

To [Karen.Knuuti@maine.gov](mailto:Karen.Knuuti@maine.gov)

Re: Expansion of Juniper Ridge

I respectfully request that the Maine DEP reject the request by Casella to expand the Juniper Ridge Landfill.

As a member of Vassalboro Conservation Commission , this expansion raises many the same issues that our town has been grappling with :

- 1) PFAS contamination of our lake that is the drinking water supply to our town and surrounding towns,
- 2) Limited solid waste disposal options
- 3) Less state incentives to recycle

Presently , Casella , who manages JR, has a poor record of preventing further PFAS contamination of the Penobscot River. The landfill's leachate waste is trucked to the now Nine Dragons mill in Old Town, where it receives minimal treatment and is released into the Penobscot River, directly below the Penobscot Nation. The Penobscot Nation has experienced environmental impacts from the Juniper Ridge Landfill including odors, a toxic fire in 2023 and reports of smaller fires since then, and the discharging of minimally treated leachate which includes PFAS “forever chemicals” into the Penobscot Nation’s sustenance fishing waters. The leachate is not treated for PFAS before being dumped in the river.

“Casella's most recent annual report for JRL shows that in 2022 there was at least one leachate spill, where the toxic chemicals flowed across the landfill road before being contained. (70) This leachate spill was never announced to the public. The annual reports for JRL show a pattern of sporadic landfill fires and toxic spills, and a propensity to keep such information from the public. (71)”- Conservation Law Foundation

The Maine DEP is legally obligated to determine whether an expansion has “public benefit.” They also must consider Environmental Justice when looking at the industrial facility's impact on surrounding communities, including the Penobscot Nation.

The expansion cannot meet the standards for a positive Public Benefits Determination because it is inconsistent with the State of Maine's Solid Waste Management Hierarchy and with ensuring environmental justice for the communities adjacent to the landfill.

Thank you for rejecting this proposal by Casella .

Sincerely,

Holly Weidner

320 Main Street

Vassalboro, ME 04989

[weidnerholly@gmail.com](mailto:weidnerholly@gmail.com)