

**Item 23 – 2: Office of Water Resources FTE Increase - Pawnee****Initiative Type:** Unconstrained – Expansion**Initiative Owner-Finance:** Clara F. O'Brien – DEQ CFO**Initiative Owner-Program:** Leslie Knope – DEQ Executive Director**Initiative Priority Ranking:** 2**Initiative Financing Details****Budget Impact Details—Change to Current Services Level of Financing**

	<b>Agency Request – Constrained</b>	<b>Agency Request – Unconstrained</b>
<b>General Revenue:</b>		\$250,000
<b>Federal Funds:</b>		\$250,000
<b>All Funds:</b>		\$500,000

**Revenue Impact Details—Change to Revenue Estimate**

	<b>Agency Request - Constrained</b>	<b>Agency Request – Unconstrained</b>
<b>Revenues</b>		\$2,500,000

**Bottom Line Impact**

	<b>Agency Request – Total</b>
<b>All Funds:</b>	\$2,000,000

**Proposal Background****Proposal Overview:** 

*Please provide a 3-5 sentence “elevator pitch” about this initiative. Include the initiative name, the funding requested (by fund source), and the top three most important things to know about the initiative and the problem to which it is responsive. You can choose whether to format this as a list or a paragraph.*

In FY 2021, the Indiana Department of Environmental Quality requests \$500,000 from all sources of funds for the addition of 4.0 FTEs to the Environmental Protection Bureau's Office of Water Resources to better provide regulatory assistance, increase capacity review permit applications, and

reduce water pollution in Pawnee. The four positions are: 2.0 Environmental Scientists, 1.0 Senior Environmental Scientist, and 1.0 Supervising Environmental Planner.

Upon recent inspection by the state's Office of Internal Audit, the Office of Water Resources was discovered to be lacking in preparation for pollution caused by stormwater and wetlands development projects.

**Opportunity Statement:** 

*In this section, clearly explain the problem that exists today and the opportunity that your request aims to capitalize on. The best opportunity statements thoroughly explain, with as much detail as possible: (1) where we are today; (2) where we want to be in the future; and (3) why there is the gap between where we are and where we want to be. The best opportunity statements also quantify key variables wherever possible.*

In 2019, the Office of Internal Audit reviewed the permitting process at the Office of Water Resources (OWR) and found that the state of Indiana lags behind the region in speed and thoroughness of the permitting process for smaller communities like Pawnee. DEQ reviews and evaluates permit applications in multiple programs to ensure that proposed projects and activities meet the regulatory requirements of federal and state environmental laws, protect the environment, and ensure a level playing field for businesses.

In recent years, wetland permit applications reflect projects and site conditions that are more complicated. Further, the faster pace of business makes more timely decisions critical to the viability of projects. A poor permitting process for wetlands under OWR has led to development projects polluting water resources in smaller communities, and developers abandoning projects outright. Delays in permitting timelines may also have a negative impact tax revenue and, in the long run, the economic growth of the state.

The report also found that the state has fewer FTEs directly testing water pollution through stormwater than our neighbors. Recent inspections throughout Pawnee, in coordination with their Parks and Recreation team, have revealed higher than average levels of pollution in the community's water resources. Alongside, the state's efforts to mitigate the pollution in the water in Pawnee, DEQ is requesting two FTEs to expand capacity to better respond to smaller community needs before the crises arise.

**Proposal Details:** 

*Provide a detailed description of the initiative you are proposing to respond to the above-described problem and capitalize on the above-described opportunity. Your narrative here should clearly describe how your intervention, if funded, could close the gap described above and achieve the desired future state. It should not restate your narrative in the "Proposal Overview" section;*

*rather, it should expand upon that narrative with additional details, quantifying key variables wherever possible. For constrained proposals, your narrative should clearly explain why your agency has chosen to propose this cut over other potential reduction items and detail the expected impact of the reduction on agency mission, goals, and operations.*

The Department recommends adding 4.0 FTEs to the Office of Water Resources to ramp up efforts to better permit wetland development projects, and to better respond to stormwater pollution in small communities.

