

Datacenters require extensive impervious surfaces (roofs, parking lots, driveways) which are likely to cause more runoff into nearby waterways, carrying pollutants. The DRI materials say 30.8% of a very large site. For 1,066 acres that would be 328 acres of impervious surface.

The map on page 19 of the SGRC package for DRI #4689 has a pointer to a “PROPOSED STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY” and that map shows several other blue-colored areas which presumably are intended to be other retention ponds. But there is no analysis of how much runoff could come off all that impervious surface and how much detention pond area and depth would be needed to contain it.

Valdosta has famously underestimated how big their catch basins should be at the entrance to their Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to avoid sewage spills. The result has been repeated million-gallon-plus spills, especially when a major storm dropped much rain directly on Valdosta.

Underestimated retention ponds at this datacenter campus could result in massive runoff overflowing those detention ponds, carrying contaminants from all those roofs, driveways, and parking lots into the Alapaha River. SGRC and the DRI should require a study on how big the detention ponds need to be.

Groundwater Usage

The SGRC summary of the DRI application says “**Water supply** needs are expected to be .05 MGD (Million Gallons per Day) and the water is proposed to be pumped from the Floridian Aquifer from an on-site well.”

Expected by whom? Where is an independent verification of this estimate? Where are records from other datacenters by the same builder or end customer?

As everyone has heard, such promises may not be honored, see, for example, Melissa Koenig, MSN, May 10, 2026, [Data center caught using 30 million gallons of 'unbilled' water as Georgia residents' taps drizzle.](#)

The DRI should be at least as stringent as the [Irwin County Data Center Ordinance](#), which requires:

(d) Water Usage Standards.

(1) Only closed-loop cooling systems are permitted in Irwin County.

(2) There shall be no discharge of cooling water into public sewers or ground without treatment.

(3) Before a certificate of occupancy is provided, all data centers shall submit a hydrogeologic study conducted by an independent third-party engineering firm showing estimated annual water usage. Such report should compare estimated water usage to the prior owner/user of the subject property or of that of similar surrounding areas.