

Remswelle – a standing surf wave for the Rems valley

An open citizens' initiative from Winterbach near Stuttgart, founded in September 2025, wants to create a surfable standing wave at the outlet structure of a flood retention basin beneath the Ostlandstraße bridge (locally the "Remswehr") – as a second use for a structure that already stands.



€14.3m

was the cost of the retention basin including the outlet structure – public money

2.8m

people in the Stuttgart region – without a river wave

around 150

surfable days a year (estimate from 90 years of gauge data)

1

river wave in Baden-Württemberg – Bavaria has six

since 2019

German Championships in rapid surfing

Six reasons for the Remswelle

The structure is there – A second use for the outlet structure – flood protection stays untouched.

The gap – 2.8 million people in the Stuttgart region, not a single river wave.

A young competitive sport – Rapid surfing with German Championships and a national squad, but no training venue in the region.

Children and young people – Exercise outdoors by the river, surfing on the doorstep.

Enough water – 3 to 15 m³/s on around 150 days a year (own analysis of 90 years of gauge data).

No pumps – The power of the Rems, arrival by bike and suburban train, run by volunteers.

More flow for the Rems – and for the wave

Holding water

We calculate how many surfable days a landscape that holds rain brings: up to three weeks more a year. That is why we support soils, meadows and cisterns that store water.

Understanding low water

90 years of gauge data show it, and so does the 2026 ban on taking water: too little water means no wave and stress for the fish. So the landscape should hold more rain.

Checking history

Until 1862 timber was floated down the Rems. Rafting is UNESCO cultural heritage, and the Remswelle would be its modern echo. What we find in archives we bring into the talks with the authorities.

Reading slopes

With the terrain model, soil and geological maps we see where the soil holds water and vineyard walls slow it down. What stays on the slope reaches the wave later and more evenly.

Inspiring children

"Anna – psst!" asks the questions that make children curious about river and wave – from "Can you surf from the Rems all the way to the sea?" to "Is surfing more like snowboarding or skateboarding?"

Five journeys of discovery through the Rems and Winterbach:
remswelle.de/en/the-rem/

Costs

No figure yet – only after the feasibility study. For comparison: Nuremberg around €3m (half from the Free State of Bavaria), Hanover €2.5m, Salzburg €90,000.

Status

Core idea in place · feasibility and talks in progress · concept and implementation open. Next talks: Rems Water Board, district office, Stuttgart regional council.

What this is about now: not yet a decision to build, but finding out whether it is feasible. What we do not claim: that the wave will definitely come, that it costs nothing, that it will bring streams of tourists, that river waves are Olympic.

Press info, images and all sources: remswelle.de/en/press

info@remswelle.de · Contact: Robin Haiss · Initiative Remswelle, Friedrichstraße 8, 73650 Winterbach, Germany. Logo and images free for editorial use with the credit "Initiative Remswelle"; visualisations must remain marked as such.