The four positions are as follows:

1. Environmental Scientist: To assist in the implementation of the reformed wetlands development permitting process. Total salary and benefits cost: \$100,000. Pay Grade: ABC.
2. Environmental Scientist: To assist in the implementation of the local communities' stormwater pollution mitigation efforts. Total salary and benefits cost: \$100,000. Pay Grade: ABC.
3. Senior Environmental Scientist: To oversee the local communities' stormwater pollution mitigation efforts. Total salary and benefits cost: \$150,000. Pay Grade: ABCD.
4. Supervising Environmental Planner: To oversee the implementation of the reformed wetlands development permitting process. Total salary and benefits cost: \$150,000. Pay Grade: ABCD.

Utilizing increased Water Quality Management Planning (CFDA: 66.454) grant federal funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DEQ recommends financing half of the cost (\$250,000) of the FTE increase with federal funding. DEQ requests \$250,000 in general revenue.

#### **FTE Details & Requirements:**

*For initiatives proposing expansion or contraction of current programs, provide details here about how many FTEs currently work on the program and the total cost of salaries and benefits for those FTEs.*

*For all initiative types, if the proposal would require the elimination of existing FTE positions or the hiring of new FTEs, provide a detailed overview of how the initiative would impact FTE levels. Be sure to include the titles or anticipated titles and total salary and benefits costs for impacted staff or proposed new staff in your narrative here.*

*If this proposal would not impact agency FTE levels and/or does not involve an existing program, simply include the following narrative: This proposal would not have an impact on FTE levels.*

#### 4.0 FTE Increase:

- Environmental Scientist Total salary and benefits cost: \$100,000. Pay Grade: ABC.
- Environmental Scientist Total salary and benefits cost: \$100,000. Pay Grade: ABC.
- Senior Environmental Scientist Total salary and benefits cost: \$150,000. Pay grade: ABCD.
- Supervising Environmental Planner Total salary and benefits cost: \$150,000. Pay Grade: ABCD.

#### Timeline for Implementation:



*Describe how long the initiative will take to implement and by what date it will be fully implemented. If the initiative will not be shovel-ready on July 1, make sure you explain how you have adjusted the budget estimates to reflect the requisite ramp-up period for the initiative.*

Positions to be posted on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The department aims to hire the four FTEs as soon as possible after the positions are posted.

#### Future Expected Costs:

*In this section, provide a brief overview of how initiative costs are expected to increase or decrease in future years and fill out the below table detailing projected costs for the next five fiscal years. If costs are expected to change over time, be sure to explain why that is expected to occur. If the initiative is time-limited or has a defined sunset date, note that here and explain why.*

	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
<b>General Revenue:</b>	\$255,000	\$260,100	\$265,302	\$270,608	\$276,020
<b>Federal Funds:</b>	\$255,000	\$260,100	\$265,302	\$270,608	\$276,020
<b>All Funds:</b>	\$510,000	\$520,200	\$530,604	\$541,216	\$552,040

A 2% inflationary increase applied to salary and benefits for each fiscal year from FY 2024 – FY 2028.

## Evidence Base

#### Evidence Scale Ranking: [2]

*Please rank the proposed initiative's current level of evidentiary support on a scale from 0-5, based on the RI Evidence Scale, with one being the least evidentiary support and five being the most evidentiary support.*

*You can use tools like the [Pew Results First Clearinghouse](#) and the [Social Programs That Work](#) database to determine whether the type of initiative that you are proposing has been rigorously evaluated in other jurisdictions. The Office of Management & Budget understands that the majority of agency requests will likely not be in the top evidence tiers at the point of submission, and you should certainly feel free to submit requests that are “theory-based” on the scale rather than*

“promising” or “proven effective.” Please note that “theory-based” submissions should include a robust and compelling measurement and evaluation plan in the Performance Measurement section.

**Description of Evidence Base:** 

*Describe the justification for your evidence scale ranking. What evidence exists that makes you think that the proposed initiative will work? Where is there uncertainty of effectiveness? It is helpful to include citations, links, or attachments of the evidence source(s) that you draw on in making this assessment.*

DEQ tracks the levels of pollution in smaller communities and conducts surveys with developers on a biannual basis. The survey contains questions regarding how timely the permitting process was. For stormwater pollution, DEQ tracks levels of water pollution based on randomized testing. With the FTE increase, the department seeks to increase the number of randomized tests in smaller communities.

