



WASTED.

A call for Person County to end its relationship with Republic Services



P.C. P.R.I.D.E.
Reduce Reuse Recycle Reinvest

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Acknowledgement

We would like to extend a special thank you to photographer Casey Toth for allowing us to include two of her photographs in this project. Her work can be seen on the top portion of the cover of this report, as well as on page seven. You can see more of her photographs at www.caseytoth.com.

INTRODUCTION

A New Way Forward.

Greetings from PCPRIDE, a grass roots organization in Person County founded in 2005. Our mission is to be a watchful eye for environmental issues and a platform for citizens' concerns. Once again there are growing concerns over looming issues. The major issue at this time is what to do with the county's trash. The county's contract with Republic Services ends in August of 2017. In 2015, the County Commissioners hired a consulting firm who returned with what they believe to be the three most fiscally responsible options. These options were:

1. Renegotiate the contract/franchise agreement
2. Direct haul waste to Granville County's landfill
3. Open a transfer station (and haul waste to Granville County or other landfill)

In a split vote, the Board of Commissioners decided to move forward with renegotiating the contract with Republic. This might be the cheapest option for the county. Although, rates were not discussed with Granville County prior to these recommendations being made, so even this is uncertain.¹ But, isn't there more at stake here than money? Does the health and safety of the citizens mean nothing at all? In the past this county has often seemed to care more about money than its citizens. We are saddened to see that this board appears to be continuing in that tradition.

At a County Commissioner's meeting on April 20, 2015, Jason Watkins, of the North Carolina Department of Energy and Natural Resources, noted that Person County produces 100 tons of trash per day (98% of our trash stays here) yet an additional 500+ tons come in from other places. During that same meeting, Mr. Watkins noted that in 2006 Roxboro and Person County made it a goal to reduce the individual number down to .75 tons per person per year, yet we still sit at 1.01 per person. He asked, "Why is this not a goal now?" We at PCPRIDE have the same question.

We do not need a mega-dump in our small community. The four facts of finding in the planning and zoning ordinance from several years ago are still the same. This landfill still is not in harmony with the area, nor is it safe for the people. Building a budget on garbage money ties a county to the dump thereby making sacrificial lambs of those citizens living near it. It is not wise to continue a relationship with a company who has a long history of attacks on the environment. It is unfair to sentence the citizens in eastern Person County to several more years of increased health problems, diminished property values, and a lower quality of life.

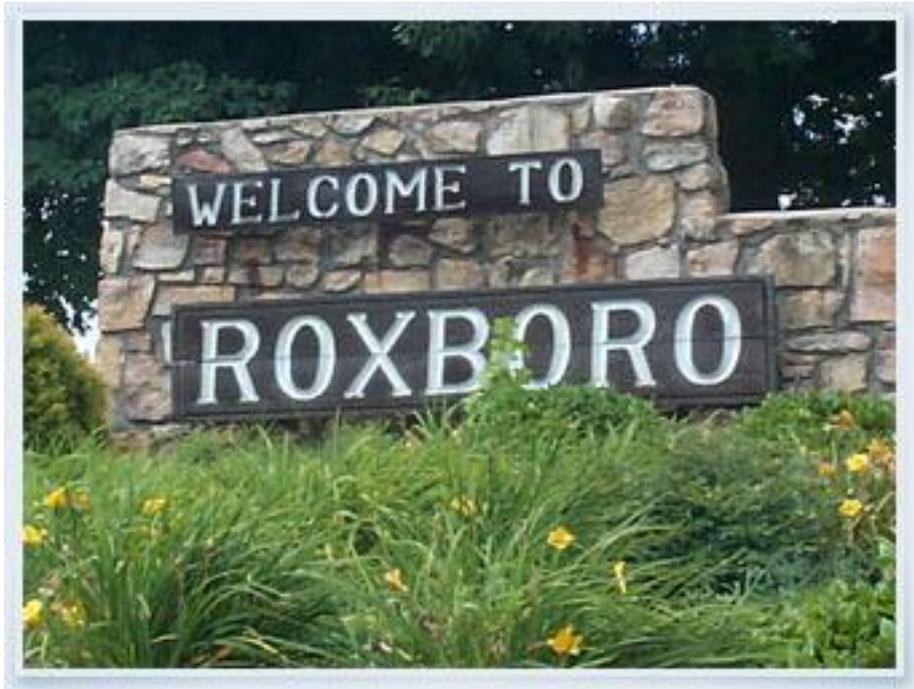
Direct hauling our waste to Granville County provides the best combination of cost, health, and environmental safety benefits for our citizens. As we have stated in the past, this, along with re-committing ourselves to recycling and reducing our waste is the best way forward. We believe our children and grandchildren deserve a future that is not **"wasted"** on garbage. - *PCPRIDE*

WHO IS PCPRIDE?

