

From: [Rick and Peggy Fletcher](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: Testimony regarding Republic Services appeal of Coffin Butte Landfill land use decision LU-24-027
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 1:49:19 PM
Attachments: [Testimony to Benton County Oregon Board of Commissioners regarding continued expansion of the Coffin Butte Landfill.docx](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Please see my testimony below in opposition to the Republic Services appeal to the Benton BOC to overturn the Planning Commission decision which denies expansion of the Coffin Butte Landfill. I have also attached a Word file of the testimony in case that works better for you.

Thank you for the opportunity to have a voice in this.

Rick Fletcher

Testimony to Benton County Oregon Board of Commissioners regarding continued expansion of the Coffin Butte Landfill, Application File Number LU-24-027

To: Benton County Commissioners, Wyse, Malone, and Shepherd:

My Name is Rick Fletcher. My wife, Peggy and I have lived at 29040 Blake Drive, Corvallis, Oregon, since we built our home on our 94.5 ac forest conservation property in 1993. We raised our 3 kids here and now have frequent visits from our 7 grandchildren there. I am a professor emeritus, from the OSU College of Forestry, after spending 32 years on that faculty.

Benton County, and specifically the rural area we live in has been a wonderful, clean, and healthy place to live and raise new generations of Oregonians. That is until the past 10+ years, as Republic Services has begun to use our rural landfill as a western Oregon dumpster for the several county area where it does business. They have started bringing many extra 40-foot vans of garbage in each day, so many that they now will need to expand it greatly to further their business model.

YOU NEED TO TELL THEM NO, NOW, AND FOREVER! Please reject this appeal in unanimous vote like our planning commission did. Overturning the Planning Commission decision through this appeal would be a terrible long-term land use decision for Benton County to allow to happen. Other than providing some \$ to fund current building of our county government infrastructure, it is an awful idea, and will lead to future environmental controversies, community conflict, and likely lawsuits against Republic Services and Benton County. It was rightly rejected 7-0 by the planning commission in July 2025, after hearing all the evidence. There has been no significant further information presented by Republic Services or others that should change that planning commission decision.

As a retired forest scientist and educator, this makes no sense at all to me, other than the "cents" involved. A large landfill should never have been placed in this location, near current and future population, and with many opportunities to poison water and air in the area. For

myself and other neighbors, this rotting mountain of garbage is not just “a not in my backyard” current issue. It is clearly a long term legacy and safety issue for all of us neighbors, but more importantly, for all of mid-valley area that will be left with the long-term environmental disaster that this landfill expansion could very well cause. **Is this really the legacy that you as our three county commissioners want to leave for future generations to struggle with?**

Please do the right thing for all of us in Benton County and adjacent areas by DENYING THE LANDFILL EXPANSION REQUEST FROM REPUBLIC SERVICES.

My wife and I have gone to great efforts to manage our conservation lands, and preserve them for future generations, as Oregon’s 1971 Land Use Planning Act rightly directed. We are proud of how we have cared for the forest, water, wildlife, and vanishing native oak stands over the past 30 years. Our hope has always been to pass it on to the next conservation owner better than we received it. The current deterioration of air and water, as well as noise from the Coffin Butte Landfill has been increasingly challenging for us, but significant landfill expansion will make our resource management significantly harder, and likely will not allow us to pass it on better than we found it (i.e. a much larger landfill is a significant environmental problem in a naturally managed neighborhood). A large, regional dump does not belong in a natural landscape of rural housing in Western Oregon. That is precisely why new dumps cannot be sited in the several counties around us.

As I was contemplating writing this testimony, a friend from Corvallis was visiting our home, and standing on our back deck, said, “what is that?” referring to the Coffin Butte Landfill, which is over a mile away, but now, is now clearly visible through the forest. We can now see it, hear it, and on days with a north wind, smell it. That was not the case until the last couple years. Clearly this environmental pollution is a violation of our laws. It has become a problem for our U-Cut Christmas tree farm, which I fear may have to close on any day we get a north wind. The odor is very unpleasant, and I am guessing very unhealthy. This problem likely will only get worse with landfill expansion. And may eventually lead to us not being able to have our U-Cut Christmas tree business in operation. That does not seem right, and in fact is prohibited by our own Benton County land use code.

