

From: [David/Elizabeth Patte](#)
To: [Benton Public Comment](#)
Subject: CUP application LU-24-027, Republic Services
Date: Monday, April 21, 2025 4:21:03 PM

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To Benton County Planning Commissioners:

My name is Elizabeth Patte and I live at 37655 Zeolite Hills Rd., Corvallis 97330.

I oppose Republic Services' Conditional Use Permit application LU-24-027 to expand the Coffin Butte landfill, and ask that the Planning Commission deny the application.

ODOR - Throughout the 11 years we have lived on our rural residential Zeolite Hills Road property, we have endured many, many episodes of Coffin Butte landfill garbage stench, often so terrible that we must go indoors. An expansion would only exacerbate this interference with the use of our property - we grow much of our food and have animals, so spend a great deal of time outdoors. This odor issue clearly violates (BCC 53.215(1)).

I would like to point out the refusal of Coffin Butte's Environmental Manager to take the issue seriously. In a February 25, 2025 letter to DEQ, he suggested that those of us reporting these odors likely smell something else, saying:

"It's important to note that several of the submitted complaints indicate odors as far as five miles away from the Landfill. Given wind speed and direction, we believe that it's possible – even likely – that residents are attributing odors from other sources to Coffin Butte."
-Paul Koster, Coffin Butte Environmental Manager, in a Feb. 25 2025 letter to DEQ's Laura McWhorter

We happen to live 5.1 miles from the landfill. Believe me, we know landfill stink when we smell it. It is absurd to say we get these smells from another source. Depending on weather patterns, our property can smell as bad as the landfill itself. On some days, we can literally watch the cloud of smelly haze roll down the valley from the landfill and then engulf us. But we know this cloud is more than just odors - it is also a toxic stew of gases. VOCs, heavy metals, particulates, and methane are just some of the gases typically emitted from landfills.

METHANE - We learned in 2022, and again in 2024, that Coffin Butte is riddled with methane leaks. According to the EPA, the landfill emits "explosive amounts of methane." The landfill has a terrible history of emissions control, with multiple violations, and I do not believe they can or try to comply with regulations. In the age of accelerating climate change, these emissions are disastrous, and are antithetical to Benton County's Thriving Communities Initiative.

As there seems to be no oversight or enforcement by Benton County of its own land use requirements, I have little confidence that this expansion would do anything but make the issue worse. However stringent "conditions of approval" are in a Conditional Use Permit, it appears that Republic Services ignores them because there are no consequences for not complying (as found in the Benton County Talks Trash final report). This is a violation of

BCC 53.215(1).

I could go on and on with threats this expansion would pose to our County's sustainable future, all of which violate Benton County Code or endanger communities, near and far:

- The potential for a catastrophic landfill fire
- Never ending plastic trash along all roads leading to Coffin Butte
- Potential contamination of drinking water
- Disturbance and danger to the amazing diversity of wildlife in the area
- Leachate and PFAs in our communities and sent into the Willamette River
- Diminished property values
- The long term costs and liability to Benton County

Finally, the worst detail of this terrible expansion proposal is the fact that the cap on the amount of garbage that Coffin Butte is allowed to accept would be completely eliminated if it is approved...exacerbating everything about the landfill that is already onerous enough.

For our County to have a vibrant future, we need to invest in innovative solutions, waste reduction and recycling, not expand a landfill that pollutes our environment and ends up putting long-term financial burdens on our community...and we need you to LEAD on this issue.

Please reject LU-24-027. We rely on you to wisely lead us toward a healthy and sustainable future in Benton County.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Patte
37655 Zeolite Hills Rd.
Corvallis, OR 97330