

Re/ Approval with Conditions for Waste Management #S-010735-WD-YB-N

4/30/2021

To whom it may concern,

I am writing with regard to the above-noted license application for the new landfill in Norridgewock. For starters, it was my understanding that Maine had instituted a ban on new commercial landfills in the state. This "Approval with Conditions" allows construction of a new commercial landfill, roughly ½ mile away from the existing landfill. As this is not contiguous, how is it not considered to be a new landfill?

This new landfill would be surrounded by water (within a mile) on all sides. It would be permitted to take in large amounts of sludge, which testing has shown to be contaminated with PFAS / PFOS "forever chemicals", yet no testing of the leachate for these contaminants is required by the approval with conditions. The people of the State of Maine deserve to know what is in the leachate before it is "treated" (minimally at best) and discharged into one of Maine's major waterways. Fish in the Kennebec River have already shown PFOS contamination, with the highest levels in fish sampled just downstream of the wastewater treatment plant where most of the current landfill's leachate is handled. This is not a coincidence and more must be done to protect our waterways and fisheries.

The existing landfill has been the site of numerous fires in the past; increasing the amounts of waste coming into the landfill can only increase the risk of additional fires. While the DEP is required to determine that the new landfill won't "contaminate ambient air" or "constitute a hazard to health or welfare", previous fires resulted in injury to local firefighters and a smoke plume from the smoldering landfill wafted through the area for weeks. The Fire Prevention Plan provided in the application does not seem to adequately protect neighbors from ambient air contamination and/or a hazard to health and welfare. Furthermore, the license conditions do not require repairs to liners or gas collection pipelines damaged by fire.

For these and many other reasons, I ask that the DEP's draft Approval with Conditions be revisited and that the DEP upholds the state ban on new commercial landfills. Using semantics to avoid the ban on new landfills does nothing to protect the health and lives of Maine's people.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles B. Leithiser".

Charles B. Leithiser

Old Town, Maine