

# Durand-Pecatonica landfill studied

By IRA TEINOWITZ  
Staff writer

The Rockford Sanitary District has begun to investigate placing a landfill between Durand and Pecatonica as an alternative to the controversial Baxter Road site in Cherry Valley.

In what District Director Jon Olson called a "preliminary" move, the Sanitary District board has approved a look at the new site, though not yet the full sampling necessary for the site to pass state Environmental Protection Agency regulations.

Olson refused to reveal the exact location under consideration.

"We don't want anybody to start shooting at their neighbors," he said.

The proposed Baxter Road landfill at Baxter and Mulford roads has prompted widespread neighborhood opposition and a campaign by a group known as Save the Land to stop it. Recently five of six Rockford mayoral



Olson

Mulcahey

candidates announced their opposition to the Baxter Road site and a bill is to be introduced into the Illinois Legislature seeking to prevent the landfill.

Democratic State Rep. Richard Mulcahey, who introduced the bill is from Durand. Olson said he was unaware of Mulcahey's Durand connec-

tion and said consideration of the new site was not intended to be a slap at Mulcahey.

Rather, Olson said, the district recently became aware that a Durand-Pecatonica site might meet soil criteria for a landfill.

"In all honesty I wasn't aware that there was even any other site in the county that might qualify," Olson said.

Rockford Sanitary District studies have suggested that the current landfill used by the district — Pagel Pit — will be filled within six years.

A new landfill is one prospect being investigated by the district, which is also investigating incineration and other methods of disposal.

Though the district has made no decision yet on its long-term plans, district officials have said the use of a landfill is expected to be necessary at least temporarily.

Reacting to the district decision to

look at the second site, Keith Larson, president of Save the Land, said Tuesday that the group is opposed "to land-filling in general."

"I know nothing about the geological specifics but Save the Land's position is that we are diametrically opposed to taking productive farm land and making it into a landfill," he said.

Larson suggested the district might best build an incinerator, then instead of burying ash sell it for use in roads, cement and cinder blocks.

Mulcahey was less definite on his response.

Though saying he believed that the city of Rockford should take care of its own landfill needs within city limits, Mulcahey said he introduced his bill because of the concern of local residents. He said he would seek similar protection for the Pecatonica-Durand area only if local residents were upset with the prospect of a landfill.

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