

# Waste authority takes first steps to expand Creswell Landfill in Manor Township

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Published: LNP | LancasterOnline

March 12, 2024

Five days a week, tractor-trailers loaded down with waste from Lancaster, Berks, Dauphin and York counties snake their way along River Road in Manor Township en route to Frey Farm Landfill.

Last year, more than 400,000 tons of waste collected on the property. For perspective, the Empire State Building in New York City weighs about 365,000 tons.

Since 1989, Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority has dedicated 93 acres of the 305-acre Frey Farm property to the landfill, where mostly inorganic waste is spread out, covered with ash from the authority's waste-to-energy incinerators, then planted over with grass.

The gradual accumulation of waste has created a mound about 200 feet tall on the property, which also hosts a pair of 400-foot wind turbines that generate power for the adjacent Turkey Hill Dairy.

As the landfill approaches capacity — the authority says it can continue to take on waste for only another 14 years — officials have begun looking elsewhere for a place to dump people's trash. Specifically, they're looking directly next door at the now-dormant Creswell Landfill.

The county waste authority closed Creswell Landfill when it opened Frey Farm Landfill more than three decades ago. The 264-

acre Creswell site had reached maximum capacity for its two landfill plots: a 40-acre plot and a 106-acre plot separated by a 17-acre tract, formerly owned by PPL, where power lines once ran across the property.

When PPL moved its power lines in 2014, the waste authority acquired the land that separated the two plots, and now the authority is looking to expand the landfill's capacity by connecting those plots across the former power line tract.

Karen Gross, a spokeswoman for the waste authority, said the move could add "decades" to the useful life of the landfill.

On Jan. 2, Manor Township supervisors unanimously approved amending the township zoning law to allow the waste authority to use the power line tract for landfill purposes.

Now the authority just needs to figure out whether the land can handle waste disposal. To do that, it will conduct an engineering study to determine the feasibility and potential design of the reuse project.

There is plenty of time to make that determination. The authority can't file an application with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for disposal permits until there are five years or less of capacity remaining at the Frey Farm Landfill.

The authority also is exploring other potential landfill sites in Lancaster County, Gross said, but no specific site has been identified.

## Neighbor concerns

Some longtime residents who live near the landfills say the potential Creswell expansion feels like déjà vu.

"I can't believe we have to start over again," said Mary Glazier, 75, who has lived on Chestnut Grove Road, southeast of the landfills, since 1980.

A vocal opponent of landfill expansion, Glazier was a member of People Against Landfill Expansion, which formed back in 2000 to oppose the authority's bid to expand onto 300 acres owned by the family of former state Rep. John Barley.

In 2000, PALE sued the waste authority and Manor Township for violating the state Sunshine Act and negotiating in secret to purchase the Barley farm. The authority settled with the group out of court in April 2002, agreeing to abandon its expansion onto the Barley property and paying millions of dollars to the township in the form of increased landfill hosting fees.

As part of the settlement, the authority agreed to expand Creswell Landfill upward, but not outward, as it has done with Frey Farm Landfill.

Glazier said she understands the need for a landfill but is disappointed to see the waste authority again trying to expand because she believed each previous expansion would be the last one.

That statement was echoed by Scott Haverstick, 76, who has lived on Water Street in Washington Boro since 1971. Water Street turns into River Road, which leads to the landfill.

Pushing back against landfill expansion has required decades of community involvement, Haverstick said, and it's time for the waste authority to find somewhere else to put its trash. "We've done our fair share of this," he said.

Glazier and Haverstick both said the current leadership at the waste authority is more transparent and receptive to neighbors' concerns than past leadership.

The waste authority met in the summer and fall with adjacent landowners and people involved in previous litigation, Glazier said, to discuss a possible expansion of the Creswell site.

Glazier said that waste authority has been operating smoothly after past incidents in the 1980s that included water contamination. She said the current issues that concern local residents include increased truck traffic, the amount of waste coming from outside the county filling the Lancaster County site, and what she referred to as the “destruction of a beautiful section of the county.”

Any expansion of Creswell Landfill would have to meet current DEP standards, including having a double liner to control fluids that drain out of the landfill.

An expansion of the Creswell Landfill could require using nearly 40 acres of the approximately 170-acre Chestnut Grove Natural Area adjacent to the landfill for storage of construction material, recycling activities and leachate transfer stations, Gross said. That land, if needed, would be restored after use.

The next waste authority board meeting is April 19. The meetings typically begin with public comment.