



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

NC Board Chairman Marcello Banes



#OneNewton Family,

When I was elected Chairman of the Newton County Board of Commissioners in 2016, there was a lot to be cleaned up in Newton County. One of the biggest things was literally cleaning up our landfill.

Newton County agreed to reclaim and remediate Site 1 of the landfill in 2012 as part of a groundwater contamination corrective plan with the Environmental Protection Division (EPD). The cell is an unlined cell used from 1987 until it was closed in 1998. Unlined means there is no protective liner between refuse cells as is required now.

The unlined nature of the cell can allow for groundwater contamination and a lined cell will be better for the environment and is just the right thing to do as stewards of Newton County. By lining this site, we will speed up the process of cleaning up the groundwater, from what typically takes 25 years to around five years.

Newton County began preparing for the remediation two years ago this month and the project was started in January of 2019.

I am pleased to say that Newton County took on this remediation because it is what is best for our community and the environment. It

is a voluntary project that was not forced on us but we proactively took as an action for our future. As a matter of fact, only 2 percent of Georgia landfills have had this type of project undertaken.

To complete this process Newton County had to excavate, process and relocate an estimated 600,000 cubic yards of waste and soil. After excavating, the processed waste is removed from the unlined landfill and moved to the composite lined landfill on the same Lower River Road property. The composite lined landfill is lined with two feet of compacted clay, a layer of compacted bentonite clay, and a 60 mil high density polyethylene (HDPE) liner.

As of this month, we are nearly 40 percent complete with more than 230,000 cubic yards of waste and soil excavated processed and relocated.

This is a terrific achievement by Newton County and our Solid Waste Management Authority (SWMA). By taking this step we will:

- Move waste from an unlined landfill to a landfill with a composite liner system which is more protective to the environment, the Yellow River, and Newton County citizens and visitors.



- Move waste away from the property line and the right-of-way of Lower River Road.
- Allow for the re-establishment of a vegetated buffer with pine trees to improve aesthetic appearances, and reduce dust, noise, and other nuisances.
- Increase the useful life or continued use of the existing landfill property so that the Newton County SWMA can continue to provide solid waste services to its citizens without siting a new landfill.
- Improve onsite groundwater quality.

As Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, member of the SWMA and life-long resident of Newton County I am proud of this action and more excited at the progress we are making.

It is the belief of myself, the SWMA and our Solid Waste Manager Kevin Walter that this project will be completed in April of 2022.

With progressive actions like this we are making Newton County a better place for all of our residents and a community we can all be proud of.

Marcello Banes

Chairman, Newton County Board of Commissioners