

November 17, 2020

To: The Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino
The City Council of City of Fort Bragg
The City/County Coastal Transfer Station Ad Hoc Committee.
Carmel Angelo, CEO, County of Mendocino
Howard Dashiell, Director of Transportation, County of Mendocino
Tabatha Miller, City Manager, City of Fort Bragg

From: Solid Wastes of Willits, Inc.

Submitted to be attached for public view to the City/County Coastal Transfer Station Ad Hoc Committee November 18, 2020 Meeting Agenda, and please forward to each Member of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and to each Member of the City of Fort Bragg City Council.

**Caspar Transfer Station
Temporary Improvements to the Site**

Issue:

The long promised publicly owned central coast transfer station to be developed by the County of Mendocino and the City of Fort Bragg has not been built.

As a result, the Caspar Transfer Station (Caspar) has been pressed into service to provide coastal self-haul customers with essential disposal and diversion services. Having been promised that the central coast transfer station opening was just around the corner, Solid Wastes of Willits (SWOW) struggled on at Caspar with aged out equipment, and then, when that equipment failed, SWOW provided, at its own expense, what was thought to be an even more temporary inefficient drop box solution to be used until the promised central coastal transfer station opened.

Faced with the reality that a publicly owned facility will not be built in the foreseeable future, it should be recognized that the County and the City, not SWOW, are ultimately responsible in the absence of the promised central coast facility for providing self-haul customers with the infrastructure necessary to provide these critical disposal and diversion services.

These services cannot be provided in any reasonably efficient way by the current inefficient and costly Caspar drop box system.

In light of the County and City's failure to provide a publicly owned transfer station solution, SWOW now asks how the City and County plan to provide SWOW with the temporary improvements needed to eliminate the debris box collection system and replace it with a trailer operation to collect waste and recyclable materials in larger loads thereby reducing truck trips in order to direct-haul to the landfill and Material Recovery Facility. These improvements will greatly reduce the carbon footprint of the Caspar operation.

History:

When it became apparent that the County of Mendocino could no longer operate the Caspar facility in an economic way, and given that the coastal transfer station would become operational in the near term, SWOW and the County of Mendocino with consent and concurrence of City of Fort Bragg, the Caspar joint owner, entered into an Agreement on January 25, 2011, providing for the operation of the Caspar Transfer Station by SWOW until June 30, 2017.

On March 18, 2016, without notifying SWOW, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors took action to extend the Agreement to June 30, 2021 pending concurrence from the City of Fort Bragg which was received.

At the commencement date of the new transfer station Agreement, SWOW was required to assume the hauling agreement between the County and USA Waste of California (Fort Bragg Disposal) for servicing the "pod container" system at the site. SWOW was responsible for paying the hauling services per the terms of the Agreement. The hauling contract could not be terminated prior to June 30, 2014.

Relying on the promised central coast transfer station, due to be operational between 2015 and 2017, SWOW continued the hauling agreement with Fort Bragg Disposal on a month-to-month basis after June 30, 2014 expecting the closing of the Caspar site by the end of the term of the Caspar Agreement.

In January 2016, SWOW received a letter from Fort Bragg Disposal requesting to pull the pod compacting/container system as they no longer wish to use or support them. Again, expecting the operation of a new coastal transfer station, SWOW negotiated with Fort Bragg Disposal to continue to service the Caspar site by replacing the pods with open-top 50 cubic yard containers. This eliminated the need for SWOW to purchase trucks and containers for what was expected to be a short period of time.

At the April 28, 2017 Caspar Coordinating Committee meeting, an update on the central coast transfer station was given by Linda Ruffing, City Manager, City of Fort Bragg, that the goal is to have an option for the site of the coastal transfer station from one of the three landowners in a land swap within 4 months. After this, the required process on the local and State levels will be completed. The goal was to circulate a design-build-operate for a new transfer station by May 2018.

At a subsequent meeting in 2017 with the Caspar Coordinating Committee, Linda Roofing gave the committee another update on the new transfer station. Ms. Ruffing stated that things were moving along and that real estate discussions were taking place between CalFire and the City/County, but State Parks is no longer part of the proposed land swap. Ms. Ruffing projects that the new facility will be built in roughly 3-4 years.

In May 2020, SWOW received a letter from Fort Bragg Disposal terminating the Caspar then month-to-month hauling service agreement with SWOW, effective June 30, 2020, for the service of providing and hauling their open-top containers at the Caspar Transfer Station.

Beginning July 1, 2020, SWOW provided 15 open-top 50 cubic yard containers with a roll-off truck for servicing the (1) household waste, (2) bulk wastes, and (3) recyclable materials. On a weekly average

SWOW collects and transports to the Willits Transfer Station 15 containers using a truck and trailer combo or approximately 7 trips per week.

