



3951 N. Meridian St., Ste. 100
Indianapolis, IN 46208
P. 317-685-8800
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Feb 1, 2024
Honorable Eric Holcomb
Governor
State of Indiana
Statehouse
Indianapolis, IN 46204
RE: Protections for Indiana's wetlands

To the Honorable Governor Eric Holcomb:

Hoosiers are faced with uncertainty about our water supply. The Indiana Economic Development Corporation has stated that it is necessary to pipe up to 100 million gallons per day to the Boone County LEAP development to support new advanced manufacturing **AND** to meet a projected future water shortage for Central Indiana. In response to concerns about this potential massive water withdrawal from the Wabash River watershed and its transfer to the White River watershed, you have ordered the Indiana Finance Authority to perform a comprehensive study of Indiana's water supply. We commend you for this step.

Indiana's wetlands, which can store up to 1.5 million gallons of water per acre, are directly connected to our aquifers. Indiana's aquifers are directly connected to our water supply. **Now is not the time to allow further erosion of wetland protection in our state!** Unfortunately, the Indiana General Assembly is barreling ahead with HB 1383 which will allow class III wetlands, our state's most protected wetlands, to be reclassified as class II, thereby reducing protection and required wetland mitigation. As stated by the Indiana Wetland Taskforce, Indiana cannot afford to lose more of our valuable wetlands.

Please join thousands of Hoosiers in demanding current wetland protections are not weakened and state clearly to your colleagues in the Indiana General Assembly to vote no on HB 1383 as it is currently written!

Wetlands are a critical component of our water supply. They provide services of water purification, flood reduction, erosion control, and habitat for 50% of Indiana's rare and endangered species. We must protect Indiana's wetlands that have not already been destroyed. Please speak forcefully and persistently to Indiana lawmakers and let them know that during a time when the Indiana Finance Authority is performing a comprehensive water study, a moratorium on legislation reducing wetland protection must be upheld and that wetlands need to be considered as part of a comprehensive water management plan.

Again, we ask you to please make your voice known that the Indiana General Assembly should vote no on HB 1383.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam Carpenter".

Sam Carpenter
Executive Director,
Hoosier Environmental Council