

FI-16367



Danielle Gosselin/STB

02/05/2009 11:05 AM

To

cc

bcc

Subject: Fw: STB Finance Docket No. 35116

----- Forwarded by Brian O'Boyle/STB on 02/05/2009 11:00 AM -----



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02/05/2009 09:20 AM

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Subject STB Finance Docket No. 35116

To the Attention of Ms. Danielle Gosselin, Environmental Filing STB Finance Docket No. 35116:

The request by Resource Recovery LLC and the R.J. Corman Rail Company that some 20 miles of rail line be reactivated, no doubt to provide access to the municipal waste landfill and industrial park being planned by Resource Recovery for Rush Township, in Centre County, will be discussed at a public meeting scheduled by the STB for Feb. 10, 2009 at the Philipsburg-Osceola Area Senior High School in Philipsburg, PA.

As a long-time resident of Centre County, I, along with many other residents, have consistently opposed Resource Recovery's plans for a landfill (please see the many petitions signed when we residents first learned of those plans, in 2005). You are surely aware of the many objections raised by the huge numbers of opponents to the landfill. For the sake of brevity, let me mention only two of those objections.

The first objection has a personal aspect. Back in 2007, a radioactive water leak was discovered in Penn State's Breazeale Nuclear Reactor! Years ago, my husband and his physics colleagues worked next door, at the Accelerator Building. At that time I never worried about health risks: professionals using state-of-the-art equipment were constantly monitoring things!

When I read in 2007 that the chairman of nuclear engineering recalled two other leakages, one as recent as the 1990s, and said that tracking down the current leak could require a great deal of investigation, I wondered: If leaks can occur in a closely monitored nuclear reactor, what could happen in a far less closely monitored landfill?

Resource Recovery points to the double lining of its proposed landfill, where it plans to dump 5,000 tons of trash per day for 28 years, even though the federal Environmental Protection Agency admits that all landfill liners eventually leak!

Furthermore, a report from the state Department of Environmental Protection indicates that many landfills contain radioactive tritium in their leachate.

Federal authorities say not to worry, that tritium levels under 20,000 picocuries per liter are considered safe for drinking water.

There was a time when "sunshine unites" were used as a measure of radiation

intensity. As with tritium today, below a certain number, there was nothing to worry about.

We know better today.

Since regulations governing the acceptable amount of radiation intensity in trash have been relaxed, we can expect the levels of tritium to increase, and no one knows how high the levels will go.

The second objection concerns the efforts of residents and legislators alike. Towards the departure of Penn State students at the close of the academic year, Chairman Carolyn Lembeck and hundreds of volunteers mount a gigantic effort to collect, sort, and sell the mountains of items discarded by the departing students. Their basic motive? To prevent those items from filling up the dumps! Legislators, in a bipartisan effort, vote regularly to ensure the reauthorization of Pennsylvania's recycling fund with Governor Ed Rendell signing the bill into law. This fund provides finances to townships and counties for their recycling programs. Such efforts look foolish in view of Resource Recovery's plans to truck garbage from New Jersey and New York to put into the landfill in Rush Township, billed as the largest dump east of the Mississippi!

We urge everyone on the STB to give full consideration to the objections outlined above, as well as to all the other objections that will be raised on February 10.

Sincerely yours,

Marian T. Freed
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