

Alaina Szostkowski

New Mexico Environment Department
Air Quality Bureau – Permitting Section
325 Camino de los Marquez, Ste. 1
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Re: Yucca Growth Infrastructure, LLC-YGI Microgrid Air Quality Construction Permit Application

Dear NMED,

My name is Alaina Szostkowski and I am a resident of Santa Fe in Santa Fe County. I am writing to stand with my fellow New Mexicans in Doña Ana County in opposition to the construction of the Project Jupiter data center campus. Across the state, residents and lawmakers alike have expressed deep concerns about the environmental health impacts associated with data center construction, and I share their concerns about the risks and harms Project Jupiter poses to all New Mexicans. I am submitting this comment to urge the New Mexico Environment Department to reject Yucca Growth Infrastructure, LLC's air permit application for the YGI Microgrid in Doña Ana County.

As an educator, I have seen firsthand the negative impacts of increased AI technology on the social-emotional health, motivation and learning of our young people. I am also deeply concerned about the future of our lands and waters and protecting them for the health of future generations. The massive environmental impacts of data centers are well known (<https://www.lincolnst.edu/publications/land-lines-magazine/articles/land-water-impacts-data-center>) and Project Jupiter is no exception in terms of its power needs. While the project's website claims that it will not impact utility bills or water resources in the region due to generating its own power on a "closed loop system," water is still required as an initial input and there are still power and environmental costs associated with a massive construction project such as this one.

Aside from my intrinsic opposition to data centers, I also have concerns about the lack of transparency and public input throughout this process. Not only has the company behind Project Jupiter changed its name and withdrawn previous permit applications because of public opposition, but it has also continued to change proposed energy sources and provide vague claims about the environmental costs and economic benefits (<https://www.organmountainnews.com/project-jupiter-senators-listening-session-august-2026/>). The current proposal to use fuel cell technology is concerning for many reasons: it still produces high levels of greenhouse gasses and toxic pollutants (the website mentions a 92% reduction in NOx but does not say anything about CO2); there is not a clear process for handling waste; fuel cell technology has not often been tested at the proposed scale; and there are still air quality impacts for surrounding communities like Santa Teresa.

While the current proposal looks better on the web and has all the language of clean, green energy and environmental input, journalistic reporting on similar projects indicate that there is often not a substantial difference in CO2 emissions between natural gas and solid-oxide fuel cells, like Bloom Energy claims, and furthermore that Bloom boxes often require start-up or back-up power generation and thus are not fully self-sustaining. Moreover, if they do run on natural gas that still

needs to be extracted and thus contributes to an overall increase in fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions that exacerbates the climate crisis.

This is just another example of New Mexico being treated as an environmental sacrifice zone, where development projects with major associated toxic waste and health risks are pushed onto economically and socially vulnerable communities with little opportunity for review or public input. I ask the NMED to hold a bilingual public hearing near the Santa Teresa community (located 3.6 miles from the proposed project) in addition to the State Senators' proposed August 11 listening session, and to reject the air permit application for the YGI Microgrid.

Respectfully,

Alaina Szostkowski