

From: [Boening, Dean](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: LU-24-027 Written Testimony and Request
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 5:25:31 PM
Attachments: [WM Benton County letter final 2025.10.7.pdf](#)
[WM Peace of Mind for Benton County 2025.10.7.pdf](#)

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Dear Sir(s)/Madam,

Please find two pdf files attached (revised cover letter & companion handout).

At 2:04 pm yesterday, I submitted these same two files (one of which was not a final version). I request that you delete yesterday's submittal entirely to avoid duplication. The files attached here will be Waste Management's written testimony. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Dean Boening
Waste Management
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Phone: (503) 201-0778

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WM Portland
7227 NE 55th Avenue
Portland, OR 97218

October 7, 2025

Benton County Commissioners Nancy Wyse, Pat Malone and Gabe Shepard
Benton County Planning Commission
Benton County Solid Waste Division

Dear Benton County Commissioners, Planning Commission Members and Solid Waste Staff:

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information as you contemplate Benton County's long-term needs related to solid waste.

By way of introduction, WM is North America's leading provider of comprehensive environmental solutions and the largest recycler in North America. We operate the largest landfill network and lead the industry in transporting waste by rail. WM also manages the most extensive network of landfill gas-to-energy plants in North America. We have served Oregon communities, from Portland to Klamath Falls, for four decades with a track record of safety leadership, operational excellence, environmental compliance and world-class logistics expertise.

We are reaching out now to encourage you to consider a new solid waste solution that is environmentally sound, logistically smart and economically feasible for Benton County.

As we have discussed with Benton County staff, WM is prepared to offer a long-term, regional solution that uses rail to transport waste from the Mid-Willamette Valley to WM's state-of-the-art landfill in Gilliam County.

Three elements make this a workable solution for Benton County – the availability of the intermodal site at Millersburg, WM's rail expertise and WM's state-of-the-art landfill in Gilliam County:

1. **MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY INTERMODAL CENTER:** This infrastructure is readily available and ideally suited for waste transport by WM and Union Pacific Railroad. In fact, Union Pacific is already our rail partner for transporting waste to WM's landfill in Gilliam County. Because WM and Union Pacific have worked together for three decades, we could be operational at this site in six to nine months after agreements are in place.
2. **WM'S RAIL EXPERTISE:** No company transports more waste by rail than WM. Rail service is part of WM's logistics expertise.
 - Consider a unit train going directly from Millersburg to Gilliam County. No trucks traveling hundreds of miles on I-5 or I-84. No stops, detours or complicated rail switches along the way. Safety, reliability and a far smaller carbon footprint than trucking!

Page 2

- WM has transported Seattle's waste by rail for more than three decades -- from Seattle to Columbia Ridge Landfill. It's an arrangement that has made sense because it is cost effective for the city and it delivers a smaller carbon footprint compared to trucking.

3. WM'S COLUMBIA RIDGE LANDFILL: Columbia Ridge is a leader in environmental compliance and renewable energy. It is permitted and operating in good standing as a Subtitle D landfill. The facility has capacity for more than 120 years and has earned strong community support from neighbors and community leaders.

- For Benton County, Columbia Ridge offers peace of mind through environmental performance. Columbia Ridge's dry climate, unique geology and superior environmental protection systems set it apart from other landfills. With leachate, as an example, other landfills can struggle with the cost and logistics of transporting leachate for processing. In Gilliam County, where rainfall averages nine inches a year, Columbia Ridge generates far less leachate than landfills in other parts of the state. This allows WM to manage the leachate onsite – with no discharge to a public waterway or a treatment facility.
- For more than a decade, WM used landfill gas from Columbia Ridge to generate electricity that has been available to power homes and businesses. Now, as WM expands its commitment to renewable energy, the company is preparing to start up two plants to produce Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) at Columbia Ridge. The state-of-the-art plants will convert landfill gas into pipeline-quality RNG.

For background, RNG begins as a biogas when waste decomposes inside landfills. WM uses underground vacuum systems to collect the biogas, process it into pipeline-quality RNG and then push it directly into natural gas pipelines to be used as a lower-emission energy source. In Washington and Oregon, WM allocates RNG to its fuel consumption for its CNG collection fleet under the EPA Renewable Fuels Standards Program and similar state programs.

A primary benefit of RNG connects to its low carbon intensity score. Recent evaluations by scientists and policymakers show the production process and subsequent use of RNG derived from landfill biogas has a lower carbon footprint than the production and consumption of gas derived from fossil fuels. This reduced climate impact is largely attributed to the origin of the gas (landfills) and to the efficiency of the RNG production process.

The Columbia Ridge RNG Facility is part of WM's plan to invest more than \$1.6 billion to develop 20 new RNG facilities from 2022 through 2026. With this investment, Columbia Ridge customers can help contribute to a more sustainable energy future.



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7227 NE 55th Avenue
Portland, OR 97218

For your consideration, we have included an attachment that overviews this solution. We are grateful for the opportunity to share this information and look forward to discussing how WM may be of service to the citizens and businesses in Benton County.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Jones', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rob Jones
Area Director - Pacific Northwest
WM Transportation and Recycling Operations

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David M. Rettell', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dave Rettell
Area Director - Pacific Northwest
WM Disposal Operations and Environmental Protection



Add files using the dropdown or drag and drop them here.
You can then arrange them in the order you want.