## **Evaluation & Performance Measurement**

**Existing Performance Data:** 

For Unconstrained – Expansion, Constrained – Adjustment, and Constrained – Elimination Initiatives: *Describe the data that currently exists for this initiative and your agency’s approach to performance measurement and evaluation of the initiative. If you don’t collect any performance data on this initiative, you should explain why data is not available. If you do collect performance data, your narrative should include details about the types of data collected and the sources of that data, note the specific metrics that are tracked for the initiative, and, wherever possible, report the metrics for the last three fiscal years. If you’ve used the data to make programmatic changes in the past, you should include details about that. Your narrative should make clear whether or not the available data indicates that this initiative has been successful in reaching its goals.*

We are tracking water quality.

**Forward-Looking Evaluation Opportunities:**

For Unconstrained – New, Unconstrained – Expansion, and Constrained – Adjustment Initiatives: *Describe your agency’s plans to evaluate this initiative in the future if your request is approved. Your narrative should include the specific metrics that you plan to track, the methods you plan to use to evaluate the initiative, and the types of data that you will collect. You should explain why and how you’ve arrived at this evaluation plan. You should also quantify what success looks like for this initiative, based on the metrics that you plan to track. If this initiative is ranked as a 3 or lower on the Rhode Island Evidence Scale, your narrative here should explain how the data that you will collect will enable you to build the base of evidentiary support for this initiative.*

We will track all the same metrics. 

#### **Timeline for Outcomes:**

*Describe when, following implementation, you expect to see meaningful change resulting from the initiative (example: completion of a proposed training initiative, return on capital investment, attainment of program targets, etc.)? If you expect long-term savings to result from this initiative, make a note of total savings that you expect on an annual basis and when you expect these to begin.*

DEQ expects that by the next developer survey (two years), meaningful change will have been implemented in the permitting process. The pollution testing in small communities has no specific timeline.

## **Additional Proposal Information**

#### **Statutory Implications:**

*Note whether this initiative will require a budget article in order to be implemented. If an article will be required, identify the impacted statute and include an attachment with proposed new statutory language to accompany this Decision Package form, and a Budget Article Memo, which describes the technical changes to the law as well as the budget and policy implications of those changes. If an article will not be required, simply include the following narrative: This initiative will not require a budget article.*

This initiative will not require a budget article.

#### **Interagency Impact:**

*If this initiative would impact another agency, name the affected agency(ies) and note how the proposal would impact them here. Note whether the other agency has been made aware of this proposal and whether the impact on the other agency will be included in their analysis. If the proposal is likely to have an impact on another agency but that impact is not quantifiable, you should also note that here. If this initiative will not have an interagency impact, simply include the following narrative: This initiative will not impact any other agencies.*

Due to the permitting process reforms, we expect to see a small uptick in the revenue collected from wetlands development projects.

#### **Federal Funds Impact:**

*If this initiative will impact federal funds (example: reduce the amount of federal match an agency receives or require the agency to solicit new federal funding), note that here and describe the expected impact. Describe the source of federal funds (ARPA FRF, CAA, etc.) impacted by this initiative. If this*

*initiative will not impact federal funds, simply include the following narrative:* This initiative will not impact federal funds.

Utilizing increased Water Quality Management Planning (CFDA: 66.454) grant federal funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DEQ recommends financing half of the cost (\$250,000) of the FTE increase with federal funds.

**Information Technology Implications:**

*If the initiative is expected to impact information technology, include details here about the specific IT impact of the initiative, including if and how you expect it to impact the DoIT ISF. If this initiative will not impact information technology, simply include the following narrative:* This initiative will not impact information technology.

This initiative will not impact information technology.

**Additional Details:**

*If you would like to include any other information about this proposal that does not fit into one of the above-detailed categories, please feel free to use this space to add that information to your submission.*