

## **July 21, 2006 Marin IJ Friday Readers' Forum**

### Rest of the landfill story

As members of the coalition opposing the proposed expansion of the Redwood Landfill (No Wetlands Landfill Expansion, Sierra Club, and Sustainable Novato, respectively), we appreciate the IJ's ongoing coverage.

Friday's article highlights why it's important to pay attention to the facts and not just PR spin. Contrary to the headline, "Dump drops plan to expand," Waste Management, Inc. is still pushing a plan to increase by some 40 percent the amount of garbage it can import to Marin and dump in our northeastern wetlands.

Although the reduction from the original plan shows what a dedicated community coalition can do, we will remain active to assure the following concerns are addressed.

First, Waste Management's "reduced" expansion of 6 million-plus cubic yards is still too dangerous, given the dump's location along a marsh, in a floodplain and active earthquake zone, where the bottom of the pile sits below sea-level a scant 24 inches from groundwater in places. The impact of global warming in 50 years could be devastating.

Second, every expert agrees there will be a failure at some point, and taxpayers will have to pay for the toxic clean-up post-closure unless financial assurance bonding is required.

Third, we need an independent monitor because Waste Management's dismal national track record - more than \$20 million in fines in the last five years - shows it can't be trusted.

Fourth, Marin must keep organic material and green waste out of the landfill (which is where it goes today) because of the resulting methane gas that contributes to global warming. Also, to extend the landfill's life, Marin must set long-term zero-waste goals, implement better reduction and reuse strategies and adopt an out-of-county tipping fee.

Fifth, Marin County supervisors must exercise local authority to address the above issues by reviewing the county land-use permit, which would enable protections going beyond the solid waste permit issued by the state Solid Waste Board.

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