PLEASE REJECT THE COFFIN BUTTE LANDFILL EXPANSION REQUEST, FILE # LU-24-027 BEFORE IT RESULTS IN LOSS OF ADJACENT BUSINESSES, AND PREVENTS LEGAL LAND USES BY NEIGHBORS. THIS IS CLEARLY A VIOLATION OF BENTON COUNTY LAND USE CODE 53.215 (2).

I have one final point of reference for you commissioners. As others, we use the landfill too, to dispose of what we cannot compost or recycle. Although we have never had garbage service in 30 years, I do make a couple trips per year to the landfill to dispose of our own garbage. The transformation under Republic Services has been distressing to say the least. A couple years ago, I had a very unsettling experience at the landfill. As I was using my dump bed trailer to put our trash in the landfill, I was next to the commercial dumping station. At one point, my garbage became stuck in the trailer, and I got out to see how to get it loose. An employee of the dump came up to me to see what I was doing, then literally ran away towards his pickup. I looked towards the commercial tipping area, and saw a large, dark cloud of ash moving towards me. All I could do was jump in my truck and wait for the cloud to engulf me. It grew dark in my truck from the ash, and I was able to put on a filter mask I had in the glovebox. When the cloud passed, I got out and proceeded to finish my dump, and proceed back home where I could clean up my truck/trailer, and take a shower. I never reported this instance, but I wondered what was really in that ash. **Just how careful are they at the dump**

as to what they received and how it is disposed of?

Republic Services and their dump owning partner, appear to be the type of operator that check the right boxes for the inspectors, but a closer look reveals they clearly are not a good long-term partner for Benton County.

PLEASE REJECT REPUBLIC SERVICES APPLICATION AND TO EXPAND THIS LANDFILL LOCATION. IT IS NOT CURRENTLY SAFE, COULD NOT BE APPROVED AS A NEW LANDFILL TODAY, WAS NEVER INTENDED TO BE WHAT THEY WANT IT TO BE, AND DESERVES TO LIVE OUT ITS CURRENT LIFE, AND BE REPLACED BY A LANDFILL AT A SAFER LOCATION, SUCH AS ON THE EASTSIDE OF THE CASCADES.

Sincerely,

Rick Fletcher

Eaglesview Forestry Owner

Professor Emeritus, OSU College of Forestry,

29040 Blake Drive

Corvallis, Oregon 97330

October 7, 2025

Testimony to Benton County Oregon Board of Commissioners regarding continued expansion of the Coffin Butte Landfill, Application File Number LU-24-027

To: Benton County Commissioners, Wyse, Malone, and Shepherd:

My Name is Rick Fletcher. My wife, Peggy and I have lived at 29040 Blake Drive, Corvallis, Oregon, since we built our home on our 94.5 ac forest conservation property in 1993. We raised our 3 kids here and now have frequent visits from our 7 grandchildren there. I am a professor emeritus, from the OSU College of Forestry, after spending 32 years on that faculty.

Benton County, and specifically the rural area we live in has been a wonderful, clean, and healthy place to live and raise new generations of Oregonians. That is until the past 10+ years, as Republic Services has begun to use our rural landfill as a western Oregon dumpster for the several county area where it does business. They have started bringing many extra 40-foot vans of garbage in each day, so many that they now will need to expand it greatly to further their business model.

YOU NEED TO TELL THEM NO, NOW, AND FOREVER! Please reject this appeal in unanimous vote like our planning commission did. Overturning the Planning Commission decision through this appeal would be a terrible long-term land use decision for Benton County to allow to happen. Other than providing some \$ to fund current building of our county government infrastructure, it is an awful idea, and will lead to future environmental controversies, community conflict, and likely lawsuits against Republic Services and Benton County. It was rightly rejected 7-0 by the planning commission in July 2025, after hearing all the evidence. There has been no significant further information presented by Republic Services or others that should change that planning commission decision.

