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Saturday Soapbox: DTG strategy has toxic long-term consequences

By NANCY LUST Special to the yakima herald-republic
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DTG Recycle landfill is pictured Friday, June 16, 2023, in Yakima, Wash. DTG Recycle has a material recovery facility and a limited-purpose landfill on the site. The Yakima Health District denied their permit renewal for the limited-purpose landfill and it expired at the end of June.

Evan Abell / Yakima Herald-Republic

“Today is a great day! DTG did what we are most known for, we grew! And along with us growing, our employees have new opportunities, our customers have new service lines and our vendors will grow some more also! So when you see DTG, know that we are “Dedicated to Grow” ... and we will not stop, because there is no end to this plan ...”

— Dan Guimont, Founder DTG, in a LinkedIn post after purchasing Bobby Wolford Trucking, April 8, 2022.

When DTG bought the Anderson landfill in 2019, they claimed to be “planet obsessed.” Instead, DTG’s operations generated hundreds of complaints, prompting regulators to investigate and request landfill gas sampling and groundwater testing.

By July 2022, benzene and naphthalene had been detected in concentrations exceeding outdoor air quality standards under the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). Now, this unlined landfill is on fire.

While DTG's strategy generated short-term wealth and aided its sale to Macquarie last fall, it also created consequences for Rocky Top neighbors and trail-users through contaminated air and, potentially, groundwater.

In response, Friends of Rocky Top (FORT), a grassroots organization working to protect Rocky Top from further destruction, was formed.

Links to the state Department of Ecology's MTCA cleanup page, Yakima County's emergency response system for notification in case of toxic gas releases (Alert-Yakima), and key documents and media coverage of DTG are available on FORT's website:

<https://www.cascadianow.org/friends-of-rocky-top>.

If you live within 1.5 miles of DTG's landfill, sign up for Alert Yakima.

If you're interested in receiving a weekly landfill fire situation report, email victoria.reyes@co.yakima.wa.us.

If you are concerned about DTG's actions and future plans, contact your county commissioner and planning staff.

If you value clean air, water, and shrub-steppe habitat on Rocky Top, support FORT.

Nancy Lust is a retired teacher and chair of Friends of Rocky Top, a project with the nonprofit organization, CascadiaNow.org, of neighbors and concerned citizens seeking to protect the land, air, and water resources around the Rocky Top area from environmental degradation.

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