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The Monroe County Prosecutor's Office has been closely monitoring the investigation by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division (IDNR Law Enforcement) into an incident that took place in the forest near Lake Monroe on July 4, 2020. Since the initial response, IDNR Law Enforcement has been working diligently to complete the investigation. During this time, the Prosecutor's Office has been in consultation with the investigators, providing assistance where appropriate. However, the Prosecutor's Office does not direct the actions of IDNR Law Enforcement officers. This has not been an unusually long investigation thus far.

The decision to bring formal criminal charges rests solely with the Prosecutor's Office. However, in order to make a filing decision, the Prosecutor's Office must receive a full and complete investigative report from law enforcement. At this time, the Monroe County Prosecutor's Office cannot speculate as to charges. IDNR Law Enforcement will forward their investigative report to the Prosecutor's Office immediately upon completion, at which time it will be expeditiously reviewed.

Prosecuting Attorney Erika Oliphant would like to thank those who have reached out to her over the past few days. The Prosecutor's Office has received well over 35,000 emails and 10,000 phone calls, as well as other correspondence, expressing concern about this incident. Please understand that given the volume, the Prosecutor's Office simply will not be able to respond to each message.

All decisions regarding this incident must be based on the evidence and applicable law. Further, the Indiana Rules of Professional Conduct prevent the Prosecuting Attorney from making any public statement that could materially prejudice any future proceeding regarding this matter.