

From: [Kellie N](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: Comment on LU-24-027 — Opposition to Coffin Butte Landfill Expansion
Date: Thursday, October 16, 2025 6:33:41 PM

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Dear Members of the Benton County Board of Commissioners,

I am writing in regard to LU-24-027, Republic Services' request to expand the Coffin Butte landfill. I strongly urge you to **deny this expansion request**.

No matter what assurances Republic Services or their hired "experts" provide, they do not live here — **we do**. The people of Benton County will bear the long-term environmental, health, and financial consequences of this decision, while the corporation reaps the profits. Just because your staff have determined that the proposal "meets land use requirements" does **not** mean it is the right choice for our community.

Environmental and Public Health Risks

The potential impacts on **groundwater, air quality, odors, litter, truck traffic, fire hazards, and wildlife** are serious and lasting. Any one of these factors could cause irreversible harm to Benton County's environment, economy, and quality of life.

Groundwater contamination is of particular concern. Many nearby residents rely on private wells. Landfills are well-documented sources of groundwater pollution:

"Results showed discharge of both legacy pollutants and elevated inorganic pollutants into the groundwater... Closing the landfill caused a significant decrease in concentrations of contaminants... However, abstraction of groundwater for human use was prohibited due to potential health risks."

— *Science of the Total Environment* (2020)

(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969720338298>)

Once groundwater becomes contaminated, cleanup is extraordinarily difficult — as seen in Eastern Oregon, where nitrate pollution has made well water unsafe to drink for decades:

"More than 30 years after nitrate contamination was recognized as a problem, it's still making well water unsafe to drink in Morrow and Umatilla counties."

— *Oregon Public Broadcasting* (2022)

(<https://www.opb.org/article/2022/05/05/groundwater-pollution-eastern-oregon-counties-drinking-water-at-risk-farming-wells/>)

Protecting Benton County's Future

Your duty as county officials is to **protect the health, safety, and future** of Benton County residents — not to prioritize the interests of an out-of-state corporation. Expanding Coffin Butte poses unacceptable risks to our water, air, and land.

Benton County is a unique and beautiful place. Allowing this expansion could turn it into an environmental liability — a place where people no longer want to live, work, or raise families.

Regional Equity and Responsibility

When Coffin Butte was established, it was never intended to serve as a regional dumping ground for multiple states. Today, only **about 7% of its waste originates from Benton County**, while the rest comes from distant communities in Idaho, Washington, and Eastern Oregon. That is unacceptable. If Republic Services wishes to continue expanding its landfill capacity, it should do so closer to where that waste is generated — reducing both environmental impact and truck emissions.

In Conclusion

This proposal is **not** in the public interest. The environmental, health, and social costs far outweigh any convenience or profit. Benton County should not shoulder the long-term consequences of a landfill that primarily serves other regions.

For the sake of our community's health, environment, and future generations,
please deny the Coffin Butte landfill expansion application (LU-24-027).

Sincerely,
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24-year resident of Benton county