



## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY JUDGE

Joanna E. Mackenzie

December 31, 2025

### **Re: Fort Hancock Landfill and Hudspeth County Solid Waste Operations**

Dear residents of Fort Hancock, TX:

I am writing to address the concerns that have been shared regarding the former Fort Hancock Landfill and Solid Waste<sup>®</sup> Operations.

First, here is the truth. The Fort Hancock landfill was closed many years ago after it reached the end of its permitted life. In practical terms, this means it was full and legally required to close. Reopening the landfill is not the solution because doing so would violate state law, and the site would overflow. For these reasons, it is not an option available to the county.

In addition, several years ago, Hudspeth County experienced a significant reduction in solid waste revenue of approximately \$800,000 per year. This occurred when our largest customer, the City of Van Horn, opened its own landfill and no longer utilized the county facilities. This loss reduced available operating funds and continues to affect the Solid Waste Management program today.

So, what is the county doing now? Quite a bit.

With the full support of the Commissioners Court, I was able to secure a \$125,000 grant to complete a comprehensive operational review of Hudspeth County's Solid Waste Management program. These funds do not come from local taxpayer dollars. We are currently in the middle of that review, and the resulting recommendations and solutions are expected to be implemented in 2026 to address challenges across the county. Rest assured that any public meetings will be advertised and held before any major changes are made.

I sincerely apologize for any inconvenience residents have experienced. Please know that your concerns are heard, and meaningful steps are actively underway to support clean, safe, and healthy communities across Hudspeth County and my hometown of Fort Hancock.

Updates regarding the Solid Waste Operations are provided at every Commissioners Court Meeting and are open to the public. My door is always open, and I encourage you to call or stop by my office at any time. You may also contact Commissioner Sergio Quijas for Precinct 2, or our Solid Waste Manager, Peter Bustamante, for updates. Our Solid Waste Team serves more than 4,500 square miles, and we are grateful for their dedication and hard work.

Lastly, thank you for asking questions and for wanting to be part of the solution in keeping our beautiful binational community clean.

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joanna E. Mackenzie".

Joanna "Jojo" MacKenzie  
Hudspeth County Judge  
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