

January 28, 2026  
Updated March 5, 2026

Concerned Commenter:

Thank you for contacting the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (Commission) to share your concerns regarding Pending No. 2025-159 for the modification application submitted by Amazon Data Services, Inc. (Amazon).

The Commission shares your concerns about the potential impacts of consumptive water use, and strives to ensure that water uses are sustainable and that other users and aquatic habitats are protected. The Commission appreciates the public participation for this project and has prepared this updated response to the comments and questions that have been received to date. Commission staff is sending this letter to address not only your comments, but also comments provided by your neighbors and other concerned citizens. If you have any additional questions or comments, or do not believe this letter adequately addresses your comments, please contact any of the people listed at the end of this letter. The comment period for this project closed on February 9, 2026, and all public comments have been reviewed and will be provided to our Commissioners prior to the Commission's March 12, 2026, business meeting. Provided below are responses to frequently asked questions and an update regarding the status of the Commission's review:

***1. What is the Susquehanna River Basin Commission?***

The Commission is an independent water resource management agency created as a federal-interstate Compact commission with members from New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Federal government. The Mission of the Commission, which is defined in the Compact, is to enhance public welfare through comprehensive planning, water supply allocation, and management of the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. The Commission regulates water withdrawals, consumptive use of water, and diversions into and out of the basin. The Commission does not have the power to regulate land use, zoning, or water quality of discharges.

***2. Why is Amazon requesting a modification to their existing approval?***

Amazon's original application requested a consumptive use quantity that was only intended to support the initial phase of the project which consisted of three buildings. The Commission approved the originally requested quantity of 60,000 gallons per day (gpd), based on a 30-day average, on September 12, 2024, as Docket No. 20240901, and conditioned the approval to contact the Commission prior to expansion beyond the three buildings outlined in the original application. Amazon's current application is now requesting a total quantity of 277,000 gpd (30-day average) that is proposed to supply subsequent phases of the data center campus.

**3. Will they use 277,000 gpd, every day, all year?**

No. Amazon has stated that they only intend to use water for evaporative cooling at the proposed data center during a portion of the year, generally during the hottest summer months. During the remainder of a calendar year, minimal to no water use is anticipated for evaporative cooling processes at the facility.

To relate Amazon's requested quantity to other more common water uses, the proposed facility's consumptive use would be slightly less than the average consumptive use associated with a golf course in the Susquehanna River Basin.

While Amazon has not proposed a direct withdrawal from a surface water source such as the Susquehanna River, the requested consumptive use quantity can be conceptualized relative to the flow of the Susquehanna River near the proposed project. The quantity is equivalent to approximately 0.003 percent of the average daily flow of ~10 billion gpd, or 0.05 percent of the low flow drought conditions (Q7-10 flow) of ~580 million gpd. The Q7-10 flow is the lowest 7-day average flow that occurs (on average) once every 10 years.

**4. How is the requested quantity and the cumulative impacts evaluated in the Commission's technical review?**

Applications undergo a rigorous, scientific review. Highly trained hydrologists, and licensed geologists and engineers, apply the latest science and technology to determine whether or not a water use will negatively impact the environment and/or other users.

Commission staff evaluates the application and determines if the projected demand is justified and realistic for the proposed facility and use. Staff also evaluates if a requested quantity from the proposed sources are sustainable and available. Additionally, the Commission's [\*Cumulative Water Use and Availability Study for the Susquehanna River Basin\*](#) provides watershed scale information that is assessed during technical review considerations.

Amazon's application is not proposing or requesting approval of a withdrawal and water is primarily to be supplied from public water supply. The public water supply maintains existing approvals for their sources from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) and/or the Commission, and those withdrawals were previously evaluated for sustainability and available capacity.

**5. Will the public water supply have enough water to support Amazon and the community?**

Amazon's primary water source will be public water supply from Pennsylvania – American Water Company's Berwick system<sup>1</sup>, while other sources of water are for redundant and back-up purposes. The Berwick system currently has approvals for multiple sources that are approved for

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<sup>1</sup> The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission approved Pennsylvania – American Water Company's request for a certificate of public convenience to serve additional portions of Salem Township including Amazon's data center at Docket No. A-2-24-3051136, which can be found [here](#).

withdrawal of several million gallons of water per day. Amazon also proposes to have significant water storage at the facility, which can lessen the daily water quantity pulled from the public water supply during hot and dry conditions.

As a requirement of the application, the public water supplier provided a Will-Serve letter to indicate their ability to supply water and has sufficient capacity available to serve the proposed project. Public water supply systems require approval from not only the Commission but also PADEP. The Commission coordinates with PADEP on every application prior to the Commissioners taking action to identify and resolve potential conflicts among water users. Staff is considering the overall projected demand for the project with respect to the application currently under review.

