

Pueblo of Iseta (Brianna Merrill)

Please see attached document.



PUEBLO OF ISLETA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

August 12, 2026

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Sent via email and comment portal

ATTN: Carman Melendrez, Ph. D,
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New Mexico Environment Department
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<https://nmed.commentinput.com/comment>

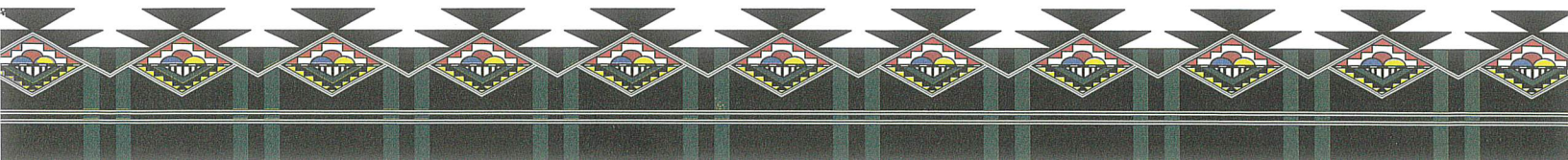
Re: Invitation for Tribal Consultation Regarding Yucca Growth Infrastructure, LLC (YGI) Microgrid Air Quality Permit Applications

Dr. Melendrez and the Air Quality Department of the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED),

The Pueblo of Isleta ("Pueblo") is pleased to have received NMED's Invitation for Tribal Consultation Regarding YGI Microgrid Air Quality Permit in Dona Ana County. Although the Pueblo of Isleta is a considerable distance to the North of Dona Ana County, air quality impacts cannot be isolated and will impact the Pueblo of Isleta and Tribes throughout New Mexico and neighboring states. When considering support or opposition for a project, the Pueblo of Isleta takes several factors into consideration: impact to the Pueblo (if any), impact to other Tribes and communities (if any), is the project suited for its proposed ecoregion, the record and integrity of the parties involved, the ability for NMED to enforce permit requirements, and the impacts to the local community. Therefore, the Pueblo of Isleta stands in opposition to the issuance of any permits allowing for the continued construction of the East and West YGI Microgrids and Project Jupiter.

The Pueblo of Isleta has flourished in what is now called New Mexico since time immemorial. The Pueblo maintains a strong agricultural tradition and therefore prioritizes clean air and water for the physical and cultural wellbeing of the Tribal community. There is no sustainable future when New Mexico entertains industry and corporations that would dramatically increase air pollution, water quality impacts, and water drawdown. These effects cannot be isolated to Dona Ana County and will therefore negatively impact the Pueblo of Isleta. The Pueblo has considered the cumulative impacts and finds the dissemination of the project into various components to be disingenuous in terms of reporting total emissions and water use. Multiple estimations and YGI's own calculations of emissions in the NMED Air Quality Permit Application No. 10883 – Agency Interest No. 41351 – PRN2026001 would far exceed the total annual emissions of the City of Albuquerque and Las Cruces combined. AI's drawbacks far exceeds their benefits; as a whole this project does not provide adequate justification for its total impact to air and water quality across the state.

Dona Ana County already faces water insecurity and air quality concerns with many local families already relying on bottled water for municipal uses due to arsenic contamination and aging infrastructure of their local water delivery systems. To permit industry to operate when it would dramatically amplify existing public health and environmental concerns is irresponsible. While industry may check the boxes on a permit, there is a broader question that should be answered: is this industry sustainable and appropriate for a desert community? As New Mexico continues to advance in renewable energy and initiatives that result in reductions to adverse air and water quality impacts, it must divest from industry that impedes progress



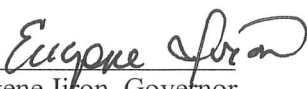
towards those goals and invest in industry that is more aligned with a flourishing desert ecosystem. The Pueblo of Isleta supports advances in industry that protect the air, water, plants, and animals that also call New Mexico home.

Furthermore, as AI Data Centers are being constructed throughout the country, adverse health effects are being reported that directly result from living in proximity to these data centers. Emissions, noise, and light pollution contribute to human impacts such as respiratory issues, cardiovascular issues, insomnia, anxiety, and tinnitus including hearing loss. See articles “the Health Divide: The AI data center boom will harm the health of communities that can least afford it” by Fran Smith published by USC Anneberg Center for Health Journalism, and “‘Living in Hell’: Data Center Neighbors Grapple With Noise, Air Pollution” by Cecelia Smith-Schoenwalder, published by U.S. News as a couple of examples of many articles reporting the emerging health concerns. Considering nothing happens in a vacuum, we can be sure to expect research to emerge regarding additional environmental impacts beyond the current air and water quality concerns. It is well documented that such projects disproportionately impact Indigenous, people of color, and low-income communities and therefore, the Pueblo of Isleta must stand in solidarity with the local community in its opposition to this data center development. For Indigenous communities, a large influx of workers without local community connections results in increases in incidents of violence. These patterns are well-documented in similar resource-extraction industries and out of concern for the well-being of all Tribal members and the local community, the Pueblo of Isleta cannot support such a project.

The manner in which this project has progressed is of concern to the Pueblo of Isleta. The insensitivity of appropriating Acoma identity in the company name (Acoma, LLC now YGI, LLC) in the initial batch of permit submissions is not forgotten. Additionally, this project has progressed prior to receiving the appropriate clearances and despite receiving overwhelming negative feedback from the local community. Further, the Pueblo is concerned about the lack of information in the permit application(s) tied to CO emissions, whether or not the facility will emit toxic air pollutants, its basis for its expected formaldehyde emissions, and the project’s basis for emissions estimates generally. Residents of Granbury, Texas have filed lawsuits and obtained significant signatures for a petition to remove Granbury city officials for the role the City of Granbury has played in annexing land and fast-tracking the development of the Project Patriot data center and power plant. The Pueblo of Isleta disapproves of the manner in which these data centers have been navigating the construction and permitting processes before their health effects on the communities they occupy are understood, before there are regulations specific to the nature of this industry, and providing insufficient analysis of their operational emissions and impacts. If the AI industry expects to be considered to be a public utility, then its development should progress with ample public comment opportunity, with the required Tribal consultation, and thorough analysis of emissions and environmental impacts. We ask the New Mexico Environment Department how it intends to meaningfully collaborate, trust data results, and expect reliable compliance corrections from YGI when those involved have already demonstrated a desire to circumnavigate community engagement and skew emissions estimation by initially applying for two permits. These questions are particularly important to address for a project that is anticipated to emit more greenhouse gases than the state’s two largest cities combined. New Mexico communities deserve honest process and involved parties to act with integrity.

The cost to New Mexico over the life-span of Project Jupiter and its various components will be extensive and diverse. Therefore, The Pueblo of Isleta asks NMED to deny YGI Microgrid – Air Quality Permit Application no. 10883 – Agency Interest No. 41351 – PRN20260001 as this project is not sustainable for the New Mexican environment and its many communities.

Sincerely,


Eugene Jiron, Governor
Pueblo of Isleta

