

**From:** [JB Corbett](#)  
**To:** [Benton Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** comments attached - Coffin Butte  
**Date:** Sunday, April 20, 2025 1:31:27 PM  
**Attachments:** [Coffin Butte comments - Corbett.pdf](#)

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Please find my comments on the landfill expansion attached.

Julia Corbett

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***Look deep into nature, then you will understand everything better.***

Albert Einstein

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April 19, 2025

Nick Fowler  
Chair, Benton County Planning Commission

Dear Mr. Fowler & Commissioners:

I strongly urge the Benton County commissioners to reject the expansion of the Coffin Butte Landfill (application file number LU-24-027). Expanding this already toxic site puts an enormous burden and great financial risk on our county for the long-term in so many ways.

If Benton County approves the landfill expansion, the county is liable for what happens to this land far, far into the future. If (when!) Republic Services closes or abandons the site, Benton County faces the cleanup of Coffin Butte and the surrounding land at enormous financial cost and unlimited long-term risk and liability. That greatly constrains the ability of my County to use its monies to instead make future public improvements, upgrades or repairs to facilities and public utilities, and the number of services available to residents like me. As a taxpayer, I don't want to support making this landfill even larger and more noxious than it already is.

I was appalled to learn that Coffin Butte is not just a landfill for Benton and a few surrounding counties – no, Republic's site accepts one-third of all of Oregon's garbage! How unfair that my county uses its land as a dumping ground for the entire state! Let all those far-flung counties and communities deal with reducing their garbage volume and sorting and removing both recyclables and toxics from their own solid waste. Expansion simply supports the status quo way we treat "garbage" and goes against the Sustainable Materials Management criteria that Benton County has endorsed. (Criteria 3)

I was also appalled to learn a whopping 31 million gallons of leachate – a stew of industrial solvents, PFAS chemicals, lead, mercury, etc. – were pumped out of the landfill and sent to Corvallis' (and Salem's) wastewater treatment plants. This isn't "wastewater" in the typical municipal sense and it's disgusting to think that this "treated" leachate is then dumped in the Willamette River, an important source of drinking water for the valley. Maybe Benton County makes a lot of money treating this leachate, but the county is knowingly releasing "forever chemicals" into that beautiful river. More and more municipalities are facing expensive solutions to keep PFAS out of drinking water supplies; it makes no sense that Benton would head in the opposite direction. It's a foolish environmental liability to expand the landfill and thereby expand the amount of deadly chemicals that Corvallis dumps into that river and sends to its residents as drinking water. (Criteria 2)

I enjoy hiking in forests just south of Coffin Butte and also walking and birding in EE Wilson. If the wind is right, the smells drift right to me, and so do the noxious chemicals. It's disgusting that Coffin Butte emits some of the largest methane plumes in the entire Pacific Northwest. Despite what Republic/Valley Landfills claims, methane levels are high enough to be explosive and contribute powerfully to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Coffin Butte profoundly degrades the character of our area and should never be allowed to expand. (Criteria 1)

I am proud that Benton County supports so many positive and healthy endeavors for its citizens. But I absolutely do not support expanding a landfill that has made Benton County a literal dumping ground for the entire state – not just for garbage but for truly dangerous chemicals and gases. Citizens like me are bearing the very real health costs of having this facility in Benton. Approving its expansion makes all those problems worse and exposes the County to significant financial and environmental liability.

Sincerely,  
Julia Corbett

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