

Barton Chronicle 9-9-2020  
Misleading comments?

Dear Editor,

In last week's article on the Black River tour conducted by Peter Emerson, fish biologist with the State of Vermont, several misleading comments were made. It is important for readers to understand the facts.

First, Emerson said that the cancerous lesions on Brown Bullhead catfish were "likely" not related to the landfill or the leachate that the landfill produces in the millions of gallons annually. Until science proves what is causing the cancer, who can say what is likely causing it? Second, he said that since the landfill is double-lined, it cannot leak. Not only does the EPA say that is not true, but the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources agrees, "All landfills leak eventually." Maybe he hasn't thought about the fact that the wetlands and Black River are downhill from the landfill, where runoff would flow. Under today's EPA regs, no landfill would even be allowed to be sited so close to wetlands.

Maybe Mr. Emerson is unaware that leachate from the landfill has been poured into the Newport WWTP by the millions of gallons over many years? Or that the leachate is full of toxic chemicals, like PFAS, that cause cancer and many other health problems, don't break down but build up over time. The good news is that, as of last November, the Newport WWTP is forbidden to accept leachate from the landfill. Our lake is protected for now, and so are the Canadians who drink from it, the fish and other wildlife who inhabit it, and the people who swim and boat in it. That ban should be made permanent. The Brown Bullheads aren't the only species that will benefit.

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