

# INDIANA WATER SUMMIT



## *Follow-Up Audience Questions & Responses*

We didn't always have time at the 2025 Indiana Water Summit to ask our presenters every question submitted by Summit audience members. Here are some questions that our presenters graciously agreed to answer afterward.



This question was for Ray McCormick of McCormick Farms, a Day 1 presenter on the "Farm Advisors" program:

**"What are some good ways to get farmers interested in the program if they aren't super excited about conservation (yet)?"**

Ray's reply:

***We don't put a lot of energy into farmers that aren't that interested in land conservation in general. Change is very difficult in the farmers world.***

***Mentoring is more likely invested in those committed to soil health and conservation. Helping them to be confident and successful is more of my personal goal rather than trying to convince a farmer to change his ways.***



This question was for Brad Baldwin of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, a Day 1 presenter on the Indiana Stream and Wetland Mitigation Program:

**"Are restored areas protected?"**

Brad's reply:

***Yes, all of IN SWMP's projects are protected in perpetuity with a conservation easement for properties that are owned by a conservation partner and by deed restriction for properties that are owned by DNR. Our restoration footprints with protections do not cover an entire property as we typically allow our conservation partners to develop public access and trails in which our restoration efforts are buffered from these public uses. IN SWMP provides a long-term management fund to the conservation partners at a rate of 7.5% of project credit generation funds to maintain the project footprint per the approved long-term management plan in perpetuity.***



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This question was for Theresa Landewe and Jack Wittman of INTERA, Day 2 presenters on state water planning:

**“Is it a duplication of effort (and waste of money) for the Governor’s office to start over on regional water studies where several regions have already been studied? The Chamber study is out there.”**

Theresa and Jack’s reply:

***Short answer – No. The Governor’s Executive Order is not starting over. The regional work will incorporate the studies that have already been done. The regions being investigated currently had not been done previously and will help provide full coverage of the state. At the end of next year (2026) we will have a complete inventory of the water demands and water resources available throughout the state. This data and information will be provided to the regions as a starting place for regional planning and the statewide water planning framework.***

***The State has commissioned new basin investigations using a uniform approach to defining water demand and availability statewide. These new (current) projects include the following basins:***

- ***Kankakee River Basin***
- ***Southwest Region - Lower Wabash and White Rivers***
- ***Northeast Region - St. Joseph River and Maumee River Basins***
- ***Ohio River and Southeast Regions***

***These basin availability reports will be added to the analysis that has already been completed in the Upper West Fork and East Fork White River, as well as the Upper and Middle Wabash Basins.***

***And regarding the Chamber study, (and the CICP work) these reports described the consequences that have been and will be faced if we don’t develop cohesive integrated water policy in Indiana and how other states have gone through this process.***

Also for Theresa and Jack, this question:

**“What are your findings on data center water usage?”**

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Theresa and Jack's reply:

*The “findings” on data center water usage are that the effects of these facilities will vary depending on the water resources in that local and regional area. For example, pumping more water from the narrow Charlestown Aquifer along the Ohio River for a data center cannot cause impacts over a large area because the river is so large and the aquifer is narrow and connected to the river. So, the location matters. There may be local and regional aquifers, reservoirs, and a river that can be used together to help cover the anticipated demands. However, as with any new large demand, there needs to be an understanding of the impacts on homeowners with private wells and the long-term impacts to water resources.*

*One of the last speakers at the Summit, Dr. Yi Ding, from Purdue, presented a summary of her lab's work to determine the impact of data centers and found that it was affected by climate and that consumption was much more technology and engineering-dependent than they had hypothesized. Her work and the narrative above demonstrate how complex and project-dependent these estimates can be.*