commission.

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

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

21 the former Upper Wabash River basin commission.

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

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

41 (j) If the Upper Wabash watershed development commission
 42 is established under this section, all property, records, and funds



1 of the former Upper Wabash River basin commission:

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

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

16 (1) IC 14-30-2;
 17 (2) IC 14-30-3; or
 18 (3) IC 14-30-4;

19 is authorized to exercise its powers.

20 (b) This section does not prohibit:

21 (1) the transformation of the Maumee River basin commission
 22 into a watershed development commission under IC 14-30-2-25;
 23 IC 14-30-7-1;
 24 (2) the transformation of the St. Joseph River basin commission
 25 into a watershed development commission under IC 14-30-3-33;
 26 IC 14-30-7-2; or
 27 (3) the transformation of the upper Wabash River basin
 28 commission into a watershed development commission under
 29 IC 14-30-4-20; IC 14-30-7-3;

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

35 SECTION 41]. IC 14-30.5-2-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.92-2025,
 36 SECTION 50, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 37 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) If one (1) county executive submits an
 38 ordinance and a written request for recognition of a proposed
 39 watershed development commission under section 1(c) of this chapter,
 40 the natural resources commission shall decide under subsections (c)
 41 through (e) whether to recognize the proposed commission.

42 (b) If the county executives of two (2) or more counties submit

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1 ordinances and written requests under section 1(c) of this chapter for
 2 recognition of a single proposed watershed development commission
 3 empowered to act in a single designated watershed that includes areas
 4 within both or all of the counties:

5 (1) the natural resources commission may not decide whether to
 6 recognize the proposed commission unless the provisions of the
 7 ordinances submitted under section 1(c)(1) of this chapter are
 8 essentially identical in:

9 (A) identifying the designated watershed; and

10 (B) stating the purposes of the proposed commission; and
 11 (2) if the natural resources commission determines that the
 12 requirement set forth in subdivision (1) is met, the natural
 13 resources commission shall decide under subsections (c) through
 14 (e) whether to recognize the proposed commission.

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

23 (1) address the natural resources commission; and

24 (2) provide written comments;

25 on whether the proposed commission should be established. The
 26 **division of water, on behalf of the** natural resources commission, may
 27 convene the meeting, record the testimony given, and receive the
 28 written comments provided.

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

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

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

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

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

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1 may be established?

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

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

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

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

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

36 (f) If:

37 (1) one (1) county's executive submits an ordinance and a
 38 request for recognition of a proposed commission under section
 39 1(c) of this chapter; and

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

42 the natural resources commission shall issue an order recognizing the

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1 watershed development commission and recognizing the county
 2 referred to in subdivision (1) as a member of the watershed
 3 development commission.

4 (g) If:

5 (1) executives of two (2) or more counties submit ordinances and
 6 requests for recognition of a proposed watershed development
 7 commission under section 1(c) of this chapter; and
 8 (2) the natural resources commission answers all of the questions
 9 set forth in subsection (e) favorably with respect to at least one
 10 (1) of the counties;

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

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

19 (1) inform the executive of the county in writing of its decision;
 20 and
 21 (2) specify in the writing the reason or reasons for each
 22 unfavorable answer.

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

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

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

39 SECTION ~~26~~⁴²[42]. IC 14-30.5-2-6, AS AMENDED BY
 40 P.L.92-2025, SECTION 51, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 41 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 6. (a) A county to which section 4
 42 or 5 of this chapter applies may not become a member of an existing

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1 watershed development commission unless:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 (2) Is it reasonable to expect that the county's flood damage
 37 reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or
 38 water infrastructure needs, as stated under section 4(b)(3) or
 39 5(b)(3) of this chapter, would be addressed more effectively if
 40 the county were a member of the existing commission than those
 41 needs have previously been addressed?

42 (3) Would the county's membership in the existing commission

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1 diminish the effectiveness of the existing watershed
 2 development commission in addressing the flood damage
 3 reduction, drainage, storm water management, recreation, or
 4 water infrastructure needs of other member counties?

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

8 (5) Has a regional watershed study or watershed management
 9 plan been conducted in consultation with Indiana finance
 10 authority and the department of natural resources that assesses
 11 water use, water quality, drinking water systems, wastewater
 12 management systems, storm water management, flood control,
 13 drainage management, recreational uses, natural resources, and
 14 water infrastructure needs of the watershed of the proposed
 15 commission? If so, can the establishment of the proposed
 16 commission be expected to address the needs identified in that
 17 study or management plan?

18 (e) If the natural resources commission answers all of the
 19 questions set forth in subsection (d) favorably, the natural resources
 20 commission shall issue an order recognizing the membership of the
 21 county in the existing commission.

22 (f) If the natural resources commission does not answer all of the
 23 questions set forth in subsection (d) favorably, the natural resources
 24 commission shall inform the executive of the county to which section
 25 4 or 5 of this chapter applies in writing of its decision and specify in the
 26 writing the reason or reasons for each unfavorable answer.

27 (g) An action of the natural resources commission under this
 28 section declining to recognize a county as a member of an established
 29 watershed development commission does not preclude the later
 30 submission of another ordinance under section 4 or 5 of this chapter
 31 seeking membership for the county in an existing commission.

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

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

42 (c) If the St. Joseph watershed development commission is

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1 established under IC 14-30-3-33; IC 14-30-7-2;

2 (1) the individuals serving as members of the St. Joseph River

3 basin commission under IC 14-30-3-8 IC 14-30-6-5 become

4 members of the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed

5 development commission;

6 (2) the term of office of an individual who becomes a member of

7 the advisory committee of the St. Joseph watershed development

8 commission under subdivision (1) is as provided in

9 IC 14-30-3-9; IC 14-30-7-2; and

10 (3) upon:

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

12 (B) the termination under any other circumstances;

13 of the term of office of an individual described in subdivision

14 (1), the office of the individual shall be filled by a successor

15 according to IC 14-30-3-33(i)(4). IC 14-30-7-2(j)(4).

16 1 SECTION ~~27~~[44]. IC 14-33-2-19 IS AMENDED TO READ AS

17 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 19. (a) In determining

18 the facts, the **division of water, on behalf of the** commission, shall **do**

19 **the following:**

20 (1) Hold hearings at which the **commission division of water**

21 shall give any interested person the right to be heard.

22 (2) At the request of an interested person, **the commission shall**

23 hold hearings at the county seat of a county containing land in

24 the proposed district.

25 (3) **The commission shall** Choose the county seat.

26 (b) The **commission division of water** shall give notice of the

27 hearings by publication at least one (1) time in one (1) newspaper of

28 general circulation in each county containing land in the proposed

29 district.

30 SECTION ~~28~~[45]. IC 14-33-2-22 IS AMENDED TO READ AS

31 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 22. The commission,

32 **in coordination with the department,** shall make a report of the

33 commission's findings to the court, including findings on the territorial

34 limits of the proposed district. The commission shall make this report

35 within one hundred twenty (120) days after the petition is referred to

36 the commission, unless the commission requests and receives approval

37 from the court for additional periods of thirty (30) days each.

38 1



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