

From: [David Hackleman](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: LU-24-027
Date: Sunday, October 19, 2025 10:22:27 PM
Attachments: [Comments to Benton County Commissioners Oct 19.pdf](#)

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Attached is a written comment encouraging the Commissioners to retain the position of the Planning Commission to deny LU-24-027.

Sincerely,

David Hackleman

19 October, 2025

To: Benton County Commissioners

Re: LU-24-027 Proposal to Expand Coffin Butte Landfill

From: Dr. David Hackleman, Vice-Chair, Benton County Disposal Site Advisory Committee

Note: My comments are based on my observations and actions on the BCDSAC as well as the fact that I am an adjacent landowner to the Coffin Butte Landfill. These comments are my personal comments. These comments are in addition to those previously submitted during the Planning Commission review process.

Please support the Planning Commission's denial of the expansion proposal LU-24-027.

In 1979, I acquired 20 acres of land mostly on the North Side of Coffin Butte. Later, I purchased an additional 20 acres adjacent to this first purchase. My land includes the top of the Butte and extends over the summit, bordering the parcels containing the landfill and associated operations. When I purchased this property, it was with the intent to live where the natural beauty of Oregon abounds, grow Oregon Douglas Fir trees on the hillside and develop a modest barn and pasture along with some fruit trees. My professional career was as an Engineer, Scientist, Professor and small business owner.

Now, in 2025, many of the firs I planted are well over 50 feet tall, the barn I constructed houses two horses for a neighbor, my property has been used by Benton County Search and rescue teams for training and the top of the hill has a geodesic dome used for radio telecommunications including an emergency services repeater for the Soap Creek region.

When I purchased this property, I had conversations with the then owner of the Benton County landfill, Valley Landfills. At that time, the landfill was solely for the local region, and had far more space available than would be needed for centuries of operations.

Sadly, there were many things I did not foresee:

- I did not foresee that this small landfill would be purchased by a major nationwide company.
- I did not foresee that adjacent counties would force closure of their similar landfills.
- I did not foresee that Benton County would acquiesce and support growth in intake from such.
- I did not foresee that an expansion proposal would be taken seriously that does not include at least some cap on annual intake at this landfill.

I also did not foresee that a major waste management corporation would not be pro-active in developing superior methods to dispose of waste that did not require the expansion of landfills as already demonstrated in many other countries. To date, I have not witnessed any pro-active actions from this corporation aside from the hiring of firms to support their request for the expansion.

As an example of a lack of pro-activity, here is the result of an inquiry regarding fire watch after hours: During my tenure on the Benton County Disposal Site Advisory Committee, we identified that during non-operating hours of the landfill, there is no fire watch performed, even during periods of high fire danger. Landfills commonly have fire eruptions and this one is no exception. While the majority of them take place during operating hours and are contained and extinguished by operations personnel,

occasionally one can reach the surface during non-operating hours. This issue was presented in November of 2024, yet delays primarily due to staffing changes at Republic led to the first focused discussion taking place in March 2025. Held at the Coffin Butte operations center, the outcomes of this meeting offered promise toward some form of surveillance to take place during non-operating hours. Republic representatives were to check with their organization toward staffing such surveillance as well as establishment of a more direct communications scheme to identify when the area was in “high fire danger” often referred to as “red days”. Republic reported in September (11 months after the issue was first raised) that its position was that the danger was inadequate to warrant observations. This, in spite of the fact of past fire eruptions only identified by random public observation of smoke plumes! This confirms a lack of pro-active efforts by this organization. It seems to me that even a simple web camera would be far superior to no observation taking place during the non-operating hours each week during high fire danger periods. I have since sent a letter to the County through Mr. Bailey Payne and addressed to the County Commissioners requesting that Benton County authorize funds to at least support the Adair Rural fire department toward providing surveillance of the landfill area during periods of high fire danger. We should not rely upon random public observations in areas known to have fire eruptions by their very nature! Again, I must stress that I do believe that the employees at the Coffin Butte Landfill are quite capable of helping to resolve this type of issue, yet feel that they are unduly constrained by some higher authority.

In the event that the Benton County Planning Commission's unanimous rejection of the expansion proposal is supported, I am happy to continue to serve on the Benton County Disposal Site Advisory Committee. We can develop a far superior solution to waste management than expansion of this particular landfill.

I have every confidence in the quality and capabilities of the employees of Republic Corporation to partner in solving long term waste management in our region and beyond. They are talented and capable individuals constrained only by outdated corporate positions out of touch with our region. Recently, I have found some cracks in the foundation of my home, possibly attributed to blasting that took place earlier this year to develop portions of the existing landfill. I will know more after inspections take place by a structural engineering firm Monday, 20 October, and will be happy to provide updates after I receive them from the firm.

Sincerely

Dr. David Hackleman
Retired Linus Pauling Chair, Chemical Engineering, Oregon State University
Retired Chief Technologist – Hewlett Packard Ink Jet Technology Operation – Corvallis, Oregon