Izaak Walton League of America

Data Center and Similarly High Energy Consuming and Producing Facilities Resolution

A data center is one or more physical structures that contain many computer servers which process an extremely large volume of highly sensitive data. They consume an enormous amount of power, land, water, and emit CO2, noise from Electromagnetic Fields, Low Frequency Noise, and contribute to electronic waste. The data center industry is sprawling across small towns specifically because of expected growth in Artificial Intelligence. There are very few, if any, regulations on the Data Center Industry.

Data centers consume millions of gallons of water per day in the process of cooling their servers. Taken from lakes, rivers or ground, the water is heated causing multiple adverse impacts. Data Centers emit non-stop Low Frequency Noise. LFN exposure has been associated with negative physical and mental health effects to children, the elderly, and those who live within a 2.5 mile radius.

Data centers require extremely high levels of security, resulting in all-night lighting causing light pollution; again with multiple profound negative impacts on the surrounding environment and neighbors.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Izaak Walton League of America, assembled in convention in Green Bay, Wisconsin, July 19, 2025, urges federal authorities to establish national standards for data centers and similarly high energy consuming and producing facilities to ensure that future facilities approvals require inclusion of the following provisions in all permits:

1. Prior to construction, data centers and similar facilities should have local and regional input and be built to state-of-the-art standards considering the environment and community as a whole.

2. Whenever possible, locate data centers in industrial “brownfields” areas and well removed from public or residential areas to minimize impacts on neighbors and other land uses, such as agriculture or parks. Studies and data in relation to water, light, thermal, air, noise, and low frequency noise should be presented to the public prior to construction.

3. Require data centers to operate at the maximum extent practical on clean energy (solar photovoltaic, tidal, wind, etc.) power, to avoid additional carbon dioxide in the atmosphere

from fossil fuels and not utilize coal power as a means of energy production .

4. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting is mandatory in every case. Urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop stringent guidelines in regulating data centers.

5. Whenever possible, water used for cooling be in a closed system and continuously recycled, with full compliance with all water quality, air quality, noise and other relevant regulations, to minimize impacts on local resources. Construction should not proceed whenever water supplies may be degraded in quantity and quality. Any water that is released into the environment may not be released at higher temperature than receiving water.

6. Prohibit the use of eminent domain to acquire energy transmission infrastructure to meet the demand load of any data center or similar facility.

7. Advocate local state and federal levels for the elimination of by-right zoning for data centers.

8. Property tax appraisal of site should be done at the level of the completed project, not at land value prior to development.

9. All studies aforementioned and otherwise are to be performed upon and within but NOT by the data center and data center industry itself. Studies should proffer guidelines and regulations using scientific methods and produce proof as to what is healthy for humans and wildlife in all environments from the immediate area of all data centers extended outwards in a radius of an anticipated impact to local flora, fauna and human populations.