PC PRIDE was founded in 2005 by a group of concerned Person County citizens in response to a proposed expansion to the Upper Piedmont Environmental landfill, located in southern Person County. Those citizens would go on to partner with the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) and mount a successful legal challenge to the expansion in 2008. Since that time, PC PRIDE has continued its efforts to promote environmental awareness and serve as a platform for concerned citizens. In the past, the organization has worked to reduce waste through the promotion of recycling. PC PRIDE was one of the key players in the creation of the Person County Recycle Center. The group raised money and placed recycle bins in all of the county's schools. PC PRIDE has also held campaign forums to educate voters on important issues during every election year.

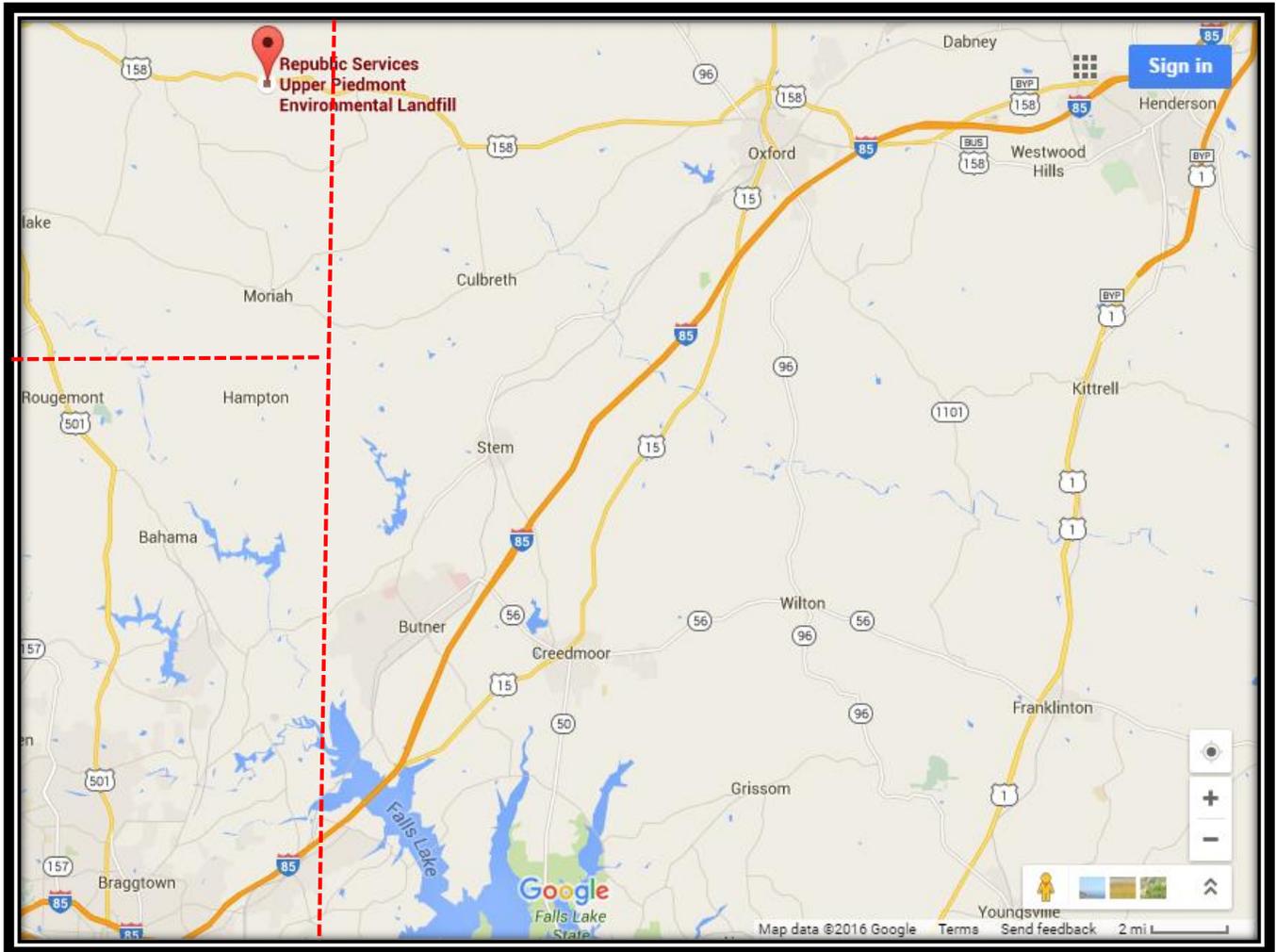
COMMUNITY PROFILE: The City of Roxboro

Roxboro, North Carolina is the county seat of Person County. As of the 2010 census, the city of Roxboro has a population of 8,362. The city is 30 miles north of Durham, North Carolina. The City of Roxboro collects and hauls waste to the Upper Piedmont Regional MSW Landfill. The City provides weekly residential trash collection, but **does not provide curbside recycling**. The city does not charge residents a waste collection fee.



