

From: [Gregg Olson](#)
To: [Benton Public Comment](#)
Subject: Waste Train Coffin Butte Alternative
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This document backs up what I presented as Public Testimony last night, May 8th, at the Planning Commission hearing on the Coffin Butte Expansion.

Dear Planning Commission,

My name is Gregg Olson, and I now live at 5394 Davidson St, SE, Albany, 97322. Until this year I lived in Corvallis since 2007.

I am writing now because I believe there is a very good alternative to the expansions of Coffin Butte landfill.

Currently there are about 10,000 municipal waste dumps in the United States. In 10 years, 90 percent will be closed. Seattle saw this coming 30 years ago and started shipping their waste by rail to Columbia Ridge Landfill, near Arlington, Oregon, over 300 miles away from Seattle. It is owned and operated by Waste Management, and is 2500 acres, with a life span of 143 years.

Seattle now ships over 63% of its waste by rail. In the U.S. the use of trains for waste has increased at 35% per year- doubling in less than 3 years. Los Angeles is now shipping waste to the Mojave Desert.

Close to us the Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center for moving truck substances to rail cars was recently built, with 3 extra tracks. On its website it states that waste transfer would be a quite large use of the center. ODOT's Rail Advisory Committee in this March's meeting received a suggestion to create a "garbage train" from Millersburg to Columbia Ridge, 150 miles away. Using intermodal containers or gondola cars, 4 waste trains a week could annually carry over 1 million tons of waste to Arlington, Oregon, 100% of Coffin Butte's current deposits.

Effects of using waste trains from Millersburg include the use of Interstate 5 in place of Highway 99 for 88% of deposits (those from out of Benton County). Trains are over 4 times more efficient than trucks, reducing emissions. Columbia Ridge receives less than 10 inches of rain per year. This greatly reduces the production of methane and other toxic gases, compared with over 50 inches of rain at Coffin Butte. Columbia Ridge also has a deep clay base to reduce ground contamination, compared to Coffin Butte's fractured basalt.

I believe Millersburg waste trains are a good shorter-term alternative to Coffin Butte's usage and expansion. Longer term, countries like Sweden deposit only about 1% of their waste in landfill, but that is another story.

Sincerely,

Gregg Olson

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