

From: [Gregg Olson](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: Written Testimony regarding LU-24-027
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 2:27:55 PM

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Dear Planning Commission,

My name is Gregg Olson, and I live at 5394 SE Davidson St, Albany, OR 97322. I believe we are not trapped to have to expand the Coffin Butte landfill. Waste trains are a very sound and practical alternative to expansion.

Currently there are about 10,000 municipal waste dumps in the United States. In 10 years, 90 percent will be closed. Seattle saw this coming 30 years ago and started shipping their waste by rail to Columbia Ridge Landfill, near Arlington, Oregon, over 300 miles away. It is 2500 acres, with a life span of 143 years. Seattle now ships over 63% of its waste by rail. In the U.S. the use of trains for waste has increased at 35% per year.

Close to us, Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center for moving truck substances to rail cars was recently built. Its website states that waste trains would be a large use of the center. ODOT's Rail Advisory Committee recently received a suggestion to create a "garbage train" from Millersburg to Columbia Ridge, 150 miles away. Using intermodal containers or gondola cars, 4 waste trains a week could annually carry over 1 million tons of waste, 100% of Coffin Butte's current deposits.

Effects of using waste trains from Millersburg include the use of Interstate 5 in place of Highway 99 for 88% of deposits (those from outside Benton County. Trains are over 4 times more efficient than trucks, reducing emissions. Columbia Ridge receives less than 10 inches of rain per year versus 50 inches at Coffin Butte. This greatly reduces the production of methane and other toxic gases. Columbia Ridge also has a deep clay base to reduce ground contamination, compared to Coffin Butte's fractured basalt base.

I believe Millersburg waste trains are a good shorter-term alternative to Coffin Butte's waste usage and expansion. Longer term, countries like Sweden deposit only about 1% of their waste in landfill, but that is another story.

Sincerely,

Gregg Olson