



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCIAL SERVICES  
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SERVING THE PUBLIC AND DELIVERING ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO STATE GOVERNMENT

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COMMISSIONER

**Date:** February 12, 2025  
**To:** Government Oversight Committee  
**From:** Kirsten LC Figueroa, Commissioner  
Dept. of Administrative and Financial Services  
**Subject:** Juniper Ridge Landfill

The Department of Administrative and Financial Services is providing the following memo, in response to Senators Bennett and Tipping's January 23, 2025, letter to the Government Oversight Committee requesting an OPEGA investigation into matters related to the Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL), as there appears to be a misunderstanding about the status of the Operating Services Agreement (OSA) with Casella Waste Management, Inc. (Casella).

**The Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services (BGS), has not extended the Operating Services Agreement with Casella for the operation of the State-owned Juniper Ridge Landfill.**

On February 6, 2025, Commissioner Figueroa provided the signed OSA between the State and Casella to Director Schleck, highlighting the term of the agreement per Section 1.45 as 30 years. **The expiration date of the OSA with Casella is still the original expiration date of February 5, 2034.**

The State entered into the OSA pursuant to Resolves 2003, ch. 93 which directed the State Planning Office (predecessor to BGS for landfill management purposes) to:

- acquire the "West Old Town Landfill"—now known as JRL
- engage in a competitive bidding process for operation of the disposal facility.

The mandated process was followed; a 30-year contract was awarded to Casella; and, the agreement finalized on February 5, 2004.

Senators Bennett and Tipping's letter also asserts that BGS has awarded Casella an expansion of the Juniper Ridge Landfill.

**BGS has no authority to award an expansion. Per statute, the application for expansion must be submitted to and approved by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).**

As a State-owned landfill, BGS will be the Applicant for an expansion of JRL, not Casella. At this time, an application for expansion has not been submitted by BGS to DEP. An application and approval of an expansion of JRL is separate from and contingent upon a Public Benefit Determination by DEP supporting expansion. DEP's Public Benefit Determination issued October 2, 2024, and supportive of expansion at JRL subject to certain conditions, was appealed on November 12, 2024 to Superior Court by the Penobscot Nation and Conservation Law Foundation.

An extension of the OSA will not precede approval by DEP of BGS' application for expansion of JRL. The length of any extension of the OSA, if granted in the future, would be proportional to the volume of any expansion permitted by DEP and the corresponding estimated life of JRL beyond the OSA's current 2034 expiration.

DAFS is aware of at least two bills, expected to come before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, that will provide an opportunity for the Legislature to engage DAFS in a conversation about the future operations of JRL, including:

- LD 235 - Resolves, Regarding the Operation and Future Capacity of State-owned Landfills - Sponsored by Rep. Campbell; and
- LR 1724 - An Act to Increase Legislative Oversight of Solid Waste Disposal at the Juniper Ridge Landfill – Sponsored by Sen. Tipping.

DAFS looks forward to sharing our knowledge and expertise with the ENR Committee as they consider these bills.