From: Delaney Jones
To: Knuuti, Karen
Subject: Public Comment on Public Benefit Determination Application for Juniper Ridge Landfill (DEP# S-020700-W5-CV-N)
Date: Thursday, September 5, 2024 9:23:11 PM

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DEP Solid Waste Project Manager Karen Knuuti,

Dear Commissioner Loyzim,

I strongly oppose the Public Benefit Determination application for the expansion of Juniper Ridge Landfill. The application fails to meet the necessary criteria and poses significant risks to our environment and communities.

The expansion contradicts Maine's Solid Waste Management Hierarchy. It does nothing to increase reduction, reuse, or recycling efforts. Instead, it perpetuates a system that prioritizes disposal over sustainable waste management.

The proposed expansion violates the environmental justice legal standards. The landfill has already disproportionately burdened the Penobscot Nation and nearby communities for years, contaminating sacred waters and exposing residents to harmful odors and potential health risks.

Casella's track record raises serious concerns about their ability to safely manage an expanded facility. Past issues with odor control, PFAS contamination, and the 2023 fire are just some examples of the risk of a further expansion.

The proposal does not address long-term waste reduction needs. It's a short-sighted solution that fails to invest in the infrastructure and programs needed for a sustainable waste management future.

I urge you to issue a negative Public Benefit Determination, pursue an independent environmental review of Casella’s landfill practices and the cumulative environmental justice impacts, and focus instead on developing zero-waste solutions that protect our environment and communities.

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