

ALASKANS FOR DATA CENTER ACCOUNTABILITY

KEEP ALASKA WILD



SAY NO TO DATA CENTERS

EDUCATION ON ALASKAN
HYPERSCALE DATA CENTERS

We are aimed to educate Alaskans
about the proposed hyperscale data
centers being built in Alaska.



Use the QR code to learn more or
go to www.northern.org/afdca/

UNDERSTANDING DATA CENTERS



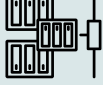
Container Data Center: is usually a module or shipping container that's packaged with ready-made, plug-and-play data center components: servers, storage, networking gear, UPS, generators, air conditioners, etc. Often found on military deployments, construction sites or in disaster areas.



Edge Data Centers: Small, localized facilities placed close to end users or devices, such as individual consumers of telecommunications services. These facilities are often managed and operated by ISPs and telcos.



Enterprise Data Center: is a private data center facility that supports a single organization. located either on the same site as the organization (an on-premises location) or off-premises at a site chosen for the connectivity, power and security it offers. The in-house IT department typically manages.



Colocation Data Center: Third-party facilities where customers rent space, power, and cooling. Companies that don't have the space for their own enterprise data center—or an IT team to dedicate to managing one—often choose a colocation data center.



Cloud Data Centers: are a collection of distributed facilities designed to provide global cloud-based services. These services are offered on-demand and on a subscription basis, commonly as: Software as a Service (SaaS); Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS); Platform as a Service (PaaS). Highly scalable and fully managed by the vendor, cloud data centers enable organizations of all sizes to pay for the computing resources they need, when they need them, and at the scale required for their operations. This model is suitable for businesses looking for cost-efficient, flexible, and scalable data center solutions.



Hyperscale Data Center: These are the ones driving today's building boom, and they carry some of the biggest power demands of any type. Owners chase cheap electricity, cooler weather, tax breaks and fiber. These are owned and operated by the company they support just on a much larger scale for cloud computing platforms and big data storage like AI & crypto currency. They are the largest players in the industry, operated by tech giants like Meta, Microsoft, Google, & AI companies. Globally distributed and fully automated & maintain extensive networks of data centers worldwide. On average, a standard data centers is around 3 acres, but hyperscale data centers are as large as 300 acres. With Google's first hyperscale data center encompassing 832 acres! 54% of hyperscale data centers are based in the US. Other major locations include China (16%) and Europe (15%).

Note: Cloud and Hyperscale overlap a lot, but they aren't the same idea: Cloud is the service model, while Hyperscale describes the size and operating style of the data center building.

CURRENT PROPOSALS

As of September 14th 2026 there are 20 proposed hyperscale data center sites.

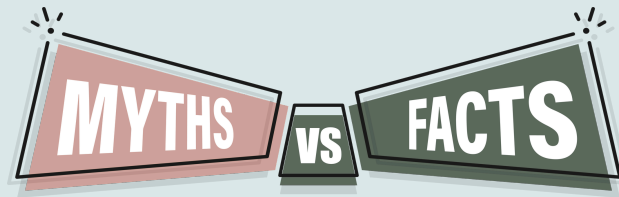
The state is currently moving to grant a 50-year lease to STAK Energy Corporation for a massive 715 acre data center on the North Slope — a facility that by its own documents would consume more than twice the natural gas currently used by all of urban Alaska, powered by a new dedicated pipeline, during an active statewide energy crisis.

At the same time, the U.S. Department of the Air Force is offering 9,417 acres across JBER, Eielson, and Clear Space Force Station for up to 12 commercial data centers. Alaskans were never consulted on becoming the data center infrastructure hub for the military-tech complex.

Mat-Su Assembly approved to help a private company find investors and developers to build a large data center on borough-owned land. TECC holds a land use permit in the Port District for feasibility testing, aimed at developing an Advanced Manufacturing and Computing Campus for large-scale power consumers. There are 5 proposed locations for this hyperscale data center totaling 10,928 acres.