Faced with the health, welfare and safety issues that are mitigated by the operation of the Caspar self-haul facility currently, the County and City must now address the following infrastructure improvements that are needed, no matter what long-term transfer station solution is achieved.

We thank you for your attention to these critical needs.

Description of Improvements: See Site Map

1. Increase the height of the ramp area, (currently where the bulky waste containers are located) with fill material and/or dig down where the trailer will be placed for loading.
2. Cover the increased ramp area where unloading by self-haulers will occur with a concrete slab 12' x 60'. The remainder of the ramp to be covered with asphalt.
3. Place a concrete slab under the area where the trailer will be placed for ease of cleanup and stability.
4. Construct a three-sided roof structure over the concrete loading area, the trailer placement area with open sides below in order for the truck/trailer to drive thru.

Operation of Existing and New Improvements:

1. Currently the covered area with two containers next to the site office that are used for household garbage will be replaced with two containers for recyclable materials. The recyclable materials that currently sit outside will be relocated under covered area to minimize rainfall.
2. Self-haul customers with both household waste and bulky waste will be directed by the site attendant to unload their waste material under the new, larger, roof structure onto the concrete slab where the waste material will be pushed by a front-load loader directly into the trailer. Before the material is pushed into the trailer the loader operator will visually inspect for hazardous materials or other materials not accepted at the landfill, since this trailer will be directed hauled to the landfill and bypass the Willits Transfer Station.
3. Once the recyclable materials under the covered area are full and during hours the public is not on site, the containers will be picked up by an onsite yard truck and dumped onto the concrete floor under the new, larger roof structure. Another type of trailer (walking floor) will be placed in the trailer location and the recyclable materials will be pushed into this trailer and when full will be transported directly to the material recovery facility in Willits to be cleaned, sorted, processed, baled and transported to a market.
4. Scrap metal and green waste will continue to be stored at its current locations on site and moved off site by the front-end loader loading SWOW's trailers. No change in operations. This system has been in place using trailers for the last few years.
5. Currently on site are two smaller trailers provided by third-party vendors for the storage of mattresses and tires. These trailers are service a few times per year when full.
6. Used motor oil and electronics banned from the landfill use a double-walled tank and debris boxes provided by a third-party vendor. This service is also a few times per year.

Cost of New Improvements:

TBD

Options for Financing Improvements:

The available options for the financing of the Caspar improvements include the following:

The use of funds on hand, debt, increased gate fees or some combination thereof.

Debt could be assumed by either the County/City, or by SWOW if specifics were acceptable to all parties.

Any funding mechanism would have to extinguish the debt during the Term of a revised Caspar Lease term.

Possible options for repaying that debt follow:

1. Use part or all the current \$194,000 balance in the Caspar fund and supplement the remaining unfunded improvements with the future \$3 gate fee portion of rent, until the improvement debt has been extinguished. After the improvements' debt has been extinguished. Consider the elimination of the \$3 portion of the rent at that time to benefit the self-haul ratepayer.
2. Use part or all the current \$194,000 balance of the Caspar fund and supplement the remaining unfunded improvements with part of the future \$3 gate fee portion of rent, until the improvement debt has been extinguished. Consider the elimination of the \$3 portion of the rent at that time to benefit the self-haul ratepayer.
3. Use part or all the current \$194,000 balance of the Caspar fund and supplement the remaining unfunded improvements cost payments with part of the future \$3 gate fee portion of rent and a gate fee increase (net of any efficiency savings) to be determined, until the improvement debt has been extinguished. Consider the elimination of the \$3 portion of the rent at that time to benefit the self-haul ratepayer.
4. Adjust the Gate Fee for the following and use a combination to fund the Caspar improvements:
 - A. Reduce the Gate fee in an amount to be determined for cost savings related to more efficient operational structure, and
 - B. Use a part, to be determined, of the \$3 rent, and
 - C. Increase the Gate fee by an amount to be determined to pay for any portion of the improvement debt not funded by A. or B. Consider the elimination of the \$3 portion of the rent at that time to benefit the self-haul ratepayer.

The South Coast Transfer Station Model:

The improvements agreement would follow the form of the SWOW South Coast Transfer Station improvement agreement which was drafted and approved as to form by Mendocino County Council.

Notice:

While SWOW plans to continue to act in good faith in regard to the Caspar Transfer Station Agreement, Notice is hereby given to the County of Mendocino and to the City of Fort Bragg that SWOW reserves all rights in any extension of the Caspar Transfer Station Agreement beyond June 30, 2021 through the actions of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino and the City Council of the City of Fort Bragg without the prior written agreement by SWOW to such extension.