

President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust Project Commission

The Garrison
Ball Room
6002 N. Post Road
Indianapolis, Indiana 46216

March 10, 2026
11:00 A.M.

PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Comments by Chair
2. Review and Approval of the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust (PBHCT) Project Commission Minutes for the meeting held December 9, 2025
3. Environmental License Plate Sales – Mark Becker, PBHCT Executive Director
4. PBHCT Financial Report – Mark Becker
5. Land Acquisition Report – Mark Becker
6. State Fair T-Shirts – Mark Becker
7. Next Meeting
8. Adjournment

Appointed Officer Information:

Name	Term End Date	Appointing Authority
Amanda Wuestefeld	*	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(1)
John Seifert	*	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(2)
Ron Hellmich	*	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(3)
Brandt Baughman	*	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(4)
Cathy Ferree	*	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(5)
Missi Bush-Sawtelle	*	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(6)
Kristopher Krouse	June 30, 2029	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(7)(i)
C. Sam Bond	June 30, 2029	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(7)(iii)
Kade Carter	June 30, 2029	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(7)(iii)
Gene Hopkins	December 31, 2029	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(7)(iv)
Emily Kress	December 31, 2029	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(7)(v)
Mary McConnell	June 30, 2029	IC 14-12-2-14(b)(7)(v)
Rep. Mike Karickhoff **		IC 14-12-2-14(b)(8)(A)
Rep. Ryan Dvorak **		IC 14-12-2-14(b)(8)(B)
Sen. Greg Taylor **		IC 14-12-2-14(b)(8)(C)
Sen. Justin Busch **		IC 14-12-2-14(b)(8)(D)

* No term start or end date, as the commission appointment is based on the job title and does not have a specific term

** Non-voting member

President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust Project Commission

**Fort Harrison State Park Inn
Roosevelt Room
5830 N. Post Road
Indianapolis, Indiana 46216**

Minutes of December 9, 2025

1) Call to Order

Emily Kress, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order of the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust (PBHCT) Project Commission at approximately 11:00 a.m., EST, on December 9, 2025, at the Fort Harrison State Park Inn, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Mark Becker, DNR Director of Land Acquisition, welcomed new board member Kade Carter. Mr. Carter was appointed by Governor Braun to represent the southeast region of the state pursuant to IC 14-12-2-14(b)(7)(iii).

2) Review and Approval of the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust Project Commission Meeting Minutes for September 9, 2025

Kris Krouse moved to approve the minutes. Ron Hellmich seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, the motion carried.

3) Environmental License Plate Sales and Financial Report

Becker presented a chart with ten years of Environmental license plate sales data. It is unclear what effect the new BMV “black plate” may have on Environmental license plate sales. The \$40 fee for the Environmental license plate (\$25 to PBHCT, \$15 to BMV) has not changed since the plate was introduced in 1992.

Becker presented the financial report including fund balances for each PBHCT account. There is no general fund appropriation for PBHCT in the current budget. The Commission discussed how DNR might better utilize the Stewardship Fund.

5) Land Acquisition Report

Becker indicated that the Division of Land Acquisition had opened 100 new files for CY2025 year to date. Files completed calendar year to date:

Fee Simple	21	936 acres
Conservation Easements	16	1,900 acres
Easements	18	(utility, ingress/egress, etc.)
Other	5	(environmental restrictive covenants, etc.)
Total	60	

Calendar year to date: Seventeen PBHCT projects completed = 1,040 acres

During the period August 1 – October 31 (since last meeting): Seven PBHCT closings:

#1602: Lake County Parks and Recreation Board – Lake Hills County Park

On August 7, DNR completed the acquisition of a Conservation Easement over the Harvest Ridge Church tract covering 10 acres for \$44,750.

#1576: DNR Division of Forestry – Harrison-Crawford State Forest

On August 19, DNR completed the fee simple acquisition of the 10-acre Daily tract in Harrison County for \$15,610.