The Department of Natural Resources proposed transferring a 19,950 acres of state land just north of Houston to AIDEA, at no cost for transmission infrastructure for utilities; “advanced manufacturing pads”; and “scalable data centers” that would use the utilities.

Delaware-based DeepGreen Cook Inlet SPV LLC released plans for a 1,650 acre, 100-megawatt data center project with as many 350 underwater turbines and 66 “hives” housing AI servers, both powered and cooled by water of Cook Inlet west of the Nikiski shoreline. DeepGreen Cook Inlet does not have a website or a project page with information about the company or the technology it plans to use.



MYTH *Hyperscale AI data centers are great for communities*

FACT Hyperscale data center developers are targeting rural and tribal communities as locations for new facilities for a variety of reasons: access to more water, cheaper electricity, and tax incentives from local governments and water/electric companies. The energy needs of the data centers are often so large that they require entire new power plants to be built in rural areas to supply their demand.¹

MYTH *Hyperscale data centers won't impact your power bill*

FACT Quite the opposite. Hyperscale data centers have caused energy price increases for consumers of up to 267%.² In 2024, customers across seven states paid over \$4 billion in additional utility costs to connect data centers to the power grid.²⁰ The carbon intensity of electricity used by AI is higher was 48% higher than the US average²⁸

MYTH *Alaska already has data centers so these proposed ones aren't that big of a deal*

FACT While Alaska does have a few data centers, they are edge data centers. They are for telecom companies like GCI. Edge data centers are a lot smaller than the proposed hyperscale data centers that are a minimum of 10 million square feet. Almost 300 acres!

MYTH *Using different energy sources like coal, natural gas & nuclear will be more cost effective*

FACT Refurbishing a **coal power** plant to extend its lifespan past the typical 40 years can cost up to \$1.3 billion. Moreover, the cost of operating these plants increased by 28% from 2021 to 2024 due to higher fuel, capital (including debt service), and maintenance costs.⁴¹ The cost to build a new **natural gas** plant has tripled since 2022 due to it taking 4-7 years to construct, scarcity of transformers and iron and steel pipes, & raising labor costs. Natural gas plants expected to enter service in 2030 or later are reporting costs of \$2,000 per kW, which may soon rise to \$3,000. These higher generation costs are passed on to consumers through higher monthly energy bills.⁴¹ In theory, \$80 billion can buy enough **nuclear** reactors to power all of Virginia's Data Center Alley. In reality, traditional reactors take 10 years or more to build, while a highly anticipated wave of small, modular reactors has yet to produce commercial power. Not long ago, utilities were shutting down costly nuclear plants and replacing them with cheaper natural gas-fired and renewable plants. The AI boom has since supercharged electricity consumption, straining power supplies and driving up prices.⁴²

MYTH **Hyperscale data centers will provide jobs**

FACT There is NO evidence that data-center job promises are being fulfilled.⁶ Construction generates hundreds of temporary well-paying jobs. A review of more than 1,200 U.S. data centers found that even the largest employ fewer than 150 permanent workers, and sometimes as few as 25.⁴³ With locals claiming most jobs are for people who don't live in the state.

MYTH **Hyperscale data centers will provide tax revenue needed to support communities.**

FACT Data center developments are receiving hefty tax breaks that are resulting in a loss in revenue²⁶. Georgia is projecting \$2.5 billion²⁵ in losses per year due to data center tax breaks and incentives. Tax incentives in Virginia are costing the state \$1.6 billion a year²⁷. We're unsure of the tax breaks given in Alaska to these companies.

MYTH **Hyperscale data centers don't contribute to climate change/global warming**

FACT By 2030, 2.5 billion tons of CO² may be released into the atmosphere by hyperscale data centers globally, more than 40% of the United States' total emissions. One center alone can release anywhere between 200,000-400,000 metric tonnes of CO² annually, as much as a small city.⁷

MYTH **AI and Hyperscale data centers are good for the economy**

FACT The generative AI and hyperscale data center industry carries deep financial risks of stranded assets.³ Every year AI fails to return ever-higher numbers, the need grows for increased labor productivity.⁵

