

## BRIEF HISTORY OF SUNSHINE CANYON (1956 – 2009)

- **1956 Dump begins** (started as an illegal dump by people dumping trash into the canyon without permits).
- **1958 Dump legalized** (City legalizes it as 40-acre dump for 10 years- run by Bentz Disposal as the North Valley Land Development Corporation).
- **1966 Dump expanded** (City approves another 200-acres early because North Valley Land Development Corp exceeded old permit height restrictions).
- **1978 Dump bought out by BFI** (BFI buys out the North Valley Land Development Corporation which at the time it was doing only 400 tons per week of “wrapped” garbage). BFI submarined the City by buying it out from under them as they were in the process of acquiring it as a landfill. In this case the community may have benefited as the landfill continued as a Class III Landfill and not as a Class I Landfill which takes toxics that the City had planned to make it).
- **1988 Revocation Hearings** (Revocation hearings held by L.A. Zoning Administration. BFI violated height restrictions, boundaries, and came too close to the watercourse and Bradley Avenue. The landfill also caused surrounding the hills and the neighborhood to be covered with trash and dust. The violations were so considered so severe that BFI was given the only Curative Variance that was ever issued by the City. BFI was not made to correct the problems, and there no fines. During this time and before closure, BFI was dumping 7,500 tons per day).
- **1989 BFI produces an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that proposed a 215 million ton landfill in 3 phases** (It would be “*the world’s largest landfill*” i.e. 215 proposed new + 25 old city landfill = 240 million tons. This would make it large than Freshkills, New York which is 100 million tons).  
Phase I – County    Phase II – City    Phase III – County again
- **1991 the City-side dump closed after receiving approximately 25 million tons of trash** (residents had been promised open space and recreational land. BFI fails to properly close the dump within 9 months as required by State regulations).
- **1994 the NVC submits a report by Treadwell/Rollo to the Regional Water Quality Control Board which shows that the design for the proposed County landfill could result in a catastrophic failure.** . BFI hired private detective to go through residents trash in an attempt to discredit them and the report. BFI was eventually forced to redesign landfill).
- **1996 the County-side expansion opened taking 6,600 tons per day** (equivalent to Phase I. The Board of Supervisors approves a 17 million ton landfill on the County side with option on 70 million tons more. The County also threatened to lock the City out of the County’s landfill if the City did not approve an expansion back into the City. After only 6 years, the County’s single-liner leachate system started leaking).
- **1999 the new City-side expansion was approved by City Council taking 5,500 tons per day** (equivalent to Phase II – 55 million tons. This expansion along with the County expansion will be 90 million tons when combined. The combined City/County landfill will be able to accept a total of 12,100 tons per day on either side of the City/County line).

- **December 11, 2000 the California State Auditor releases an audit of the California Integrated Waste Management Board (now CalRecycle).** (the report which was requested by the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens Inc (NVC) was titled “Integrated Waste Management Board, Limited Authority and Weak Oversight Diminish Its Ability to Protect Public Health and the Environment”).
- **2004 BFI gets State approval for final closure of old City-side dump.** (the dump should have been closed in 1991. Instead of the promised open space, recreational land, and a mosaic of trees & shrubs the State instead permitted a prescriptive cover no more than 6-feet thick with wild grass seeds and sage brush. Had the dump been closed properly there would have been at least 12-feet of cover).
- **2004 BFI gets final permits for new City-side landfill** (the landfill had been required to have a double liner at the insistence of residents but BFI appealed to the Regional Water Quality Control Board to use one liner but was denied).
- **May 19, 2004 BFI sends threatening letter to City** (if City did not respond in 30-days, they will raise rates up 50%, have the right to refuse all City trash, and pre-conditioned quoted trash fees with the use of a single liner system. BFI said the letter was not threatening).
- **May 27, 2004 NVC sends response to City** (the North Valley Coalition stated that BFI had previously claimed the NVC was responsible for increased costs, and now it was blaming the City and asking taxpayers to pay for their bad management and the cost of permits and the Conditions of Approval from various State and local agencies who were charged with protecting the public).
- **June 15, 2004 City responds to threatening letter** (the City said that it believed what BFI was doing was a violation of the City contract. BFI must wait until June 2005 as required in their contract).
- **January 2005, the NVC in response to sewer odors coming into homes, tried for months to get the City to shut down the landfill’s sewer** (the City failed to stop the treated water from the leaking County landfill liner from being dumped into the residential sewers under the houses to the south of the landfill in slugs of up to 40,000 gallons at a time. They agreed that they should have denied the permit because of a codicil on the 100+ acre buffer zone which prevented any landfill operations but since that had issued a permit they could not take it back. The City did not even know the flow rate or what was actually in the effluent as the information that was on the permit file was from the Operating Industries landfill. BFI always maintained that it was not them causing the problems but eventually the SCAQMD was able to verify the community’s claims).
- **March 2005 the County Department of Health Services releases Health Study** (the study reported that the cancers in the area were statically insignificant because the DOHS sample size was too small, failing to address the fact those same cancers were twice the cohort group rate, and dismissing the high rate of asthma as the result of reporting by hysterical women).
- **June 23, 2005 Councilman Greig Smith releases RENEW LA Plan (Recover Energy Natural Resources and Economic Benefit from Waste for Los Angeles** (the study was a frame work plan to address municipal solid waste and remove LA’s reliance on urban landfills by 2025. Additionally it required the City to reduce the amount of trash deposited by the City by 600 tons/day on year ONE, 1000 more tons/day on year TWO, 1000 more tons/day on year THREE, and 1000 tons/day on year FOUR so that by 2011 the City would be down to 500 tons/day).
- **June 30, 2005 5-Year Contract renewal misses deadline** (City does not agree with 5-year contract extension. BFI extends time to consider)



