

Update on Alto Concrete Batch Plant planned by Roper Construction, Inc.

As most of you probably know, Roper Construction, Inc. has made application for a new Air Quality Permit from the Air Quality Bureau of the New Mexico Environmental Department to allow the company to construct a new Concrete Batch Plant on Airport Road near its intersection with NM Hwy. 48.

The list of reasons why this site is an inappropriate location for a concrete batch plant could fill a book and we have discussed many of those in previous meetings (Air, Water, Noise, Light and Traffic concerns, as well as proximity to the Class-1 Wilderness Area, children's Church Camp, National Scenic Byway, and numerous residential neighborhoods).

Since the application was filed, many residents and business owners in the surrounding area have joined together in opposition to the plant's construction. Calls and letters, as well as petitions signed by more than 1,000 people, have gone out to the NMED Air Quality Bureau and other governmental agencies seeking the denial of Roper's permit request, or at least the scheduling of a Public Hearing to allow citizens to voice their concerns.

Based on feedback from several people who have spoken directly with Mr. Roper, it appears that he will not be easily dissuaded from his plan and is preparing for a fight.

A "working group" of about 25 people, with representatives from various neighborhoods in the area, (Alto Lakes, Sun Valley, Legacy Estates, Enchanted Forest, Ranches of Sonterra and Rio Ruidoso Vista Estates) has been formed to develop action plans and strategies to protect the interests of the Greater Alto Community. This group has recently engaged the services of one of New Mexico's leading environmental attorneys to assist us in the battle. This is NOT a Pro-Bono legal engagement, but it was deemed to be an important action if we hope to maintain the scenic beauty and environmental integrity of our neighborhoods. A Go-Fund-Me page may soon be established to help defray some of the costs of fighting the Roper Concrete Batch Plant.

One very positive development is that the NMED Cabinet Secretary concurred with the Air Quality Bureau's recommendation that a Public Hearing be held regarding Roper's permit application. The date, time and location of this hearing are not yet set, but it has been promised that we will be notified of the details of the public hearing well in advance.

When the hearing occurs, there is no guarantee that Roper's permit will be denied. A HUGE community turnout in opposition would probably be most helpful.

The next meeting of the "Working Group" is scheduled for Thursday, September 2nd at 7:00 PM. We will try to keep everyone informed of any significant new developments as they occur. Please don't be alarmed if you don't hear anything for a while... the wheels of State Government sometimes move very slowly.

If you wish to become a member of the working group, have a need for specific information, or have pertinent information to share, please contact Craig Cathey at cwcathey47@gmail.com

Please sign our petition at [Change.org](https://www.change.org)