

# Indiana Conservation Alliance

A unified voice advocating for public funding for land, water, and wildlife conservation

**Purpose:** A broad coalition of members work together as the Indiana Conservation Alliance to promote greater awareness of and investment in nature. This is accomplished through coordinated efforts to identify and address programmatic needs and funding opportunities across the range of possible sources, both public and private.



## President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust

When Indiana invests in nature, Hoosiers do too. The Harrison Trust is a public fund to leverage private investment for land conservation. Since its inception in 1992 as the Indiana Heritage Trust, it has spent with its partners \$68.3 million to conserve 440 sites across Indiana and protect nearly 73,000 acres. Proceeds from the sale of a specialty license plate provides the bulk of funds, about \$39 million since its inception in 1992. The General Assembly has appropriated additional funds in the past but has not appropriated a meaningful amount since 2009. A companion program created to celebrate Indiana's bicentennial set aside \$20 million from the state that resulted in \$46.2 million from private sources. That effort touched down as 180 projects in 66 counties that conserved about 9,500 acres. When Indiana invests in nature, Hoosiers do, too, and everyone benefits.

## State Wildlife Action Plan

Three billion fewer birds fill the skies of North America today than in 1970. Meadowlarks, finches, juncos, wood warblers, sparrows, swallows and blackbirds are all in decline. Waterfowl numbers increased significantly at the same time, thanks to decades of funding restoration and protection of wetlands. Similarly eastern whip-poor-wills and bobwhite quail, whose whistled calls are familiar to so many of us, and threatened game birds like ruffed grouse and woodcock could rebound if the Indiana Wildlife Action Plan gets funding to restore critical habitat for Indiana birds. Plus, all Indiana wildlife will benefit. Recovering America's Wildlife Act, pending in the U.S. House, will provide up to \$16 million per year to Indiana if DNR can fund the required \$4 million match. Saving songbirds and gamebirds for our children and their children to experience and enjoy are just two examples of Indiana wildlife that deserve funding now.

## Indiana DNR

The Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources owns and manages hundreds of outdoor properties—state parks, recreation areas, forests, nature preserves, and fish and wildlife areas. Since their inception we have been recognized nationally for the outdoor recreation opportunities they offer, but in recent years we have allowed them to deteriorate. Efforts are now underway to make up for that neglect. Indiana needs to not only continue these efforts, but also modernize the facilities to serve the next generation of Hoosiers. In addition to upgrading facilities, the state must also invest in DNR staff to retain, recruit and fairly compensate the professionals responsible for protecting our natural resources. As our society becomes increasingly urbanized, and separated from nature, it will become even more important to protect remaining natural areas and provide outdoor recreational opportunities.



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# Indiana Conservation Alliance (INCA) has a Long Term Goal: Creating New Dedicated Funding for Conservation and Outdoor Recreation in Indiana

## And INCA has a Short Term Goal:

In the absence of new dedicated revenue, INCA asks for at least an additional \$50M from the General Fund to be included in the state budget every year.



**\$20M**

to DNR for grants to local parks and trails



**\$5M**

for Harrison Trust for conservation of natural areas



**\$4M**

for Wildlife Action Plan for habitat



**\$16M**

additional for DNR property rehabilitation



**\$5M**

for Clean Water Indiana for local soil and water conservation

That is just \$50M annually or **one third of 1%** of the Indiana State Budget.

The Recovery Strategy for Indiana must include funding outdoor infrastructure.

Investing in Access to Outdoor Recreation, Parks, Trails and Conservation positions Indiana communities to be more competitive for the next decade.

The Pandemic makes it obvious that Expanding Outdoor Recreation in Indiana is an essential requirement for physical, mental and social health in every Hoosier community in 2020 and beyond.



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