#1598: DNR Division of Forestry – Harrison-Crawford State Forest

On September 2, DNR completed the fee simple acquisition of the 10-acre Fillbach tract in Harrison County for \$12,600.

#1584 Whitewater Valley Land Trust – Whitewater Valley Conservation Area

On September 10, DNR completed the acquisition of a Conservation Easement covering two tracts for a total of 147.908 acres in Wayne County for \$287,463.

#1599 DNR Division of Fish, Wildlife & Nature Preserves – Virginia Willow Sinkhole Swamp Nature Preserve

On September 16, DNR completed the fee simple acquisition of the 118-acre Ems tract in Harrison County for \$725,000.

#1600 DNR Division of Fish, Wildlife & Nature Preserves – Virginia Willow Sinkhole Swamp Nature Preserve

On September 22, DNR completed the fee simple acquisition of a 40-acre tract from the Sam Shine Foundation in Harrison County for \$119,255.

#1596 DNR Division of Forestry – Morgan-Monroe State Forest

On October 31, DNR completed the fee simple acquisition of the 2.5-acre Stapp & Ashby tract in Morgan County for \$19,195.44.

6) Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on March 10, 2025, 11:00 a.m., at The Garrison Ball Room.

7) Meeting adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:45 a.m.

Commission Members in Attendance:

**Emily Kress
Missi Bush-Sawtelle
Mary McConnell
Kade Carter
Kris Krouse
Ron Hellmich, Nature Preserves**

Zack Smith, Forestry proxy
Mike Linderman, State Museum proxy
Anthony Sipes, State Parks proxy
Chad Whitis, Fish & Wildlife proxy
Betsy Yankowiak (call in)
Sam Bond (call in)
Rep. Mike Karickhoff (call in)

Other Attendees:

Mark Becker
Erika Hinshaw
John Connell
Laura Minzes
Craig Zandstra

**President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust
License Plate Revenue**

	CY2014		CY2015		CY2016		CY2017		CY2018		CY2019	
	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates
January	89,175.00	3,567	84,375.00	3,375	77,100.00	3,084	72,900.00	2,916	80,850.00	3,234	67,525.00	2,701
February	94,625.00	3,785	92,650.00	3,706	91,900.00	3,676	98,100.00	3,924	85,525.00	3,421	86,500.00	3,460
March	94,250.00	3,770	104,550.00	4,182	102,350.00	4,094	99,450.00	3,978	87,750.00	3,510	94,525.00	3,781
April	99,150.00	3,966	94,725.00	3,789	89,550.00	3,582	89,925.00	3,597	85,550.00	3,422	86,775.00	3,471
May	91,125.00	3,645	88,975.00	3,559	90,625.00	3,625	89,400.00	3,576	92,900.00	3,716	91,900.00	3,676
June	96,350.00	3,854	88,900.00	3,556	90,350.00	3,614	87,750.00	3,510	87,125.00	3,485	90,875.00	3,635
July	88,425.00	3,537	85,175.00	3,407	86,900.00	3,476	86,300.00	3,452	82,175.00	3,287	87,950.00	3,518
August	90,525.00	3,621	92,550.00	3,702	85,850.00	3,434	87,100.00	3,484	87,975.00	3,519	88,100.00	3,524
September	90,275.00	3,611	91,025.00	3,641	83,350.00	3,334	85,650.00	3,426	82,928.00	3,317	84,175.00	3,367
October	85,425.00	3,417	85,050.00	3,402	76,325.00	3,053	81,975.00	3,279	85,250.00	3,410	87,675.00	3,507
November	58,050.00	2,322	54,325.00	2,173	58,050.00	2,322	58,050.00	2,322	56,600.00	2,264	59,800.00	2,392
December	30,050.00	1,202	28,500.00	1,140	29,600.00	1,184	32,250.00	1,290	39,950.00	1,598	43,875.00	1,755
	1,007,425.00	40,297	990,800.00	39,632	961,950.00	38,478	968,850.00	38,754	954,578.00	38,183	969,675.00	38,787