As a retired forest scientist and educator, this makes no sense at all to me, other than the “cents” involved. A large landfill should never have been placed in this location, near current and future population, and with many opportunities to poison water and air in the area. For myself and other neighbors, this rotting mountain of garbage is not just “a not in my backyard” current issue. It is clearly a long term legacy and safety issue for all of us neighbors, but more importantly, for all of mid-valley area that will be left with the long-term environmental disaster that this landfill expansion could very well cause. **Is this really the legacy that you as our three county commissioners want to leave for future generations to struggle with?**

Please do the right thing for all of us in Benton County and adjacent areas by DENYING THE LANDFILL EXPANSION REQUEST FROM REPUBLIC SERVICES.

My wife and I have gone to great efforts to manage our conservation lands, and preserve them for future generations, as Oregon's 1971 Land Use Planning Act rightly directed. We are proud of how we have cared for the forest, water, wildlife, and vanishing native oak stands over the past 30 years. Our hope has always been to pass it on to the next conservation owner better than we received it. The current deterioration of air and water, as well as noise from the Coffin Butte Landfill has been increasingly challenging for us, but significant landfill expansion will make our resource management significantly harder, and likely will not allow us to pass it on better than we found it (i.e. a much larger landfill is a significant environmental problem in a naturally managed neighborhood). A large, regional dump does not belong in a natural landscape of rural housing in Western Oregon. That is precisely why new dumps cannot be sited in the several counties around us.

As I was contemplating writing this testimony, a friend from Corvallis was visiting our home, and standing on our back deck, said, "what is that?" referring to the Coffin Butte Landfill, which is over a mile away, but now, is now clearly visible through the forest. We can now see it, hear it, and on days with a north wind, smell it. That was not the case until the last couple years. Clearly this environmental pollution is a violation of our laws. It has become a problem for our U-Cut Christmas tree farm, which I fear may have to close on any day we get a north wind. The odor is very unpleasant, and I am guessing very unhealthy. This problem likely will only get worse with landfill expansion. And may eventually lead to us not being able to have our U-Cut Christmas tree business in operation. That does not seem right, and in fact is prohibited by our own Benton County land use code.

PLEASE REJECT THE COFFIN BUTTE LANDFILL EXPANSION REQUEST, FILE # LU-24-027 BEFORE IT RESULTS IN LOSS OF ADJACENT BUSINESSES, AND PREVENTS LEGAL LAND USES BY NEIGHBORS. THIS IS CLEARLY A VIOLATION OF BENTON COUNTY LAND USE CODE 53.215 (2).

I have one final point of reference for you commissioners. As others, we use the landfill too, to dispose of what we cannot compost or recycle. Although we have never had garbage service in 30 years, I do make a couple trips per year to the landfill to dispose of our own garbage. The transformation under Republic Services has been distressing to say the least. A couple years ago, I had a very unsettling experience at the landfill. As I was using my dump bed trailer to put our trash in the landfill, I was next to the commercial dumping station. At one point, my garbage became stuck in the trailer, and I got out to see how to get it loose. An employee of the dump came up to me to see what I was doing, then literally ran away towards his pickup. I looked towards the commercial tipping area, and saw a large, dark cloud of ash moving towards me. All I could do was jump in my truck and wait for the cloud to engulf me. It grew dark in my truck from the ash, and I was able to put on a filter mask I had in the glovebox. When the cloud passed, I got out and proceeded to finish my dump, and proceed back home where I could clean

up my truck/trailer, and take a shower. I never reported this instance, but I wondered what was really in that ash. **Just how careful are they at the dump as to what they received and how it is disposed of?**

Republic Services and their dump owning partner, appear to be the type of operator that check the right boxes for the inspectors, but a closer look reveals they clearly are not a good long-term partner for Benton County.

PLEASE REJECT REPUBLIC SERVICES APPLICATION AND TO EXPAND THIS LANDFILL LOCATION. IT IS NOT CURRENTLY SAFE, COULD NOT BE APPROVED AS A NEW LANDFILL TODAY, WAS NEVER INTENDED TO BE WHAT THEY WANT IT TO BE, AND DESERVES TO LIVE OUT ITS CURRENT LIFE, AND BE REPLACED BY A LANDFILL AT A SAFER LOCATION, SUCH AS ON THE EASTSIDE OF THE CASCADES.

Sincerely,

Rick Fletcher
Eaglesview Forestry Owner
Professor Emeritus, OSU College of Forestry,
29040 Blake Drive
Corvallis, Oregon 97330
October 7, 2025