

From: [Suzanne Ortiz](#)
To: [Benton Public Comment](#)
Subject: Testimony for LU-24-027
Date: Monday, April 21, 2025 3:39:05 PM
Attachments: [20250420_BCPC_TESTIMONY_LU-24_027.docx](#)

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Date: April 20, 2025
Reference: LU-24-027
To: Benton County Planning Commission
Benton County Community Development
4500 SW Research Way
Corvallis, OR 97333-1139

From: Suzanne Ortiz
ortizsv@gmail.com

Regarding LU-24-027, I am writing to STRONGLY OPPOSE approval of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) submitted by Republic Services.

I'm a resident of Corvallis, Benton County, Oregon & have lived here for 14.5 years. I have closely followed the process related to Republic Services submittal asking for approval of the latest CUP.

E.E. Wilson Natural Area is an area that I have enjoyed visiting for the past 14 years to see the wildlife. I have also volunteered at events that introduced E.E. Wilson NA to community members. I am concerned about the following issues related to the CUP:

QUALITY OF LIFE & HEALTH: Our community values quality of life issues that protect the environment and promote the health & well-being of all of our citizens, whether they reside in town or in rural areas. These values are stated in the Benton County **2040 Thriving Communities Initiative**. If the CUP is approved there is a clause in the CUP that will remove the cap of 1.1 million tons of waste that is currently being deposited in the Coffin Butte Landfill (CBL). Expansion of the CBL will create a second landfill mass that will fill up even faster when the cap is removed. That means more waste, more methane & other hazardous emissions, more leachate, more trucks & traffic, and more days when the residents in Airle, Adair Village, Albany & Corvallis have to endure rank odors that compel them to stay indoors. Expansion of the Landfill violates **BCC 53.215(1)** by interfering with the character of the area that is across the highway from a beautiful natural area that is home to wildlife and nesting herons and where community members enjoy the serenity and peace of nature. These

types of experiences have been shown to enhance good health.

The presence of the Landfill is already a source of emissions that enter the air & or combine with rainwater to form leachates. Gas plumes from the Landfill include methane, PFAS, heavy metals, dioxins and particulate matter. Leachates can include heavy metals, carcinogenic industrial solvents, PFAS, dioxins, organic matter & rainwater. Close to 30 million gallons of leachate were generated by Coffin Butte in 2023 (2023 Annual Report on the Coffin Butte Landfill). The leachate is currently being trucked to the Waste Water Treatment Plants in Corvallis & Salem where it is diluted and released into the Willamette River.

Breathing the materials that are emitted in the gas plumes is not conducive to good health & the levels will only increase when the Landfill area expands. In the Republic Services 2023 Annual Report on the Coffin Butte Landfill, a timeline has been added in the updated report concerning “Methane and the EPA.” The last two entries in the timeline, as quoted from the report are as follows: 8/8/2024 – Sens. Ron Wyden and Merkley, along with U.S. Rep. Val Hoyle issue a press release urging the EPA to “thoroughly and expeditiously complete its investigation.” and 8/28/2024 – Coffin Butte resubmits its 2023 annual report. The Landfill is still awaiting the official report from the June 2024 EPA inspection.” I’m one of many community members who await the official EPA report.

Republic Services is responsible to self-monitor and self-report on emissions at the Coffin Butte Landfill. According to the number of methane emissions found during the EPA investigation in 2024, there clearly hasn’t been diligent self-monitoring or self-reporting. This is a matter of high concern and impacts the health & safety of all residents & visitors, as well as the wildlife in the area.

THE LONG-TERM COST WILL FALL ON BENTON COUNTY CITIZENS: The estimated date for the closure of the Coffin Butte Landfill is 2038 if expansion is not granted. (Info from: https://cd.bentoncountyor.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/history_doc_-_updated_3-27-23.pdf). Benton County, which contributes around 6-7% of the waste material, and the surrounding Oregon & Washington counties who contribute approximately 93% of the waste, need to use that time to come up with a long-term solution for waste management. Approval of the landfill expansion IS NOT A SOLUTION. Republic Services is responsible for the Landfill for 30 years following closure. After that, it is Benton County tax payers who will have to maintain & mitigate the site. Expansion will only increase the amount of waste, PFAs, leachate & emissions. This potential “forever cost” for “forever chemicals” will be borne by the citizens of Benton County.

It is critically important that we recognize our responsibilities to take care of the environment, including our air, our water, and our land. We are the stewards who have responsibility for protecting habitat for wildlife. Our choices represent our values. I respectfully request that the Planning Commission members DENY the expansion of the Coffin Butte Landfill.

OTHER SUPPORT THAT OPPOSES THE COFFIN BUTTE LANDFILL EXPANSION:

ENRAC RECOMMENDS THAT CUP BE DENIED: The Benton County Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC) voted 5-1 on April 9, 2025 to recommend to the Benton County Planning Commission to DENY the CUP to expand the Coffin Butte Landfill.

ENRAC-CUPDeliberations-Report-04-15-25-Faux-Final.pdf

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CORVALLIS:

https://lwvcorvallis.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025-04-Testimony_Coffin-Butte_Benton-County-Planning-Commission.docx.pdf

MID-WILLAMETTE BIRD ALLIANCE (testimony submitted 4/14/2025, signed by co-Presidents and Conservation Committee chair & member) - link to letter not attached

Suzanne V. Ortiz

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