REALITY CHECK: Roxboro waste disposal costs

It is often stated as fact that the City of Roxboro would pay more for waste disposal if its waste were taken elsewhere. This is not completely accurate. We believe that the departure of Republic Services should coincide with the introduction of a municipal curbside recycling program. In fact, Person County's 10-Year Solid Waste Management Plan notes that the City of Roxboro **"could realize a savings of approximately \$113,000"** through the introduction of a curbside recycling program.¹³ This is largely due to fuel savings. The recycling center is located in the City of Roxboro.



HOW ARE YOU AFFECTED BY THE UPPER PIEDMONT LANDFILL?

The Upper Piedmont Landfill takes in more than **600 tons of trash each day**¹¹, yet most residents of the Triangle area probably don't even realize that there is a mega-dump in their own backyard. These residents almost certainly don't realize that a huge landfill, where much of the coal ash from the Dan River spill was taken, sits in close proximity to their own water supply.

The landfill sits:

Less than 3 miles from the **Granville County** line

Less than 8 miles from the **Durham County** line

Approximately 10 miles upstream from **Lake Michie**, part of **the City of Durham's** water supply

Less than 20 miles upstream from **Falls Lake**, part of **the City of Raleigh's** water supply

COMMUNITY PROFILE: Republic Services

Republic Services, LLC employs approximately 31,000 employees and has more than 375 collection companies in 42 states and Puerto Rico, 223 transfer stations, 192 solid waste landfills and 78 recycling facilities. Two of their major investors are Warren Buffett and Bill Gates. Their logo star represents the company's philosophy of five essential core values – to be Respectful, Responsible, Reliable, Resourceful, and Relentless in all they do, every day.⁸ On September 21, 2009, Newsweek released their "Green Rankings" a ranking of the 500 largest corporations on their track record on a number of environmental issues. Republic Services was ranked 448th out of 500 overall, and 46th out of 50 in their industry. Republic has operated the Upper Piedmont Environmental Regional in Person County for 19 years.



REPUBLIC
SERVICES

REALITY CHECK: Lined landfills do leak.

The Upper Piedmont Environmental Landfill is classified as a Subtitle D lined landfill. The very best landfill liners today are made of a tough plastic film called high density polyethylene (HDPE).¹² This film is about the thickness of a credit card. **A number of household chemicals will degrade HDPE**, permeating it, making it lose its strength, softening it, or making it become brittle and crack. Not only will household chemicals, such as moth balls, degrade HDPE, but much more benign things can cause it to develop stress cracks, such as, **margarine, vinegar, ethyl alcohol, shoe polish, and peppermint oil**, to name a few.¹² - www.ejnet.org/landfills/

REALITY CHECK: Relentless.

Republic Services has been relentless in its attack on the environment. Here are some of their most notable victims:

Bridgeton, Missouri – Since at least 2010, Bridgeton Sanitary Landfill in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri has been burning as a subsurface smoldering fire. The landfill was served a violation notice in July after people complained about "horrific odors". EPA air quality monitoring in August 2012 showed unhealthy levels of acetaldehyde and benzene. The landfill has been generating about 150,000 gallons of leachate per day, which has "seeped into the limestone rock at the bed of the landfill and flowed into the surrounding groundwater".⁷

Clark County, Nevada - In 2008, Republic Services agreed to pay a \$1 million fine and up to \$36 million in remediation costs for violations of the Clean Water Act at a closed landfill in Clark County, Nevada.⁵

Wayne County, Georgia - Republic has created a fire storm in Wayne County, Georgia with a coal ash debacle. They tried to bypass the commissioners and citizens to bring coal ash in mega volumes into their Broadhurst Landfill. This is an ongoing battle, and now the question is if Republic Services, is going to get the authority to dump coal ash at the Wayne County site.⁶

San Francisco, California - In 2007, Republic Services was fined \$725,000 by the State of California related to hazardous waste leaking from a closed landfill into San Francisco Bay.

