

Molly Dubow

To the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and City of Benson officials:

I am writing to express my unequivocal opposition to the proposed Aluminum Dynamics aluminum recycling facility slated for near Highway 80 at the gateway to Benson.

1. Hazardous Air Pollution Threatens Our Health

According to the permit application's Air Dispersion Modeling (December 2024), the facility would emit over 52 tons of PM2.5, along with significant quantities of NO_x, CO, hydrogen chloride, and other hazardous air pollutants annually. Many of these pollutants are fine particles that can penetrate deeply into lungs and bloodstream, posing serious respiratory and neurological risks to nearby residents—especially children, seniors, and the immunocompromised.

2. Unsustainable Water Demand in a Drought-Stricken Region

The plant's two cooling towers alone are projected to use 5,000 gallons of water per minute—roughly 30% more annually than the entire Benson community currently uses. Given our fragile aquifer and ongoing drought, this level of consumption is irresponsible and unsustainable. It puts wells, river flow, and long-term community water security at risk.

3. Disruption to Community Lifestyle and Traffic

Operating 24/7, the facility would generate significant noise, traffic congestion from heavy trucks and trains, and visual blight—particularly damaging for residents, a nearby nursing home, and a school just a short distance away. This level of industrial incursion starkly contrasts with Benson's rural charm and compromises quality of life.

4. Alarming Lack of Transparency and Public Engagement

Many Benson residents were unaware of the scale or even the existence of this project until recently. Land was leased and permits submitted with minimal public notice, denying residents the opportunity for meaningful involvement in decisions impacting their health and community.

5. Threat to the San Pedro River and Its Biodiversity

The San Pedro River—our region's only free-flowing river and a biologically rich corridor home to rare wildlife and migratory birds—is at risk. The proposed plant's emissions and runoff threaten to degrade this vital ecosystem forever.

6. Mounting Opposition and Local Activism

Local residents have responded with urgency: over 2,400 verified signatures have been collected on a Change.org petition titled "Save Our Health & San Pedro River from

Industrial

Moreover, a dedicated Facebook group continues raising awareness, and 25% of registered voters have signed the petition ♦ an unprecedented level of civic response.

For these reasons, I ask the ADEQ and Benson officials to:

Deny the Title V permit for this project.

Rigorously enforce public transparency, including a new public hearing and vote by the City Council before proceeding.

Prioritize the health, water security, and environmental well-being of Benson's residents and future generations.

This is not merely a development. It's a choice ♦ between clean, sustainable growth and industrial risk that jeopardizes our health, water, environment, and way of life. I urge you to side with the community's welfare.

Thank you for considering this critical, time-sensitive matter.