MYTH **Hyperscale data centers don't create air pollution**

FACT Data centers need a constant and reliable power supply. Many facilities rely on gas-fired generation for routine operations alongside diesel generators for emergency backup. Both come with climate and health risks. Diesel-fueled backup generators also release harmful air pollutants, including fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen oxides (NOx), linked to respiratory disease, heart disease, asthma and other serious health risks. Memphis, Tennessee, where more than 30 natural gas turbines intended for daily use are being installed at xAI's new Colossus data center. Local residents and the NAACP filed a notice with intent to sue under the Clean Air Act, arguing that the project could worsen already dangerous air quality.⁴³

If using a coal plant to power the data center it emits toxic particulate matter that harms the environment and nearby communities, as well as greenhouse gases that heat the planet. Natural gas produces carbon dioxide emissions as well as other harmful pollution. This would continue to harm the environment and compromise the health of people living near these new power plants.⁴⁰

MYTH **Data centers won't impact the water in your home**

FACT Only 3% of Earth's water is freshwater, and only 0.5% of all water is accessible and safe for human consumption.⁴⁴ Nearly all data centers require huge amounts of drinking water to function and cool their machines. In some cases, this water can never be reused or returned to the water cycle because of contamination. Data centers are already consuming over 25% of local community water supplies in certain areas. In 2023, Google's data centers alone used over 6 billion gallons of water for cooling, enough water for the entire city of Los Angeles for 2 weeks.⁸ Many people report loss of water pressure in areas where data centers are built. It can be particularly damaging for rural households that rely on well water, causing those sources to go dry or build up sediment. These facilities are an extreme danger to precious water resources and will impact your family directly if built near your home.⁹ When hyperscale data centers use local water supplies they receive priority treatment and threaten communities access to water.³⁹

Data centers withdraw millions of gallons daily for cooling (direct use) and consume additional billions indirectly via power plant water for electricity generation (indirect use), depleting rivers, aquifers, and local supplies.⁵³

MYTH **Closed-looped cooling systems won't consume water or pollute it**

FACT Closed-loop cooling systems enable the reuse of both recycled wastewater and freshwater, allowing water supplies to be used multiple times. A cooling tower can use external air to cool the heated water, allowing it to return to its original temperature. These systems can reduce freshwater use by up to 70%.⁴⁴ However, this approach costs more and requires greater system complexity. Closed-looped cooling systems use and consume water through evaporation, blowdown, and leaks²⁹. They add PFAS chemical additives (like glycol), which can only be recycled in the system a few times, creating blowdown wastewater with nitrites, glycol, and heavy metals. Because chemicals are required in closed loop systems, water contained in a closed loop system poses a risk to ground water and local aquatic wildlife³⁰⁻⁴⁵.

In the City of Cheyenne Wyoming, a rare antibiotic resistant bacterium called *Cupriavidus gilardii* was detected in the City's reclaimed water system. Due to wastewater from the construction and commissioning of a Meta AI data center which uses a closed loop system. The incident occurred during "fill-and-flush" operations which creates blowdown wastewater, a process used to clean and prepare large cooling systems before they become operational.⁵⁷

Some closed loop data centers also use cooling towers acting as an indirect heat rejection device. However, as we've seen in New York, cooling towers if not properly maintained can create *Legionella* bacteria. Where an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease had claimed the lives of six people in New York City.⁵⁸⁻⁵⁹

MYTH

Hyperscale data centers won't impact your night sky

FACT

While few studies have been conducted on data center light pollution, one report from a former worker at data centers in Virginia, described the facilities light pollution as “easily seen for miles.” Data centers “glow at night like a giant city of lights. The night sky is glowing like a meteorite just crashed into the woods ... humming, pulsating, glowing.” Data centers are also incompatible with residential areas because they often “deploy bright security lighting.”¹⁰ Meaning say goodbye to watching the northern lights.

