

**From:** [Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann](#)  
**To:** [Benton Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Coffin Butte Expansion Application LU-24-027  
**Date:** Thursday, May 1, 2025 12:53:03 PM

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To: Benton County Planning Commission  
Re: Coffin Butte Expansion Application LU-24-027

The issue before you today is very specific: whether to grant permission to Republic Services to expand the Coffin Butte landfill. Because of their past failures as operators of the facility, the lack of oversight by the County and the State, and the likelihood that increasing the size will not improve performance, we strongly recommend that the request to expand be denied.

You may wonder why a non-profit organization from Seattle is taking a position on a landfill expansion in Oregon. The Institute for Energy and Resource Management (IeRM) works to bring the US approach to solid waste into the 21st Century. We were involved as observers in the Sustainable Materials Management Plan process, thanks to an invitation from a group of concerned Benton County citizens. The goals of the SMMP, reducing methane emissions harmful to the climate and greatly increasing recycling rates, are consonant with ours. We promote an integrated waste management system, similar to waste management programs that have been successfully implemented in Europe and Asia. Given the intent of the SMMP, the Benton County climate action plan, and the State of Oregon's global warming emission reduction goals, the Coffin Butte landfill is a target of opportunity.

Thus we believe that you have before you not only a narrow decision about expansion of the landfill, but a chance to change the direction of waste management for the County and perhaps the region, given that most of what goes into the landfill is from elsewhere. Why should you be concerned about this? In addition to the immediate issues of odors, emissions, and truck traffic, there are more fundamental problems that must be addressed: wasted resources, lost revenues, and the major impacts of landfiling on the climate.

By denying this request for expansion, you will take the first step toward a paradigm shift in waste management policy. We urge you to do so, to continue to pursue the goals of the SMMP, and to begin the shift to an integrated waste management system. Your children, and their children, will thank you.

Sincerely,  
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