

**From:** [Faye Yoshihara](#)  
**To:** [Benton Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for LU-24-027  
**Date:** Monday, March 31, 2025 1:43:49 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

DATE: 31 March 2025

ATTN:

Benton County Community Development Department, Planning Commission  
Corvallis, OR 97333

RE: Application LU-24-027, a Conditional Use Permit Application for Expansion of Coffin Butte Landfill

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I oppose the conditional use permit (CUP) application for expansion of Coffin Butte Landfill LU-24-027.

I am a property owner living on Soap Creek Road and submitted testimony in August 2021, during the last CUP application by Republic Services. At that time, I was most concerned about the closure of our primary evacuation road and the negative impacts on livability of Soap Creek Valley with increased “dump days” with its obvious air pollution, litter and potential for soil and water pollution. As small woodland owners, I could not fathom that forest conservation zoned land should be used for a landfill. It goes completely against the purpose of the zone, as indicated in Benton County Code criteria 53.215. My concerns on these topics and others have grown substantially as I’ve learned more about landfill issues broadly and specifically the history of Coffin Butte Landfill.

Since that time, I have participated in efforts to quantify and document our concerns. Even after the unanimous denial by the Benton County Planning Commission, Soap Creek Valley neighbors were dismissed as annoying NIMBYS. Only the Mid-Valley Bird Alliance (at that time Corvallis Audubon) and League of Women Voters took a stand against the landfill expansion CUP. Local sustainability groups were unwilling to work with us. Instead, it was three high school sophomores (15-year-olds, too young to even drive) and their science fair invention Oregon PAQMS (Personal Air Quality Monitoring Station) who first stepped up to help us address our concerns about the pollution we know we smelled. They custom designed a PAQMS that monitored for methane and hydrogen sulfide, in addition to their standard nitrogen dioxide, carbon dioxide and particulate matter. Over time, we got support from Beyond Toxics a non-profit from Eugene and researchers at the Pacific Northwest Research Station and Oregon State University.

I was personally involved in a variety of air quality monitoring around the landfill with the Oregon PAQMS and Beyond Toxics teams and in collecting moss samples around Coffin Butte Landfill and Covanta/ReWorld incinerator. I have also provided support to researchers conducting water and moss analysis in other laboratories. One study published in the journal *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* in 2024, documents signature heavy metal

contaminants found in moss around the Covanta/ReWorld incinerator. The companion study focused on Coffin Butte Landfill has not yet been published. However, since Covanta/ReWorld incinerator ash was trucked to Coffin Butte Landfill for use as “alternate daily cover”, it is a known link between these two “point source pollution” locations.

The next generation of Benton County residents, possibly including the students involved in these monitoring efforts, will live with the discretionary decision (criteria 53.210) you take now to approve or deny this CUP application. From the far-reaching implications of methane and other air pollutants to the toxic leachate diluted and released into the Willamette River, together seriously interfere with the character and quality of life in our community and all those who live downstream (criteria 53.215). Landfills are yesterday’s technology and better solutions are being advanced in many municipalities. Allowing Republic Services to continue to expand, especially in such an ill-suited geography, delays their adoption of new technologies and practices while the impacts on our health, safety and climate continue to grow.

At four miles distant from the landfill, I am not amongst the most vulnerable. However, the more I have learned about Coffin Butte Landfill’s the lack of compliance with past CUP conditions of approval, the more concerned I have become for all of Benton County with the growing long-term liabilities if this landfill is allowed to continue to grow, spew and leach pollutants, including known carcinogens and toxic substances, into our community. I recognize that Benton County gains significant revenues from Coffin Butte Landfill, but it is minor compared to the long-term liabilities that are piling up faster than the garbage at the dump. Your discretionary decision should not come at the expense of today and tomorrow’s Benton County residents.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my concerns about the Coffin Butte Landfill expansion application. I urge the Planning Commission to deny Application LU-24-027.

Sincerely,

Faye Yoshihara

37461 Soap Creek Rd.

Corvallis, OR 97330