

From: [kiko denzer](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: deny LU-24-027
Date: Sunday, October 5, 2025 3:28:30 PM

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TO: Commissioners Shepherd, Wyse, and Malone, of Benton County Oregon
FROM: Kiko Denzer, Philomath Oregon
DATE: 10/5/2025
RE: Deny LU-24-027

In his September 12th 2025 letter to the BOC, Republic Services attorney Condit argues that a planning commissioner mis-used the word “adjacent” when they described land in the surrounding counties as adjacent. Mr. Condit states that such use of the word “ignores the dictionary definition of “adjacent.”

That definition of “adjacent” (from Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged, Merriam-Webster Inc., Publishers, Springfield, Massachusetts, USA, as cited by Mr. Condit), includes the following:

“1 a: not distant or far off...nearby but not touching [the islands and the adjacent mainland coast]...ADJACENT is sometimes merely a synonym for near or for close to [the heavy lands adjacent to Paris — Charles Dickens]”

Clearly, if Charles Dickens can say that unspecified “heavy lands” lie adjacent to Paris, then a member of the Benton County Planning Commission can use the word “adjacent” to describe any of the counties near the landfill (many of which, as Mr. Condit will know, dispose of their trash there). Indeed, seeing that Multnomah county has declined to dispose of their trash in a valley that grows their food, they must consider Benton County to be near enough to qualify as adjacent.

Further considering the word “adjacent” requires examining the word “near.” Context is key. For example, in order for parents to produce a child (by nature’s original methods, of course), adjacency clearly requires them to be near enough for physical contact.

But where does someone have to stand to be “near” Coffin Butte? Visual context is, obviously, near enough to see the dump. Olfactory context must be near enough to smell the dump; which will vary with the sensitivity of the particular nose. Many report smelling the dump from as far as Philomath. Economic and environmental contexts must be near enough to: a) experience an impact on property values, real estate activity, and general well-being, and b) to be impacted by the climate-warming effects of methane plumes in the air and toxin-laden leachate in the water. In this context, the whole state, the country, and the entire globe would qualify as adjacent, as both air and water carry adjacency to every continent and every person on the planet.

Adjacent properties immediately impacted by the landfill and already entered as evidence include: a vineyard owner who was trying to sell his vineyard 3.84 miles to the northeast of the landfill who was unable to sell his property because the buyer was sickened by landfill

odor;

A property owner who lives on Tampico has testified that the new landfill will be visible from their home, and that visibility will negatively impact the sale of that home;

Also noted in the evidence are the potential impacts of incoming "hot loads" as well as highly flammable escaping gases that put the entire county and state at risk of catastrophic fire.

Currently, we pay little attention to the path of PFAS and other toxins that get trucked out of Coffin Butte and flushed into local water treatment plants, but in Maine and Michigan, where water treatment plants accepted PFAS and toxin-laden waters for treatment and sold farmers the resulting biosolids as "fertilizer," state agencies have shuttered farm operations because the toxins in the biosolids permanently poisoned the soil.

It is clearly not the intent of the code to ignore such adverse impacts just because Mr. Condit fails to read the full definition in a dictionary entry.

The contextualized meaning of "adjacent" also clearly impacts what we consider as "the character of the area," both by extending "area" to include the various adjacencies and impacts, and by demanding a thorough examination of the word "character."

Here it's worth considering motive. Mr. Condit represents a publicly traded company for which the primary motive is to produce profits for investors. While the company claims to offer "sustainable environmental solutions," reducing actual rates of disposal would reduce revenues and thus profits.

Thus, Republic Services chooses to define the "character of the area" as narrowly limited to waste disposal because they own abutting properties zoned for waste disposal. But that is mere tautology, not a valid argument.

A single candle visible to those close by goes unnoticed by those further away, but a lighthouse throws a beam visible from 25 miles away. In the same way, as the dump has grown, so has its impact. Clearly, fulfilling their duty to their constituents and to the code *requires* the Commissioners to consider *all the impacts and all the arguments* opposing expansion.

The truth of global environmental impact on the character of *all* our homes and *all* our lives is self-evident. To ignore it harms everyone and ultimately benefits no one.