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Letter: HB 177 will protect our state parks

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March 10 – To the Editor:

New Hampshire HB 177 prohibits new landfills from being located within two miles of a state park. The damage that will be done if this bill does not pass is immeasurable.

Passage of HB 177 would protect our state parks in ways no current regulation does. This has become an urgent issue.

I refer to the current situation in Dalton with the potential sale of 1900 acres to Casella Waste Systems, a company that hauls out-of-state trash into New Hampshire. Casella wants to locate a massive landfill next to Forest Lake. Do we want to allow and even encourage this practice? It has no concern for the environment, the tourism business or residents. It would sacrifice irreplaceable wetlands, pollute lakes and rivers, create unsightly views of trash, and increase truck traffic. The proposed landfill is not even needed for NH trash. It would be a for-profit transaction to benefit a Vermont based company.

Casella, and companies like it, have alternatives. They do not need to compromise the natural resources that enhance our state parks. Once damaged, the harm would have long lasting consequences. When utterly destroyed, such as filling in wetlands and clear cutting old growth trees (both included in Casella's Dalton plan) it would be permanent.

I urge readers to contact their representatives this week. Ask them to vote YES on HB 177, scheduled for (a hearing in) early April. Find contact information at gencourt.state.nh.us.

It is up to us to insist our state park system be protected from this threat.

Cynthia Barrett

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