

From: [Sam i](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: Re: LU-24-027 | Submit testimony by October 7 for consideration in Staff Report
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 7:38:14 PM
Attachments: [Testimony 10725.pages](#)

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Dear Benton County Commissioners,

I oppose Coffin Butte landfill's expansion.

Clean air and water are precious vital resources for all of us in Benton County.

A feeling of ease in our communities because our elected officials consistently stand up for our safety, health and welfare, is vitally important.

Promises have been broken over the years by the owners and operators of Coffin Butte landfill. And our county has failed in its oversight.

The landfill expansion if approved weighs on our common resources to a great extent over an extended period of time, affecting our grandchildren and their children.

It's Wet Here

This post-war landfill is in a very wet part of a wet valley.

Adair Village gets 51 inches of rain, on average, per year.

At Arlington, an alternative regional landfill with large capacity and accessible by rail, the average annual rainfall is less than 9 inches.

There is a strong link between wet conditions and leachate production in landfills.

Every droplet of water that splashes down on an open landfill cell will slowly trickle through the trash, transforming into a concentrated liquid waste known as leachate.

Moisture encourages bacterial decomposition, which is the primary process for methane generation in landfills.

Landfill Gas

Billowing tarps, tears and odors indicate the release of methane and landfill gasses into our air. These gasses also contain PFAS. "According to [an EPA-funded study](#) recently published in the peer-reviewed Environmental Science and Technology Letters, PFAS could be escaping landfills via gas at concentrations similar to — if not higher than — liquid leachate."

I have attached the research paper entitled *Landfill Gas: A Major Pathway for Neutral Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance (PFAS) Release*.

"Researchers have detected "unexpectedly" high levels of PFAS in landfill gas, adding to a growing body of evidence on how "forever chemicals" leave waste sites."

PFAS Forever Chemicals

All over the world, PFAS in landfills are growing. In Europe and the UK research has been forward thinking and robust. I cite here a Guardian article from November 2024 telling of a project seeking to remove PFAS forever chemicals from leachate that contaminates groundwater and surface water - and can cause health problems, including kidney and testicular cancer.

“Processes intended to decontaminate noxious liquid landfill waste before it enters rivers and sewers have been found to increase the levels of some of the worst toxic chemicals, a study has shown.

Landfills are well known to be a main source of PFAS forever chemicals – or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – but the new study shows that the treatment plants designed to clean up the liquid waste can instead boost the levels of banned PFAS such as PFOA and PFOS, in some cases by as much as 1,335%.

Processes intended to decontaminate noxious liquid landfill waste before it enters rivers and sewers have been found to increase the levels of some of the worst toxic chemicals, a study has shown.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/nov/04/decontamination-of-landfill-waste-leads-to-increase-in-toxic-chemicals-says-study>

Solutions do not exist to “treat” PFAS forever chemicals. It behooves us to lessen the amount of toxic leachate in our region by not approving the expansion of Coffin Butte in this very wet part of the Willamette Valley.

Currently, PFAS are ubiquitous in surface waters- and that means the Willamette River, into which untold numbers of gallons of PFAS containing landfill leachate from Coffin Butte have been released untreated after being transported to the Corvallis and Salem water treatment plants.

Local and global concerns regarding the persistence of PFAS, how they move through the environment, and the potential for adverse health impacts of PFAS are increasing. Here in Benton County, we have the ability to make a decision in order to safeguard the health of our population and our natural resources.

A Gigantic Liability

The Coffin Butte owners and operators have not been good stewards. They have not been good partners. There are many incidences of rule breaking and mishandling of the confidence and trust placed in them.

Coffin Butte landfill is not a resource to us - rather it is a gigantic liability and a source of real health and environmental concerns.

The landfill's expansion would further impinge upon our rights to our health and finite natural resources of clean air and water.

There are unknown consequences of leachate that percolates into groundwater, or that is disposed of in the Willamette River- or of PFAS that burp into the air along with landfill gasses.

Those PFAS forever chemicals are percolating into our **bodies** and our natural environments.

From Politico, October 2025- *A group of 24 European politicians whose blood was [tested](#) for toxic PFAS chemicals over the summer all had the substances in their bodies, the NGOs involved in the testing revealed Tuesday.*

"I tested positive for four substances, and three of them can harm unborn children, act as endocrine disruptors, cause liver damage, and are suspected of being carcinogenic," said Danish Environment Minister Magnus Heunicke in a written statement, describing his results as a "frightening reality."

Please oppose this expansion.
Thank you for your diligence.

Susan Walenza
1415 NW Greenwood Place
Corvallis

[PFAS in the body](#)

[PFAS in Surface Water](#)

[Landfill Gas- Major Pathway for PFAS Release](#)

[Decontamination of Leachate Leads to Increase in Toxic Chemicals](#)

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