	CY2020		CY2021		CY2022		CY2023		CY2024		CY2025	
	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates	Distribution (\$)	# of Plates
January	64,700.00	2,588	72,325.00	2,893	67,000.00	2,680	71,975.00	2,879	79,050.00	3,162	70,250.00	2,810
February	86,675.00	3,467	88,150.00	3,526	85,925.00	3,437	101,575.00	4,063	96,125.00	3,845	102,575.00	4,103
March	82,050.00	3,282	106,625.00	4,265	100,400.00	4,016	103,325.00	4,133	98,050.00	3,922	109,050.00	4,362
April	81,850.00	3,274	95,350.00	3,814	107,250.00	4,290	105,650.00	4,226	102,100.00	4,084	111,400.00	4,456
May	91,950.00	3,678	96,450.00	3,858	100,475.00	4,019	100,050.00	4,002	102,125.00	4,085	112,450.00	4,498
June	98,525.00	3,941	104,275.00	4,171	105,125.00	4,205	104,050.00	4,162	100,375.00	4,015	110,000.00	4,400
July	93,850.00	3,754	93,325.00	3,733	94,350.00	3,774	98,225.00	3,929	104,675.00	4,187	113,350.00	4,534
August	101,550.00	4,062	95,225.00	3,809	107,800.00	4,312	110,025.00	4,401	108,550.00	4,342	102,925.00	4,117
September	101,625.00	4,065	88,675.00	3,547	91,500.00	3,660	96,925.00	3,877	101,300.00	4,052	103,650.00	4,146
October	92,475.00	3,699	96,025.00	3,841	97,825.00	3,913	93,725.00	3,749	104,275.00	4,171	104,200.00	4,168
November	65,700.00	2,628	65,475.00	2,619	72,450.00	2,898	74,775.00	2,991	76,025.00	3,041	\$ 72,000.00	2,880
December	47,000.00	1,880	50,125.00	2,005	52,950.00	2,118	53,625.00	2,145	61,150.00	2,446	\$ 55,300.00	2,212
	1,007,950.00	40,318	1,052,025.00	42,081	1,083,050.00	43,322	1,113,925.00	44,557	1,133,800.00	45,352	1,167,150.00	46,686

President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust
BALANCE SHEET FISCAL YEAR 2026
As of 1/31/2026

	Period FY26	
Beginning Balance on 07/01/2025	\$15,780,877.00	
FYTD Plate Sales: 25,855	\$646,375.00	<i>+284 plates from this date prior fiscal year</i>
Misc. Income	\$0.00	
Reimbursed Match Funds	\$0.00	
Donations	\$0.00	
Interest	\$389,557.48	<i>Interest is retained in the fund account</i>
Appropriation	\$0.00	<i>No General Fund Appropriation for FY26</i>
Total Income	\$1,035,932.48	
Revenue Adjustment	<u>-\$351,007.48</u>	<i>Not distributed</i>
Subtotal	\$16,465,802.00	
Current Year Disbursements		
Stewardship Exp.	-\$1,547.30	
Land Acquisition Exp.	-\$1,411,693.84	
Current Ending Fund Balances	\$15,052,560.86	
Stewardship	-\$2,448,361.95	
Commitments	<u>-\$5,519,580.00</u>	
Current Available Funds	\$7,084,618.91	

**President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust
Fund Accounts**

(IC 14-12-2-26)