MYTH

Light Pollution isn't that bad on humans or animals

FACT

Artificial light can wreak havoc on natural body rhythms in both humans and animals. Nocturnal light interrupts sleep and confuses the circadian rhythm—the internal, twenty-four-hour clock that guides day and night activities and affects physiological processes in nearly all living organisms. An increased amount of light at night lowers melatonin production, which results in sleep deprivation, fatigue, headaches, stress, anxiety, and other health problems. Recent studies also show a connection between reduced melatonin levels and cancer. Light pollution causes birds guided by moonlight during migration to get confused, lose their way, and often die. Large numbers of insects, a primary food source for birds and other animals, are drawn to artificial lights and are instantly killed upon contact with light sources.⁵⁴

MYTH

Hyperscale data centers decibel levels are safe for humans & animals

FACT

Data centers generate significant noise pollution primarily from diesel generators and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems, with internal noise levels reaching up to 96 decibels – well above the 85 dBA threshold considered harmful to hearing.⁴⁶ This is comparable to the sound of a motorcycle or a jackhammer next to your bedroom window. Infrasound (not audible to the human ear) emitted from data centers can impact your physical and mental health.^{32 33 34} Noise exposure can disrupt circadian rhythms, delay sleep onset and reduce overall sleep quality, all of which contribute to physical and mental fatigue. In addition to sleep disturbances, epidemiological and clinical studies indicate that noise acts as a physiological stressor, triggering autonomic arousal and increasing the risk of headaches, irritability, dizziness, cognitive dysfunction and even mood disorders. In a study conducted about the effects of urban noise pollution, they found that any noise pollution above 65 decibels & higher caused disturbances in sleep, headaches, dizziness, irritability and difficulty concentrating.⁴⁷ Laboratory studies and field research have identified four main ways in which animals are adversely affected by noise pollution: (i) hearing loss, with noise levels of 85 Decibel or higher; (ii) masking, such as the inability to hear important environmental and animal signals; (iii) increased heart rate and breathing; and (iv) behavioral effects. There is considerable intra-species variability, and this varies according to the characteristics of the noise. This may lead to territory abandonment and loss of reproduction.⁵⁵

The EMF exposure from a hyperscale data center isn't that bad for humans & animals

MYTH

FACT

Data centers produce electromagnetic fields (EMF), Radiofrequency (RF), Extremely Low Frequency (ELF), Electromagnetic Interference and Dirty Electricity. While the specific health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMFs) from data centers specifically have not been extensively studied due to the relative novelty of this infrastructure, the broader health impacts of non-ionizing EMF exposure have been researched for decades. Non-ionizing EMFs have been linked to childhood leukemia, central nervous system tumors, brain cancer, breast cancer, Alzheimer's disease, cognitive dysfunction, miscarriage, ADHD, obesity, asthma, oxidative stress, free radical formation, and DNA damage. Long-term exposure to elevated ELF-EMF magnetic fields have reported cancer, miscarriage, and increased Alzheimer's.⁵¹ Depending on species and environment, wildlife is capable of experiencing both near- and far-field exposures like humans. RF radiation may also affect natural "natal homing behavior"—like salmon—to return to their original birth location to reproduce. It can also interfere with animals migration patterns. Extremely low frequency EMF was also found to disrupt the directional sense of honey bees as well as other insects. Studies have also found with animals EMF exposure lowered animals & insects birth rates.⁵⁶

MYTH

Hyperscale data centers won't affect our fishing

FACT

Reduced river flows, warmer waters, and pollution harm fish habitats, aquatic life, and ecosystems, disrupting food chains and species survival.⁵³ A study conducted concluded data centers in coastal regions pose a greater threat to migratory fish due to expected changes in water flow and temperature. Further, increased warming of freshwater systems can come directly from the cooling of servers and indirectly from the cooling of electricity generators. These temperature shifts may interact with some freshwater species at sensitive stages, such as spawning migrations and larval development. Additionally, hydropower could cut off access for spawning and migratory fish with the addition of dams or the use of decommissioned dams.⁵² Data center cooling systems often use chemical additives to prevent corrosion, scaling, and the growth of algae and bacteria. During startup, the piping is initially flushed with water to clean and verify the system; that flush water is then disposed of as wastewater with said chemicals. This also happens during maintenance.⁴⁵ With water pollution also a contributor to the health of fish.

