

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 451 of 1994**

**324.30101 Definitions.**

Sec. 30101. As used in this part:

(a) "Bottomland" means the land area of an inland lake or stream that lies below the ordinary high-water mark and that may or may not be covered by water.

(b) "Bulkhead line" means a line that is established pursuant to this part beyond which dredging, filling, or construction of any kind is not allowed without a permit.

(c) "Dam" means an artificial barrier, including dikes, embankments, and appurtenant works, that impounds, diverts, or is designed to impound or divert water.

(d) "Department" means the department of environmental quality.

(e) "Expand" means to occupy a larger area of an inland lake or stream than authorized by a permit issued under this part for marina mooring structures and watercraft moored at the marina.

(f) "Fund" means the land and water management permit fee fund created in section 30113.

(g) "Height of the dam" means the difference in elevation measured vertically between the natural bed of an inland lake or stream at the downstream toe of the dam, or, if it is not across a stream channel or watercourse, from the lowest elevation of the downstream toe of the dam, to the design flood elevation or to the lowest point of the top of the dam, whichever is less.

(h) "Impoundment" means water held back by a dam, dike, floodgate, or other barrier.

(i) "Inland lake or stream" means either of the following:

(i) An artificial or natural lake, pond, or impoundment that is a water of the United States as that term is used in section 502(7) of the federal water pollution control act, 33 USC 1362.

(ii) A natural or artificial lake, pond, or impoundment; a river, stream, or creek which may or may not be serving as a drain as defined by the drain code of 1956, 1956 PA 40, MCL 280.1 to 280.630; or any other body of water that has definite banks, a bed, and visible evidence of a continued flow or continued occurrence of water, including the St. Marys, St. Clair, and Detroit Rivers.

Inland lake or stream does not include the Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair, or a lake or pond that has a surface area of less than 5 acres.

(j) "Marina" means a facility that is owned or operated by a person, extends into or over an inland lake or stream, and offers service to the public or members of the marina for docking, loading, or other servicing of recreational watercraft.

(k) "Minor offense" means either of the following violations of this part if the project involved in the offense is a minor project or the department determines that restoration of the affected property is not required:

(i) The failure to obtain a permit under this part.

(ii) A violation of a permit issued under this part.

(l) "Mooring structures" means structures used to moor watercraft, including, but not limited to, docks, piers, pilings, mooring anchors, lines and buoys, and boat hoists.

(m) "Ordinary high-water mark" means the line between upland and bottomland that persists through successive changes in water levels, below which the presence and action of the water is so common or recurrent that the character of the land is marked distinctly from the upland and is apparent in the soil itself, the configuration of the surface of the soil, and the vegetation. On an inland lake that has a level established by law, it means the high established level. Where water returns to its natural level as the result of the permanent removal or abandonment of a dam, it means the natural ordinary high-water mark.

(n) "Project" means an activity that requires a permit pursuant to section 30102.

(o) "Property owners' association" means any group of organized property owners publishing a directory of their membership, the majority of which are riparian owners and are located on the inland lake or stream that is affected by the proposed project.

(p) "Reconfigure" means to, without expanding the marina, do either of the following:

(i) Change the location of the dock or docks and other mooring structures at the marina to occupy an area of the inland lake or stream that was not previously authorized by a permit issued under this part.

(ii) Decrease the distance available for ingress and egress to an outside slip as described in section 30106a.

(q) "Riparian interest area" means that portion of an inland lake or stream over which a riparian owner has an ownership interest.

(r) "Riparian owner" means a person who has riparian rights.

(s) "Riparian rights" means those rights which are associated with the ownership of the bank or shore of an inland lake or stream.

(t) "Seasonal structure" includes any type of dock, boat hoist, ramp, raft, or other recreational structure that is placed into an inland lake or stream and removed at the end of the boating season.

(u) "Seawall" means a vertically sloped wall constructed to break the force of waves and retain soil for the purpose of shore protection.

(v) "Structure" includes a wharf, dock, pier, seawall, dam, weir, stream deflector, breakwater, groin, jetty, sewer, pipeline, cable, and bridge.

(w) "Upland" means the land area that lies above the ordinary high-water mark.

**History:** Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995;—Am. 1999, Act 106, Imd. Eff. July 7, 1999;—Am. 2006, Act 275, Imd. Eff. July 7, 2006;—Am. 2009, Act 139, Imd. Eff. Nov. 4, 2009;—Am. 2014, Act 351, Eff. Jan. 16, 2015;—Am. 2018, Act 631, Eff. Mar. 29, 2019.

**Compiler's note:** For transfer of authority, powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities of the Land and Water Management Division, with the exception of the farmland and open space preservation program, natural rivers program, and Michigan information resource inventory system, to the Director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, see E.R.O. No. 1995-16, compiled at MCL 324.99901 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

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