	<u>State Parks and Historic Sites</u>	<u>Forestry</u>	<u>Nature Preserves</u>	<u>Outdoor Recreation and Trails</u>	<u>Fish & Wildlife</u>
Beginning Balance	\$2,057,538.00	\$1,440,610.00	\$1,165,946.00	\$1,745,155.00	\$1,832,065.00
Income	\$94,269.86	\$94,269.86	\$94,269.86	\$94,269.86	\$94,269.86
Appropriation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Revenue adjustment	-\$31,941.68	-\$31,941.68	-\$31,941.68	-\$31,941.68	-\$31,941.68
Disbursements	-\$1,775.00	-\$35,593.92	-\$490,493.92	-\$22,375.00	\$0.00
Ending Balance	\$2,118,091.18	\$1,467,344.26	\$737,780.26	\$1,785,108.18	\$1,894,393.18
Commitments	<u>-\$148,400.00</u>	<u>-\$1,246,330.00</u>	<u>-\$695,850.00</u>	<u>-\$289,218.00</u>	<u>-\$371,912.00</u>
Available Funds	\$1,969,691.18	\$221,014.26	\$41,930.26	\$1,495,890.18	\$1,522,481.18
	<u>Descretionary</u>	<u>Stewardship</u>			
Beginning Balance	\$5,151,297.00	\$2,388,266.00			
Income	\$471,349.28	\$93,233.92			
Appropriation	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Revenue adjustment	-\$159,708.40	-\$31,590.67			
Disbursements	-\$861,456.00	-\$1,547.30			
Ending Balance	\$4,601,481.88	\$2,448,361.95			
Commitments	<u>-\$2,767,870.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>			
Available Funds	\$1,833,611.88	\$2,448,361.95			

Division of Land Acquisition Report
Through February 28, 2026

	CY2024		CY2025		CY2026 YTD	
	#	Acres Protected	#	Acres Protected	#	Acres Protected
Fee Simple Acquisitions	13	4,826.29	14	403.71	3	175.46
Conservation Easements	15	1,094.08	17	1,944.76	1	112.35
Departmental Transfers			9	582.64		
Easements	28		19		8	
Other	2		5		1	
Total	58	5,920.37	64	2,931.11	13	287.81
PBHCT Completed	7	107.27	18	1,069.53		
Files Opened	88		108		11	

