

S.F. garbage headed for Vaca landfill

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A plan is in the works to use Recology Hay Road landfill as a back up location to dispose solid waste coming from San Francisco.

According to a public notice from the San Francisco Planning Department, Recology already collects San Francisco's trash and then transports it to the Altamont Landfill in eastern Alameda County for disposal. However, the existing agreement with the operator of the Altamont Landfill, Waste Management Inc., will expire in 2016.

"The proposed project consists of the transportation of municipal solid waste from San Francisco to the Recology Hay Road Landfill located in unincorporated Solano County, near Vacaville, where it would be disposed," according to the public notice. "San Francisco and Recology would enter into an agreement with a duration of up to 10 years for the transportation of San Francisco's (municipal solid waste). That waste would be transported by long haul semi-trucks, primarily from Recology San Francisco transfer station located at 501 Tunnel Road, with several additional trucks hauling residual wastes for disposal from Recology's Recycle Central facility, located at Pier 96 in San Francisco, as is presently the case. The proposed project would correspond with the cessation of transport of San Francisco's waste to Altamont Landfill."

Ricardo Serrano, Solano County's environmental health supervisor of the Local Enforcement Agency, said Recology's permit at the Hay Road Landfill allows them to bring in 2,400 tons of solid waste per day.

"We've known that they're actively seeking to bring in more garbage," he said. "The permit allows them to do that."

In 2011, Solano County reported that the Hay Road landfill had 38.6 years of capacity.

Recology Hay Road is already accepting green waste from San Francisco to its compost site, according to Adam Alberti, spokesperson for Recology.

He explained that San Francisco went out to bid a few years ago knowing that the agreement with the Altamont landfill was set to expire. During that process San Francisco awarded the bid to Recology and its Ostom Road landfill in Yuba county and for garbage to be transferred there by rail. However, delays surrounding the agreement including legal issues and environmental reviews have forced Recology to revert to its back up plan, the Hay Road landfill.

In the original request for proposal, the Hay Road landfill was included as a back up site, Alberti said. Recology is doing its due diligence now with an environmental review to get the Hay Road site ready just in case, Alberti explained.

Meanwhile, according to the public notice, the project is being studied by the Planning Department's Environmental Planning Division to determine its potential environmental effects.

"No environmental documents have been issued for this project," the notice stated.

Still, public comments concerning the potential environmental effects of this project are welcomed. In order for concerns to be fully considered or to ensure receipt of future environmental review documents for this project, contact Paul Maltzer at (415) 575-9038 or paul.maltzer@sfgov.org by July 15.

Additionally, environmental review provides information on physical environmental effects and does not make recommendations on the project itself.

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