

From: [Gary Barnes](#)
To: [Benton Public Comment](#)
Subject: Oppose/deny LU-24-027
Date: Monday, April 21, 2025 5:00:12 PM

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Dear Benton County Planning Commission,

I [am writing](#) in opposition to Republic Services' Conditional Use Permit application LU-24-027 to expand the Coffin Butte landfill. I [strongly](#) urge the Planning Commission to deny this application.

I live on South Boundary Road, off of Soap Creek Road, about 3 miles from the landfill. We have lived here for 22 years. My impression when we first moved here was that the landfill, locally owned at the time, was well-managed and responsive to the community. The landfill was busiest on weekends, when locals were bringing their garbage to the landfill.

Now it is completely different. It is owned by a large publicly traded corporation that appears interested in profit and shareholder returns and not about the community. **I was shocked to learn that only 6.7% of waste is coming from Benton County.** That supports my observations. Every day large semi trucks filled with waste are parading in from the North, in part because other landfills have been similarly challenged and either closed or restricted. The size of the mountain of garbage grows right before your eyes. Do we trust Republic Services to responsibly control what comes into the landfill? Who knows what toxins and forever chemicals are coming into our neighborhood. Republic has a reputation for

The smells from the landfill have become much worse. I can only read about the potential effects on our groundwater, air, and wildlife, because those are not my areas of expertise. However, those concerns make logical sense: rapidly expanding the amount of waste in such a short amount of time does not suggest that Republic is monitoring the volume or the contents of what comes in. The company is gaining a reputation for violating environmental regulations and then covering those up. I understand they are currently under investigation from the EPA for this.

And building a landfill in such a wet climate, on a steep hillside, with fractured basalt rock will increase concerns about leachate, methane, groundwater contamination, and the negative effects on wildlife. *A properly situated landfill would be in a dry climate, on clay soils, and away from human habitation. Coffin Butte Landfill is none of these.*

We have such amazing, diverse wildlife out here in the Soap Creek valley, including a large herd of elk, bald eagles, herons, and of course our beloved turkeys. OSU raises beef cattle here. These are assets to Benton County that can never be replaced. All are threatened by a landfill expansion. I hope you will read the extensive and detailed report about this from the Mid-Willamette Bird Alliance.

I am also concerned about our property values. We live in a beautiful area, our properties often have some acreage, and we have invested a lot of time and money. We have also paid a lot of property taxes to our county. If Soap Creek has a reputation for being the garbage dump for the State, and if groundwater contamination is found, who would want to live here? I get that we all have to take responsibility for disposal of our own garbage, but why should we have responsibility for everyone else's garbage, at our expense and peril? Is that good for Benton County?

I echo the concerns of the Benton County Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC) who voted on April 9, 2025, to recommend to the Benton County Planning Commission to deny the Conditional Use Permit requested by Republic Services to expand Coffin Butte Landfill (CBL). They cited the following negative impacts of the landfill expansion as reasons:

- Air pollution
- Methane emissions
- Water pollution
- Leachate
- Impact to local residents and the community
- Economics
- Regional impacts and coordination

Please vote against this proposal -- [and](#) thank you for your service on the [commission](#).

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