



April 19, 2024

Robert Scott, Commissioner
New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
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Subject: Granite State Landfill (GSL) Development, NCES Landfill

We are writing to you on behalf of our constituents to address several pressing concerns related to environmental and public health matters in the North Country of New Hampshire regarding the proposed Granite State Landfill (GSL) project. **After careful consideration and engaging with the constituents of our districts, we find it our duty to express absolute opposition to this initiative.**

New Hampshire prides itself on its natural landscapes, pristine waterways, and rich biodiversity. The Forest Lake area, in particular, serves as a vital habitat for wildlife, a recreational haven for our residents, and a source of clean, fresh water. Introducing a landfill to this environment poses unacceptable risks that could tarnish not only the local ecosystem but also the health and well-being of our communities.

Additionally, common concerns and questions from our constituents include:

- The potential PFAS-contaminated runoff within the watershed of the Ammonoosuc River and adjacent Forest Lake State Park from the proposed site. The contamination risk poses serious threats to both the environment and public health, necessitating immediate remediation efforts.
- The costs associated with PFAS remediation at the NCES landfill are potentially placing a heavy burden on the towns of Bethlehem, Grafton County, and the state of New Hampshire. Will these communities qualify for funds from the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund? Will DES communicate with these communities how to receive funds?
- What kind of mitigation plans exist, including funding mechanisms, for the eventual contamination of Forest Lake and the Forest Lake State Park if the Granite State Landfill (GSL) is permitted? Will GSL be required to be bonded?
- The potential negative effects on North Country tourism and outdoor recreation due to ongoing NCES contamination and potential permitting of GSL are of great concern. The economic impacts, particularly on those who utilize Littleton's Riverwalk area for swimming, tubing, and fishing, must be carefully evaluated.

- The considerable increases in heavy-duty, trash-related vehicle traffic in the towns of Carroll, Whitefield, and Littleton must be addressed to minimize disruptions and ensure the safety of residents. Currently the intersection of Cottage Street and Main Street in Littleton is already congested. Increased traffic will only make this worse.
- What is the potential for ground and surface water contamination within the vicinity of the proposed GSL development, particularly concerning PFAS compounds? These areas are currently free of such contamination, and it is crucial to preserve areas to prevent further environmental degradation.

Beyond the environmental and quality-of-life concerns, there is an economic argument to be made against the landfill. The natural beauty of New Hampshire is one of our most valuable assets, attracting tourists from across the nation and generating significant revenue for our state. Compromising these landscapes with a landfill could diminish tourism appeal and, as a result, negatively impact local businesses that depend on tourism dollars.

While we understand the need for effective waste management solutions, these must be balanced with the imperative of preserving our environment for future generations. We urge you to deny the applications for the GSL project and consider alternative waste management strategies that have less environmental impact, such as increased recycling programs, the adoption of zero-waste initiatives, and investment in more sustainable forms of waste processing.

It is imperative that we take a stand now to avoid the long-term consequences that the Granite State Landfill project might impose. We owe it to our constituents, our communities, and our state to protect the resources that make New Hampshire the place we love and are proud to call home.

In conclusion, we agree with the reports submitted to DES by both Bethlehem and Dalton Conservation Commissions as well as the letters submitted by the Grafton and Coos County Commissioners and we urge you to take swift and decisive action to deny the wetlands permit application, NHDES File Number: 2023-03259, and the driveway permit application, NHDOT File Number 14656, for the GSL Landfill Projection.

Your attention to these pressing issues is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

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Cc: Commissioner William Cass, New Hampshire Department of Transportation; United States Army Corps of Engineers