***6. How will emissions, noise, and discharges be regulated, and will they provide environmental protections from any contaminates?***

Although air quality issues, noise, and wastewater disposal are common and understandable concerns for any community faced with new or expanding projects, the Commission does not have jurisdiction over these issues. The Commission's authority is limited to aspects of water quantity and is also tasked with not being duplicative of other agencies. Accordingly, public concerns regarding the potential impacts to air quality, water treatment, and wastewater discharges are matters under the jurisdiction of PADEP<sup>2</sup>. Noise concerns are generally regulated at the municipality.

If the Commission approves Amazon's pending application, Amazon will be required to obtain all necessary permits and/or approvals required for the project from other federal, state, or local government agencies including those that have jurisdictions related to air emissions, water quality, wastewater treatment, and discharges. All required permits and/or approvals would need to be obtained **prior** to project operation.

In regards to the discharge of wastewater, Amazon has indicated in their application to the Commission that "Non-evaporated-non-contact-cooling-water will be: 1. treated and reused opportunistically, 2. discharged to the Berwick Area Joint Sewer Authority (BAJSA) as permitted and allowed by BAJSA, and/or 3. treated on-site and discharged to the Susquehanna River as permitted and allowed by Individual-NPDES-Industrial-Wastewater permit and Water Quality Management Plan."

According to PADEP's Permit Tracker, Amazon has applied for and received a Water Quality Management Pump Station Permit for its facility. Additionally, Amazon has applied for a Minor Industrial Wastewater Facility without Effluent Limitations Guidelines Permit. As of February 17, 2026, this permit has not yet been issued and can be tracked [on the PADEP Permit Tracker \(https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/data-and-tools/track-permits\)](https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/data-and-tools/track-permits). As these permits are not regulated by the Commission, any questions regarding them should be directed to PADEP, specifically the PADEP Northeast Regional Office.

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<sup>2</sup> PADEP utilizes a Permit Tracker that can be found [here \(https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/data-and-tools/track-permits\)](https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/data-and-tools/track-permits) to help the public track permit applications for projects. A link to a permit tracker search with the keywords "Amazon Data Services" and filtered to only show results for Luzerne County can be found [here](#).

**7. *How can the Commission ensure Amazon will remain compliant?***

The Commission enforces its rules through dedicated compliance program staff who audit records and conduct facility inspections to ensure compliance with the conditions of an approval and Commission regulations. The Commission maintains the right to inspect a project, at any time, for compliance with a project's approval. Approved projects are required to collect, maintain, and report daily water use data using certified meters and equipment. These data are submitted quarterly and are screened for compliance with approval conditions upon receipt. Although this information is typically reported quarterly, monitoring data can be requested by Commission staff at any time deemed necessary/appropriate.

**8. *What is the Commission's public process prior to taking action, and will there be a public hearing for the proposed project?***

The Commission has a stringent public notification process that is to ensure effective opportunity for public comment during the review phase of applications submitted to the Commission, and is committed to maintaining open meeting practices that provide similar public access to its processes and transparency with respect to its actions. The Commission's application process requires projects to complete a notification process, which includes the project sending notification letters to the municipality, county, county agency, and state with jurisdiction in the area of the project, and includes a public notice to be published in a newspaper that circulates in the area of the project. Additionally, a summary of the application materials for pending projects and all approvals are available on the Commission's Water Application and Approval Viewer (WAAV) for public access at: <https://www.srbc.gov/waav>.

Applications requiring Commissioner action are subject to a public hearing, which is open to the public in order to provide verbal testimony on those projects. This application was subject to the public hearing held on January 29, 2026.

Written comments regarding this application were accepted through February 9, 2026. All written comments submitted to the Commission and a transcript of the testimony received at the public hearing will be provided to the Commissioners so that they may take them into consideration prior to making a final decision.

**9. *What is the status of the Commission's review?***

The Commission's technical review of the application is ongoing. Following completion of the technical review, staff will prepare recommendations to be presented to the Commissioners for their consideration at a quarterly Commission business meeting, which is currently scheduled for March 12, 2026. Additional information on the business meeting is available at: <https://www.srbc.gov/about/meetings-events/>.

To monitor the status of the application or view a summary of the application materials, you can visit: <https://www.srbc.gov/waav>. Additional information regarding the Commission and our process is also available on our website at: [www.srbc.gov](http://www.srbc.gov).

***10. What if I have other questions or would like additional information?***

If you have any additional questions or concerns, you can contact any of the Commission staff below:

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