*(INDOT to DNR, typically mitigation)
(utility, ingress/egress, etc.)*

Next Level Conservation Trust Report

NLCT #	Completion		County	Type	Acreage	NLCT \$	Match \$	Total Value	NLCT\$/acre		
	Date	Project Description									
4001	2/12/2024	Wesselman Nature Society / Wesselman Woods	Vanderburg	Conservation Easement	41.57	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 24,055.81		
4002	1/3/2024	NICHES Land Trust / Williams Woods	Warren	Conservation Easement	120.00	\$ 630,158.00	\$ 251,250.00	\$ 881,408.00	\$ 5,251.32		
4003	12/7/2023	Clear Lake Conservancy	Steuben	Conservation Easement	36.91	\$ 255,000.00	\$ 264,700.00	\$ 519,700.00	\$ 6,908.70		
4004	1/30/2024	DNR Fish & Wildlife / Kankakee FWA	Starke	Fee Simple	267.44	\$ 1,246,300.00	\$ 82,100.00	\$ 1,328,400.00	\$ 4,660.11		
4005	1/15/2026	DNR Nature Preserves / Big Walnut NP (Wilson)	Putnam	Fee Simple	13.76	\$ 120,000.00	\$ -	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 8,720.93		
4006	2/1/2024	Mud Creek Conservancy	Marion	Conservation Easement	38.23	\$ 383,400.00	\$ 493,400.00	\$ 876,800.00	\$ 10,028.77		
4007	11/18/2024	ACRES Land Trust / Kern tract	Fulton	Conservation Easement	114.43	\$ 506,250.00	\$ 368,750.00	\$ 875,000.00	\$ 4,424.10		
4009	10/4/2024	ACRES Land Trust / Riegsecker tract	Elkhart	Conservation Easement	202.00	\$ 998,759.00	\$ 1,321,250.00	\$ 2,320,009.00	\$ 4,944.35		
4010	6/28/2023	Lake County Parks / Sarros tract	Lake	Conservation Easement	99.30	\$ 1,157,500.00	\$ 570,000.00	\$ 1,727,500.00	\$ 11,656.60		
4011	6/18/2024	Shirley Heinze Land Trust / Meadowbrook	Porter	Conservation Easement	72.85	\$ 306,000.00	\$ 209,000.00	\$ 515,000.00	\$ 4,200.41		
4012	5/13/2025	Shirley Heinze Land Trust / Big Eastern	Starke	Conservation Easement	425.74	\$ 1,426,500.00	\$ 475,500.00	\$ 1,902,000.00	\$ 3,350.64		
4013-B	Payment	DNR Forestry / Yellowwood SF (Girl Scouts)	Brown	Fee Simple	122.40	\$ 860,000.00	\$ -	\$ 860,000.00	\$ 7,026.14		
4013-E	9/27/2024	DNR Forestry / Clark SF	Clark	Fee Simple	40.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 18,449.00	\$ 138,449.00	\$ 3,000.00		
4013-F	Offer	DNR Forestry / Ferdinand SF (Brown)	Dubois	Fee Simple	43.50	\$ 320,000.00	\$ -	\$ 320,000.00	\$ 7,356.32		
4014	6/30/2023	DNR Fish & Wildlife / Mallard Roost WCA	Noble	Fee Simple	158.00	\$ 1,050,001.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 1,400,001.00	\$ 6,645.58		
4015	2/1/2024	DNR Fish & Wildlife / Willow Slough FWA	Newton	Fee Simple	41.13	\$ 171,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 246,000.00	\$ 4,157.55		
4019	5/15/2023	Central Indiana Land Trust / Fern Station	Putnam	Conservation Easement	570.47	\$ 3,119,813.00	\$ 1,039,937.00	\$ 4,159,750.00	\$ 5,468.85		
4021	4/10/2025	Zionsville Parks / Carpenter Nature Park	Boone	Conservation Easement	170.75	\$ 3,000,000.00	\$ 1,446,935.00	\$ 4,446,935.00	\$ 17,569.55		
4022	10/3/2025	DNR State Parks / Spring Mill SP (Bassett)	Lawrence	Fee Simple	40.85	\$ 210,000.00	\$ -	\$ 210,000.00	\$ 5,140.76		
4028	2/1/2024	Sycamore Land Trust / Sam Shine Preserve	Monroe	Conservation Easement	107.93	\$ 244,500.00	\$ 81,500.00	\$ 326,000.00	\$ 2,265.36		
4029	8/29/2024	Sycamore Land Trust / Beanblossom Bottoms	Monroe	Conservation Easement	26.44	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 5,673.22		
4030	1/26/2024	Sycamore Land Trust / Dolan tract	Monroe	Conservation Easement	113.00	\$ 318,386.00	\$ 106,129.00	\$ 424,515.00	\$ 2,817.58		
4031	1/24/2025	The Nature Conservancy / Harrison Glades	Harrison	Conservation Easement	200.00	\$ 562,500.00	\$ 328,315.00	\$ 890,815.00	\$ 2,812.50		
4032	3/11/2025	The Nature Conservancy / Green's Bluff	Owen	Conservation Easement	198.28	\$ 1,312,500.00	\$ 458,780.00	\$ 1,771,280.00	\$ 6,619.43		
4033	10/26/2023	State Museum & Historic Sites	Posey	Fee Simple	64.08	\$ 768,960.00	\$ -	\$ 768,960.00	\$ 12,000.00		
4034	1/29/2025	Shirley Heinze Land Trust / Lydick Bog	St. Joseph	Conservation Easement	93.78	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 906,000.00	\$ 1,156,000.00	\$ 2,665.81		
4035	6/26/2025	LC Nature Park	Allen / Huntington	Conservation Easement	106.70	\$ 719,600.00	\$ 334,000.00	\$ 1,053,600.00	\$ 6,744.14		
4036	4/3/2024	Quabache Land Conservancy	Parke	Conservation Easement	63.60	\$ 128,700.00	\$ 157,300.00	\$ 286,000.00	\$ 2,023.58		
4037	2/20/2025	DNR State Parks / Trine SRA	Steuben	Fee Simple	27.56	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 12,699.56		
NLCT Offer / Signature / Closed to date (as of January 31, 2026)									AVG \$/acre	Match %	
						3,620.70	\$ 21,685,827.00	\$ 10,488,295.00	\$ 32,174,122.00	\$ 5,989.40	32.6%