

# Beef up recycling, mine opponents tell York Region, Toronto

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This project also involves federal lands owned by the Algonquin First Nation. But I honestly can't see this moving forward because it has become a messy political issue."

During the last 11 years, the coalition has twice banded together and fought a plan to dump waste from the GTA into Adams Mine. Rail Cycle North Ltd. still hold a certificate of approval from the province to operate a landfill on the site.

Last week, York Region chairperson Bill Fisch said the region's waste will be aboard trains headed north if Toronto renews its commitment with RCN.

However, Belanger warned proponents of the deal that area residents will take whatever steps are necessary to stop trains from arriving at the mine.

"I have absolutely no doubt civil disobedience will occur if this highly questionable project happens," he said. "It's very disappointing to hear Mr. Fisch's comments. We are fighting political and economic powers that are driven by profit motives."

"Every organization in Northern Ontario and Northern Quebec is on our side, right down to the Girl Guides and the Scouts. The First Nations were on standby last fall and they are on standby now. We have farmers prepared to park their tractors and rigs on the tracks, ready to block the trains."

"This will turn into a grudge match," Belanger said, noting 2,800 people stood on the trail tracks during a weekend demonstration late last year.

York Region should be diverting the majority of its trash away from landfills by beefing up its recycling and composting efforts, added Belanger.

But Fisch said that plan is already in the works, with a new recycling transfer station planned for Richmond Hill or East Gwillimbury next year.

"We will try to do the best we can with our recycling, but there will always be garbage," Fisch said. "It has to go somewhere."

"There is no getting around that." Meanwhile, former Kirkland Lake Mayor Richard Denton, an Adams Mine opponent, was defeated in November's municipal election and replaced by Bill Enouy, who said his community is open for business, including trash disposal. But

Belanger says Adams Mine is located 10 kilometres outside of Kirkland Lake and polls conducted in neighbouring communities show an 80-per-cent opposition rate to the project.

"The municipal election never was a referendum for Adams Mine," he said. "The only core of support is in Kirkland Lake, yet they have no jurisdiction over the deal."

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