FAQ: Local Hydroelectric Facilities Community Engagement

Summary:

For more than 100 years, I&M's hydroelectric facilities have helped power homes and businesses while serving as a part of life along the St. Joseph River. As I&M begins planning for the future of its Berrien Springs, Buchanan and Twin Branch facilities and prepares for the federal relicensing process, the company is inviting customers, neighbors and community members to share their perspectives through open houses and an online survey.

Feedback gathered will help inform the relicensing process and support I&M's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), which guides long-term decisions about how the company provides reliable, affordable electricity.

No decisions have been made, and community input will play an important role in shaping the conversation moving forward.

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1. Why is I&M asking for community feedback now?

We know these facilities are more than power plants to many people. That's why we're starting by listening. Before any decisions are made, we want to hear from the people who live nearby, enjoy the river or simply care about these communities. Your feedback will help shape conversations as we move through the federal relicensing process and update our long-term energy plans, helping ensure we understand what matters most to the people we serve.

2. Has I&M already decided what it plans to do with these facilities?

No. We're just getting started.

Just as we did with the Elkhart and Mottville hydroelectric facilities, we're beginning by listening. ***Community feedback helped inform that planning process and ultimately supported continued operation and relicensing of those facilities.***

Now we're asking customers, neighbors and community members to share their perspectives on the Berrien Springs, Buchanan and Twin Branch facilities. We want to understand what matters most to the people who live, work and spend time near them before any decisions are made.

3. Why are you asking about these facilities specifically?

We took a similar approach with our Elkhart and Mottville hydroelectric facilities in 2024, gathering feedback from customers, community members and local stakeholders as part of the relicensing process. That input helped inform our planning and I&M ultimately moved forward with seeking new federal licenses for those facilities.

Now we're beginning those same conversations for the Berrien Springs, Buchanan and Twin Branch facilities. We want to understand what's important to the people who live, work and spend time nearby so those perspectives can be considered alongside environmental and operational reviews as planning moves forward.

4. What is an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)?

An Integrated Resource Plan, or IRP, is I&M's long-term roadmap for providing reliable and affordable electricity to customers.

The plan looks at different energy resources and helps guide decisions about how we can continue supplying electricity while balancing reliability, affordability and sustainability. More information can be found at IndianaMichiganPower.com/Community/Improving-our-Community/Projects/IRP/.

5. What happened with the Elkhart and Mottville hydroelectric facilities?

As part of our most recent long-term planning process, we took a close look at the different ways we generate electricity. What we found is that hydropower continues to be one of the most affordable ways we generate electricity while also providing renewable energy for our customers. Because of those benefits, continued operation and relicensing of the Elkhart and Mottville facilities was identified as the preferred path forward.

6. Are you planning to get rid of the Berrien Springs, Buchanan or Twin Branch facilities?

No decisions have been made.

At this stage, I&M is gathering information and listening to community feedback. We want to better understand what residents, customers and other stakeholders value before future planning decisions are considered.

7. Is this related to local data centers or increased electricity demand?

No. These conversations have nothing to do with data centers, new development projects or electricity demand growth. We're reaching out because it's time to begin the federal relicensing process for these facilities and update our long-term plans. We want to hear from the people who live, work and spend time in these communities. Your feedback will help inform both the relicensing process and our Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) as we consider the future of these facilities.

8. Will this increase my electric bill?

We understand customers are always thinking about their monthly bills. There are no impacts to customer bills associated with this community engagement process. In fact, hydropower continues to be one of the most affordable sources of electricity in I&M's generation mix. Any

future decisions involving these facilities would include additional review and opportunities for customer input.

Customers looking for help managing their energy costs can visit I&M's Bill Support Center to explore payment assistance programs, energy-saving tips and flexible payment options.

9. Will these facilities continue to operate during this process, and will public access, recreation or river activities be affected?

Yes. The facilities will continue operating normally throughout the process. There are also no proposed changes to public access, recreation or river activities at this time. We know these areas are important to many people and we're interested in learning how they're used today so those perspectives can be considered moving forward.

10. When will a final decision be made?

We understand people want clarity about what's ahead. While there isn't a final timeline or predetermined outcome today, we're committed to keeping customers, neighbors and stakeholders informed throughout the process. We'll share updates, key milestones and opportunities for input every step of the way.

11. How is I&M contacting stakeholders?

I&M is using several methods to gather feedback and share information, including:

- Community open houses
- Online surveys
- Project websites and updates
- Meetings with local officials and community leaders
- Outreach to businesses, community organizations and recreational groups
- Direct communication with nearby property owners

Our goal is to provide multiple ways for people to learn more, ask questions and share their perspectives.

12. Who should participate?

Anyone with a connection to these facilities or communities is encouraged to participate, including:

- Residents
- Property owners

- Local businesses
- Recreational users of the river
- Community organizations
- Local government leaders
- Environmental and conservation groups
- I&M customers interested in the future of these facilities

Whether you live nearby, spend time on the river or simply care about your community, we want to hear from you.

13. Will this affect my property values?

We understand changes in a community can raise questions about things like property values and quality of life. Right now, there are no proposed changes to these facilities and no decisions have been made. That's one reason we're reaching out now. We want to hear from as many people as we can so we can better understand what matters most before any future decisions are considered.

14. Why does my feedback matter?

Technical studies and planning analyses provide valuable information, but they don't tell the whole story. The people who live, work and raise families in these communities bring perspectives that can't be found in a report or study. Their feedback helps us better understand what these facilities mean to the community and what factors should be considered as planning moves forward.

15. How can I share my feedback?

You can share your feedback in several ways:

- Attend a community open house
- Complete the online survey
- Review project information on the project website
- Speak directly with I&M representatives during community outreach events

Information about upcoming meetings, the survey and project updates can be found at https://www.hydrocommunityconversation.com/.

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