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Subject: LU-24-027 Testimony - Marcy Follett
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May 9, 2025
Marcy Follett
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**I oppose LU-24-027 application to expand Coffin Butte Landfill.
This testimony is from a social media comment I made when this land use
process first started:**

When my grandparents bought this farm from the pioneers who settled here. I believe it was in 1934 about 10 years before WWII. The dump was not here. My grandma was part of the citizen group that showed up to say they did not want the dump here. It was in 1970 I believe. But this is the site that lost. At that time there was a promise to a time limit.

Back then garbage was dealt with differently. Paper was burnt in fires that warmed the homes. Oils were reused in many ways. Table scraps went to feed the animals that fed the people. Or to compost for improving the soil which grew more to feed the people. Clothes not made of synthetic materials were passed on to others when they no longer served the owner. Glass was only disposed of when it could not be reused to preserve food. The glass that could not be reused, the cans, the occasional bakelite (like an early plastic), and a few pieces of metal that could serve no other purpose were taken to the side of the creek and dumped. Just like children's textbooks had taught children was the way to deal with it.

After the war started a government man came walking from the direction of the dump. He offered my grandfather a silver dollar. My grandpa did not "want anything from some government man". And it's a good thing. Because had he accepted that coin it would have been considered as a down payment for our land. He would not have been allowed to negotiate the sale price or the time of departure. But the sale was mandatory for the good of the nation. He was paid \$11,000.

After the war he paid \$14,000 to get it back. What he got back was a land littered with ammunition (some of it live), bomb holes in his fields, and no house to call home. But the dump was not here then.

At that time there were large incinerators at Camp Adair. And here on the farm there was a new pile next to the cans and glass. We call it the ammunition dump. It is where we put the waste left behind from the military training.

After the war, there was a plywood mill where the recycle/compost center is. If you look on Google you can still tell where the waste glue chemicals from that operation entered the GP Reservoir. (I have noticed a lot of sores on the fish there. All in the same general location.). But the dump was not here then.

In the 70s there was a big movement to fight pollution. Even the cartoons pictured the evils of pollution as nasty foamy bubbling streams of filth. Needless to say schoolbooks had been revised and dumping in creeks was no longer an acceptable solution. But the dump was not here then. In 1978 there was a need for a dump to serve the Willamette Valley as more people were living in urban areas. And America had figured out that dumping anything that had no other possible use into a nearby creek, actually had a negative impact to our environment. As well as to the people and animals who lived and played nearby. Also to those who were downstream. Clear to the creatures in the ocean. But the dump was not here then.

At least 3 sites were being considered. There were local public meetings held for each site. Many people showed up to voice their opposition to it. But this site was selected. Partly because prior it had been Camp Adair. And so it was not as easily turned into productive farmland or housing. And although I don't think it was classified as one of the DUMP sites yet, the land was not healthy and could already stand to be cleaned up.

THIS IS THE IMPORTANT PART.

With the dump came a promise. That the dump would only be here for a limited amount of time. Then there would be another one located somewhere else to take its place. That time limit was not given as a bargaining chip. It was not a condition set by our community. It was set by science in consideration of the environment. Experts evaluated the site. Determined how much the land could handle without jeopardizing the health of the land around it. The original proposal included a managed way to return the land to nature. So that it could recover and have a minimal impact on us and our environment.

What was that length of time, that had been determined to meet the needs of the Willamette Valley and cause minimal impact to this local community? My husband and I thought we read 50 or 60 years. someone who attended a public meeting in the 80s remembers being told the year 2000. Anyone moving their family to this area since 1978 had to ask themselves if they really wanted to live this close to a dump. But the dump has not always stunk. So it would have been reasonable to think that it would be ok. And if anyone would have been concerned enough to research it, they should of had any concerns put to ease, if they saw the original proposal.

If the dump had been closed in 2000. Then we would not be discussing this. If it was 50 years. Then we may still be smelling an operation that shut down 6 yrs ago. But here we are today and the dump is still here.

Beyond the stench. The pollution of our land. The need to allow the land to recover. Even beyond the lengthy discussion of how expanding the size of the dump is not an addition of pollution in the area. But it is a compounding of the pollution and health hazard. Or how the long term impact of over a century of mishandling waste compares to today's regulations and resulting waste.

One very big thing to consider is the implications of not holding government officials, corporations, and even each other accountable to promises made and contracts signed. As an average person if I sign a contract and later find that it doesn't meet my needs.... Say I buy a little sports car with no back seat. Then my family grows to include 2 kids and a spouse.

Sure, I can get a new car. But the guy that sold me the sports car is under no obligation to simply give me a bigger car. What I have to do is fulfill the original contract. There are no options that allow the original contract not to be fulfilled. A lot of what happens in our government is based on promises for the future. Make sure that it is known that promises still mean something even if the original people have passed and it is a new generation. Part of our responsibility is to not just our noses but the lives of the future generations.

Sure, with today's laws the dumps have to go somewhere. And of course everyone will say NOT IN MY BACKYARD. That is not what we are saying. We are saying. IT HAS BEEN IN OUR BACK YARD LONG ENOUGH!!!