

Mckinlie Hemming

Dear NMED staff, My name is Mckinlie Hemming, and I am a concerned community member and new mexico resident, writing to urge you to reject Yucca Growth Infrastructure, LLC's air permit application for the YGI Microgrid in Doña Ana County. Project Jupiter's power plant would release up to 10 million tons of climate-warming greenhouse gases every year — more than the combined emissions of Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe. That alone would erase most of the climate progress New Mexico has made in the last two decades and make a mockery of our state's climate goals. The proposed "micro" grid has a 2,462 MW capacity — nearly the size of the entire El Paso Electric grid (2,900 MW) and comparable to the full PNM grid (2,700 MW). But unlike those grids, which include substantial renewable energy and produce far less total pollution, this single project would be a massive new source of greenhouse gas and toxic emissions. This is an environmental justice issue. Santa Teresa Elementary and High School sit within five miles of the proposed site, where 96% of high school students are Hispanic. Daycare centers are nearby too. These children are especially vulnerable to NOx, CO, and VOCs. The Chihuahuan Desert borderlands are not a dumping ground for experimental technology, and Santa Teresa should not be ground zero for Bloom Technologies to scale their toxic technologies. Tribal governments — including Tortugas Pueblo, Ysleta del Sur, and Pueblo communities with landholdings in Doña Ana County — have not been properly notified of this application. The technology itself is unproven at this scale. This facility would be 1,000 times larger than the largest existing Bloom fuel cell installation, yet the application relies on pollution testing from a single 65 kW unit — 37,000 times smaller than the proposed plant. fuel cells also generate hazardous waste in "default canisters" and the claim that filter changes are exempt from air permitting (under 1,000 lbs/yr).

"The public should be given an additional 60 days to review and comment on the air quality permit so community members can participate equitably.

The air quality permit application should be denied outright given Bloom Energy's history of illegal dumping hazardous waste. Approving this permit would be government-sponsored environmental racism directed at residents of Doña Ana County.

If the permit is not denied outright, a public hearing needs to be held in Santa Teresa, in both English and Spanish, with an option to participate virtually."