MYTH **Hyperscale data centers are perfect for Arctic environments**

FACT The assumption is that the Arctic is an empty, cold canvas, poised for development. The Arctic's appeal as a site for data infrastructure is not without logic, but the risks associated with operating data centers in this vulnerable region have largely gone unexamined. A fossil-fuel-powered data center would cause CO2 emissions to skyrocket, further accelerating ice and permafrost melt and feeding a dangerous warming feedback loop.⁴⁸

Nearly all of the electricity consumed by a data center ends up as heat, servers and other equipment require continuous cooling. These cooling systems remove the heat generated by computing and release it into the surrounding environment as waste heat. The latest science shows that this waste heat can increase surrounding land surface temperatures by as much as 16°F and raise air temperatures in nearby neighborhoods by up to 4°F. These effects have been observed as far away as half a kilometer, or about five city blocks!⁴⁹ The fact that these hyperscale data centers are heat islands means it will lead to the permafrost to melt. When it thaws, microbes will begin to eat the material, causing it to decay and releasing carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere. As permafrost degradation buckles roads, compromises homes, and changes the landscape, it is without a doubt one of the most serious threats to people both within and beyond the Arctic in this century.⁵⁰

MYTH **AI helps us solve tasks more efficiently and helps us think better**

FACT Users of AI programs like ChatGPT have been shown to have lower brain engagement and “consistently underperformed at neural, linguistic, and behavioral levels.” By relying on generative AI to do our critical thinking, we’re shutting down the most important parts of our brain – the stuff that makes us human. A preliminary study from MIT has revealed that engaging with AI to write an essay causes “cognitive debt” and those who used ChatGPT to write struggled to quote their essays.¹² Generative AI use is permanently killing creativity and homogenizing thoughts among users.³⁷

MYTH **Non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) protect competitive advantage**

FACT NDAs with data center developers limit accountability because they are broad in writing and discourage information sharing on project energy and water use. NDAs leave both leaders and their constituents in the dark regarding the potential impacts of these projects.¹⁶

MYTH **AI data centers protect your privacy**

FACT Data centers are part and parcel of the surveillance state. Every private conversation you share with ChatGPT is recorded forever and can be shared with authorities if asked. A significant percentage of AI power usage goes to surveillance apparatus like facial recognition and location tracking.¹⁷

Allowing data centers on Indigenous lands and engaging with generative AI is Data Sovereignty

MYTH

FACT

Indigenous communities are being told that AI data centers will help protect and assert their data sovereignty. However, many tribal nations do not have the capacity or legal infrastructure to regulate multinational corporations. By giving these companies unfettered access to Indigenous data, we're actually giving away their power. This is not data sovereignty.¹⁵

MYTH

AI can protect Indigenous culture and languages

FACT

AI will never be able to accurately learn Indigenous languages. By giving tech corporations access to indigenous ancestral knowledge, there is a risk of misrepresentation and appropriation of the culture. Native histories, cultural knowledge, and languages should stay in Native hands.¹⁴

MYTH

Hyperscale data centers won't effect subsistence hunting and fishing

FACT

From all the forms of pollution hyperscale data centers cause this will effect the migration & health of many of the animals people hunt & fish. RF radiation may also affect natural "natal homing behavior"—like salmon—to return to their original birth location to reproduce. It can also interfere with animals migration patterns.⁵⁶ Reduced river flows, warmer waters, and pollution harm fish habitats, aquatic life, and ecosystems, disrupting food chains and species survival.⁵³ Many animals have highly specific vulnerabilities to anthropogenic EMF due to unique physiology that depend upon, and constantly use, the Earth's static geomagnetic fields for seasonal migration/orientation, nest/den building, mating, reproduction, offspring care, food finding, territorial defense, simple daily/seasonal circadian rhythms, and even longevity and survivorship.⁵⁶ With a hyperscale data center any animal that would come in contact with it would have those systems compromised. Then you have to think of the air pollution, noise pollution, etc which all have been covered on the effects they cause humans as well as wildlife.

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