

= Seal of Indiana =

The Seal of the State of Indiana is used by the Governor of Indiana to certify official documents . The seal has gone through several revisions since the region was a part of the Northwest Territory . It is likely the original seal , which is similar to the current one , was created by William Henry Harrison during his administration of the Indiana Territory . The current design of the seal was standardized by the Indiana General Assembly in 1963 .

= = Usage = =

The state seal is maintained by the Governor of Indiana . It is used to certify the authenticity of official state documents . The seal is placed on departmental reports , bills the Governor signs into law , and official communications from the Governor to other high @-@ ranking office holders . The seal is also used on all commissions granted by the state as proof of the commission 's authority .

= = History = =

The United States Congress passed legislation on May 8 , 1792 , that directed the U.S. Secretary of State to " provide proper seals for the several and respective public offices in the said Territories " . Indiana was part of the Northwest Territory at that time and a seal was created by the United States Department of State to be used on official papers of the territory . The original seal was maintained by Governor Arthur St. Clair and the first recorded use was in a proclamation made on July 26 , 1788 .

On May 10 , 1800 , the Indiana Territory was created by an act of Congress , but no provision for an official seal was included in the measure . The earliest recorded use of Indiana Territory 's seal was on court documents that were signed by Governor William Henry Harrison in January 1801 . The seal he used was an adaptation of the original seal created for the Northwest Territory . Although its origin is uncertain , it is likely that it was Harrison who made the alterations .

The constitution of 1816 contained a clause that stated the governor should maintain a state seal and use it in official communication . The design of the seal was first proposed during the first session of the Indiana General Assembly in 1816 . On November 22 , 1816 , representative Davis Floyd of Harrison County proposed the adoption of a seal with a design he referred to as " A forest and a woodman felling a tree , a buffalo leaving the forest and fleeing through the plain to a distant forest , and sun in the west with the word Indiana . " The bill was put through a joint conference of both houses of the General Assembly and funds were voted to purchase a printer to create the seal .

In 1819 , the state seal was part of a state crisis . Lieutenant Governor Christopher Harrison became acting @-@ governor when Governor Jonathan Jennings was away conducting negotiations with northern Indiana 's native tribes . When Jennings returned , Harrison refused to step down as governor , claiming that Jennings ' actions had invalidated his governorship . Harrison seized the state seal and set up his own governor 's office . After several weeks of debate in the state legislature , Harrison was forced to return the seal to Jennings and vacate the office of the governor .

During 1895 , Robert S. Hatcher , the reading clerk of the Indiana Senate , was directed to ascertain the legal status of the design of the state seal . After a thorough review , Hatcher found that the laws that authorized the seal did not explicitly state what its design should be . He recommended that a bill be passed to standardize the seal . Senator McCord submitted legislation for that purpose , but no action was taken on it .

On January 28 , 1905 , an article ran in the Indianapolis News containing information on the origin of the seal , some of it dubious . The article received much attention and started an informal inquiry into the history of the seal , and namely to discover if the sun in the seal was rising or setting . Jacob Piatt Dunn , the preeminent Indiana historian of the time , consulted several history and arrived at the conclusion that the sun was rising . Dunn cited the fact the state was young , and the mountains

were to the east of the state , not the west ? clearly indicating the sun was rising .

The current design of the seal was standardized by the Indiana General Assembly in 1963 . During the meeting of the General Assembly , Representative Taylor I. Morris introduced legislation to standardize the design of the state seal . His bill described a seal that depicts a woodsman chopping a sycamore tree , while an American Bison runs in the foreground and the sun rises in the background . The leaves of the state tree , the tulip , were to be the border design . The bill passed the assembly that session and became law .

In 2004 , the 1963 statute came under criticism because it states the sun in the state seal is setting rather than rising . A thorough investigation by the Indiana Historical Bureau into the history of the seal led to the discovery that original seal was created with the intention that the sun should , in fact , be depicted as rising . In both 2004 and 2005 legislation was introduced to change the wording of the statute , but as of 2008 no action had been taken to correct the error .

= = Current statute = =

The law created to standardize the state seal has been in effect since 1963 . The statute states :
Indiana State Code : IC 1 @-@ 2 @-@ 4 @-@ 1

The official seal for the state of Indiana shall be described as follows : A perfect circle , two and five eighths ($2 \frac{5}{8}$) inches in diameter , inclosed by a plain line . Another circle within the first , two and three eighths ($2 \frac{3}{8}$) inches in diameter inclosed by a beaded line , leaving a margin of one quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of an inch . In the top half of this margin are the words " Seal of the State of Indiana "

At the bottom center , 1816 , flanked on either side by a diamond , with two (2) dots and a leaf of the tulip tree (*liriodendron tulipifera*) , at both ends of the diamond . The inner circle has two (2) trees in the left background , three (3) hills in the center background with nearly a full sun setting behind and between the first and second hill from the left .

There are fourteen (14) rays from the sun , starting with two (2) short ones on the left , the third being longer and then alternating , short and long . There are two (2) sycamore trees on the right , the larger one being nearer the center and having a notch cut nearly half way through , from the left side , a short distance above the ground . The woodsman is wearing a hat and holding his ax nearly perpendicular on his right . The ax blade is turned away from him and is even with his hat .

The buffalo is in the foreground , facing to the left of front . His tail is up , front feet on the ground with back feet in the air , as he jumps over a log .

The ground has shoots of blue grass , in the area of the buffalo and woodsman .

= = Iconography = =

The sun rising in the picture represents that Indiana has a bright future ahead and is just beginning . The mountains it rises over are a representation of the Allegheny Mountains showing that Indiana is in the west . The woodman represents civilization subduing the wilderness that was Indiana . The buffalo represents the wilderness fleeing westward away from the advancing civilization .

= = Government Seals of Indiana = =