

Coffin Butte Landfill recently withdrew its Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application, which would have allowed it to continue to perform routine disposal operations in another zoned portion of the existing property. We made the decision to withdraw the application so we could do more listening and better understand community perspectives. As we engage with our neighbors and community, we are also taking the opportunity to address any misconceptions about Coffin Butte whenever possible.

## Myth vs. Fact

### How the proposed expansion at Coffin Butte will impact Landfill Life

#### MYTH

Eliminating trash from outside Benton County would preserve air space and eliminate the need for an expansion.

#### FACT

There are two reasons why that's untenable. First, the legal and regulatory conflicts are incredibly cumbersome. The State of Oregon implemented and began permitting "regional landfills" in the 1970s, as a more environmentally responsible approach to solid waste management and disposal. **Coffin Butte was designated as a regional landfill under the 1974 Chemeketa Region Solid Waste Management Program, a cooperative effort between Benton, Linn, Marion, Yamhill and Polk Counties.** The plan noted that "individual communities will be unable to effectively solve the economic, social, scientific and technical problems of solid waste disposal" and that a "regional approach to solid waste disposal will be necessary," for the area's economy. Today, these counties all depend upon the landfill for responsible disposal through various contracts, requirements or other enforceable arrangements, which cannot be wished away.

Second, even if one could get past those conflicts, the economic burden that would shift to Benton County would be substantial. **Residents and businesses in Benton County have benefited from affordable disposal rates, in large part, because the other neighboring counties pay their fair share, effectively keeping costs lower for everyone.** If the financial contributions from those surrounding counties were to somehow go away, the costs for hauling and disposal in Benton County would skyrocket. And, in all likelihood, those added costs would be passed on to employers and residents alike. The reality is that responsible solid waste management is capital intensive. The State's use of regional landfills helps ensure safe and cost effective disposal, while providing considerable regulatory oversight.

## MYTH

The proposed expansion is not needed. Coffin Butte can continue to operate for at least 20 years if Republic Services utilizes the space already permitted in the site development plan.

The proposed expansion would have eliminated any tonnage caps at the landfill, effectively allowing Coffin Butte to accept as much waste as it wants.

## FACT

Coffin Butte has less than **four years of life remaining** in the current disposal area. There are an additional 15 years of estimated capacity in the on-site quarry. However, there are active, ongoing quarry operations. In addition, the engineering and construction work needed to properly prepare the quarry for disposal operations is estimated to take roughly four years. **As a result – without the proposed expansion – Coffin Butte is at risk of running out of air space.** That would mean the County's waste would have no viable outlet, creating unprecedented disruptions and added costs for everyone – from businesses and schools to local governments and residents.

**The Landfill has no issue with the current tonnage cap, and would be comfortable continuing with the current policy.** The original CUP application, which the landfill withdrew in response to community questions, was a necessary regulatory step under the Benton County development code – to be able to perform routine landfill operations on another previously zoned portion of the existing property.

