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Profiteer on Horseback - Nancy Carbonneau Morrison

Mar 26, 2024

Profiteer on Horseback

To the Editor:

I write in response to John Casella's "Modern materials management in New Hampshire" LTE published on March 20.

I come away feeling that John sees himself as a white knight charging into the North Country on a steadfast steed, looking to slay a problem that frankly NH does not have.

Mr. Casella states that a new landfill in NH "will provide the necessary disposal capacity... that will be needed when NCES (in Bethlehem) closes after 2026." Director Wimsatt from NHDES has clearly stated that NH has no capacity need for trash... existing NH landfills have space for years to come and are actually mandated to prioritize NH trash.

John goes on to say, "Today, being cooperative and borderless... creates a regional marketplace for recycling and waste disposal." NH presently does export 5 to 10% of its waste to be recycled or disposed of out-of-state, as we have no recycling facility of our own. However, Casella admittedly aims to import from out-of-state 49% of the trash that would go into their proposed landfill in Dalton. I understand how a low percentage of waste will travel over borders due to present recycling opportunities or more efficient waste management, but this extreme inequity places an undue burden on the environment and people who did not create this imported trash.

And by golly, if Casella Waste Systems wants to build a recycling center in NH as indicated, bring it on. Then we could reduce traveling over state borders for trash management. NH has paid its dues by "hosting" a Casella landfill in Bethlehem for 30 years, and a "state of the art Materials Recovery Facility" would hopefully improve NH's ability to recycle.

John's letter listed award-winning work done in New England, but failed to mention that Casella Waste Systems spilled 154,000 gallons of toxic leachate in Bethlehem due to unattended equipment over a weekend, had a landfill catch fire in Maine last year, spilled another 9000 gallons of leachate recently at an unattended, experimental leachate treatment facility in VT, and had a 3 1/2 acre "permanent" cap slide off the top of a landfill in NY.

Rather than being a white knight savior, John appears to be far more interested in his own corporate profits at the expense of NH's environment and the health and safety of its citizens.

Sincerely,

Nancy Carbonneau Morrison

Mont Vernon, N. H.