- **July 27, 2005 City-side expansion opens** (1 day after the City Planning Department approval which was made over the Technical Advisory Committee objections that BFI had not met the Q-Conditions to open. Expansion started accepting 5,500 tons/day).
- **August 5, 2005 City Council does not pass contract** (only the day before, Mayor Villaraigosa had come out in support of contract. This was contrary to his campaign promises to the community and among the first of all the campaign promises broken. The contract needed 8 votes to pass but only gets 7. BFI agrees to continue existing contract another 6 months).
- **November 21, 2005 the County Regional Planning Commission denies BFI's application for a new Conditional Use Permit (CUP)** (the County citing among other things, a failure to mitigate traffic).
- **December 27, 2005 BFI appeals to the County Board of Supervisors.**
- **December 21, 2005 the County Solid Waste Facilities Hearing Board approved the use of Construction & Demolition Waste (C&D) as Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) opening up the County side (banned by City) to material potentially contaminated with asbestos.**
- **December 30, 2005 the NVC appealed to the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) December 21, 2005 decision** (an appeal was filed by the NVC and heard on February 14, 2006 in Sacramento. The board upheld the appeal after they inspected BFI's subsidiary (who was supplying the C&D material) and just as the NVC's attorney had claimed, this material was contaminated and did not qualify as C&D. BFI was ordered to cease taking the C&D material)
- **February 24, 2006 the contract saga restarted** (the new RFPIII from Sanitation for the City's trash had the same old players (BFI & Waste Management) with the exception of MDSI whose plan to take the trash to Avenal Landfill was rejected by Sanitation as too expensive. The Board of Public Works recommended accepting Sanitation's report which again had BFI as the lowest cost option, while ignoring MDSI's claim that the \$17 million difference claimed by the report was only \$8 million. The City of Avenal's remote landfill run by MDSI claimed the support of both the local residents and its City Council, and that it would bring much needed money and jobs to its community. The report passed through the RENEW LA Ad Hoc Committee, the Budget & Finance Committee, and the Energy & Environment Committee before going to City Council. Councilman Greig Smith came up with other options, some of them very close to BFI's bid. The matter had now been heard and continued four times in City Council. Shamefully, they caved into a last minute letter from BFI and voted to approve the contract and continue negotiations.
- **March 10, 2006 the Council approved options recommended by RENEW LA Ad Hoc Committee** (the Ad Hoc Committee recommended a contract that would have 600 tons per day diverted to other landfills. As might be expected BFI held out for 300 tons per day before agreeing).
- **March 17, 2006 the Council approved the 5-year option with BFI and a diversion of 600 tons per day with 300 tpd to WMI El Sobrante and 300 tpd to Avenal** (but at a cost with a \$2.50 per ton increase for pass-through costs and the right to divert. The balance of 2500 tons per day is to be accomplished by Sanitation who have failed to meet any of their prior commitments).
- **March 24, 2006 Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa in a press conference pledged to end the City's dependence on dumps** (he also set a recycling goal of 70% of the refuse by 2015 – five years earlier than the current goal, and to convert the City's 535 trash trucks to LNG).

- **January 29, 2007 Board of Supervisors approves new CUP 00-194-(5) for County-side landfill extension.**
- **In 2007 BFI blindsides both the City and the County by applying directly to the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) for a Solid Waste Facilities Permit (SWFP) for a combined City/County landfill** (they did this rather than submit the request through normal channels, namely the Local Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) for the City and the County. A protracted fight ensued and in 2009 the CIWMB granted BFI's request totally ignoring land use conditions which had been the normal practice in the past. The result was the emasculation of both LEA's leaving them with only the authority to enforce State regulations and not the conditions of BFI's Conditional Use Permit (CUP).
- **2009 BFI submitted a request to install turbines to generate up to 20 megawatts of electricity** (at first members of the community who had encouraged them to be greener were supportive of the idea after presentations by BFI's consultants indicated that the process would be cleaner than the current 3 flares (incinerators). The community has had second thoughts when it was learned from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Notice of Preparation of the Draft EIR for the Sunshine Gas Producers Renewable Energy Project that the turbines would generate as much as 31 TONS PER DAY MORE POLLUTANTS than the existing flares).