Help Preserve Wetlands.

Ask Governor Holcomb to veto SEA 229.

Mar 13, 2020

SEA 229 will lead to loss of wetlands. Wetlands are important because they purify water, absorb excess water, and provide critical habitat for many species.

**Background:** In the 1800's, Indiana's wetlands were drained to make way for farms and towns. Only 10 – 15% of the original wetlands are left. In 2003, the legislature recognized the value of preserving the remaining wetlands and wrote the Indiana Isolated Wetlands Law. SEA 229 creates a major new exemption to the Isolated Wetlands Law for reconstruction of regulated drains.

What does “reconstruction” mean? In the Drainage Code ‘reconstruction’ includes enlarging drains or “making any major change”. It is extensive work that could damage wetlands.

**How is SEA 229 a problem?**

- It opens a broad exemption that will hurt our remaining wetlands.
- It contains a key provision which is subjective and undefined (reconstruction is exempt if it does not “substantially change the characteristics of the drain”).
- It creates regulatory confusion with federally protected wetlands.

**Does the current law allow for drain reconstruction?** The Wetlands Law in its current form does not stop reconstruction of drains. It just has a permit process to ensure that wetlands are preserved to the maximum extent possible and replaced when they can't be preserved.

**Take Action:** Email Governor Holcomb at GovHolcomb@gov.in.gov and ask him to please protect Indiana’s remaining wetlands and veto SEA 229.