Stark County, Ohio - In 2009, the Environmental Protection Agency of Ohio levied a \$10 million fine after Republic "failed to extinguish" an "aluminum dross reaction/fire" at the Countywide Landfill.²

Roxbury, Massachusetts - In 2002, Allied Waste was ordered to pay a fine of \$782,550 by the EPA and spend \$2.3 million on an environmental project to improve air quality for violations of the Clean Air Act.¹⁰



COINCIDENCE?

In March of 2013, Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster filed a lawsuit against Republic Services for the Bridgeton landfill debacle. In 2014, Republic Services gave \$50,000 to Missouri Republican House and Senate campaign committees and \$20,000 to House and Senate committees for Missouri Democrats.⁹ In June 2015 the state of Missouri and Republic Services reached an agreement, before the case could go to trial.

WHY DIRECT HAUL WORKS BEST.

We believe that, if implemented properly, the option to haul waste directly to Granville County provides a much healthier option to the citizens of Person County while continuing to be convenient and cost effective. Here are a few reasons why:

1. If a new contract is negotiated, Republic, a company with a long history of environmental negligence, is very **likely to increase their daily tonnage and increase the size of their coverage area** over the next several years, thus potentially creating an even larger long-term problem for our county.
2. The **life expectancy of the Granville County Landfill with our trash and theirs is 75-100 years!**¹ This correlates well with our county's need for a long-term solid waste management plan.
3. Direct hauling outside of the county will **force the City of Roxboro to reduce trips to the landfill**. The most obvious way to do this is by increasing recycling efforts.
4. Increasing recycling efforts, not only will improve our image as a more progressive county, it will also provide **a boost to Person Industries and the Person County Recycling Center**.
5. A **convenient centrally located drop-off site** would be beneficial to citizens of northern Person County, many of whom do not travel to Upper Piedmont Environmental, because it is so far away from them.

REALITY CHECK: Increasing recycling rates – it can be done.

Here are some ways that other areas have managed to increase their recycling rates:

Recycling mandates - Recycling mandate by city or county ordinance, which would require residents and businesses to recycle any item possible. San Francisco has used a mandate to increase its diversion rate from 46 percent to 80 percent since 2000.³

Pay as you throw - A program cities such as Austin use to incentivize residents to recycle. There, residents are charged for the amount of trash they throw away rather than a flat fee. In cities where trash collection is covered with tax dollars, residents can receive rebates for throwing away less trash.³

Increased marketing and education about recycling – The current budget for marketing Person Industries is practically non-existent. Even a minimal increase would be beneficial.

COMMUNITY PROFILE: Person Industries

Person Industries is a community rehabilitation program that trains people with disabilities for jobs in the community. Employees receive on-the-job work experiences through Person Industries' onsite and community employment work groups. PI operates the Person County Recycling Center as well as employs people in work groups in several local industries through production, housekeeping and confidential shredding contracts.



Person Industries has been in operation since January of 1985. Since that time the program has grown in the amount of people served, the programs of services offered, production contract work available and qualified staff trainers.

County residents can drop-off recycling free of charge at the recycling center. PCRC accepts glass, plastics, metals, papers, white goods, electronics, pallets and textiles. – *personcounty.net*



CONCLUSION

Protecting Our Community, Preserving Their Future.

Our survival depends on knowing all those who claim to be our friends, but in truth, are just using us. All over the country, Republic Services, LLC has proven to be a wolf in sheep's clothing. It appears that our commissioners are willing to let this company destroy a part of the county for the sake of money with no other considerations. The very people elected to protect this county will be helping to destroy it by extending our relationship with Republic. As of yet we have not heard what Republic wants because they are holding private meetings with the county and locking the public out.

What has Republic done to Person County over the last 19 years? The sum will not be known for many, many years to come, but water and air quality have, at the very least, been jeopardized. An above average of environmental diseases has been reported in the community immediately surrounding the landfill. Many complaints with regards to odor, water quality, and more, have been made by local residents. All of this, while Republic has been building a garbage mountain, which is now the highest point in Person County. It is time for this toxic relationship to come to an end.

There is a better solution than giving Republic another franchise agreement. According to Granville County Manager Michael Felts, based on the current waste streams of Granville and Person County, the Granville County Landfill would have an estimated life expectancy of 75-100 years. Granville County has expressed a willingness to participate in further discussions on a landfill partnership. The most desirable option for the citizens of Person County is direct hauling to Granville County. The citizens of southeastern Person County have sacrificed enough.

It is time for our commissioners to show leadership on the issue of solid waste by choosing the direct haul option and re-doubling our efforts to increase recycling in Person County. By doing so, we are not only protecting our community for today, we are also creating a healthier community for future generations. - *PCPRIDE*



**"WE DO NOT INHERIT THE EARTH FROM OUR
ANCESTORS, WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN"**

- Native American Proverb

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