

Krista Joslin-Gay

I sit in my dining room watching the smoke of the Sacanton Fire fill the valley my house sits in. I'll have to sit in it today in order to promote a local health program. Its focus is local food systems, healthy eating, and physical movement for elementary age children. I'm finishing out a contract with the NMDOH. I have to say, this all feels ironic. It all feels like a bad joke. This is wrong. What are we doing? We know these centers are unpopular and expensive. We know that they are not beholden to public needs or health standards. And to make it all more confusing, we know our world is dying. We know these data centers are contributing to relocating whole watersheds. We know that they come with air, noise, and water pollutants. The values that got us here are the same ones being used to justify these centers. What happens when all we have to drink is sand? I have a farm. I cannot grow food without clean, consistent water. We build these centers at the expense of ecosystems. At the expense of ourselves. And for who? Who is benefiting? Who is paying the living cost? The human cost? Which children get asthma this time? Which ones get birth defects? Who gets the cancer? The diabetes? Whose local food systems and recreation spaces are getting the most contaminated? Who is deciding that? Why is that the choice? Allowing this center to be built is wrong.