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Dear JCV Supporters,

Happy New Year! We hope that everyone had time for rest and reflection over the holidays. A new year has begun and our mission to support sustainable growth, without heavy industry in Jefferson County is far from over! We look forward to another year of working together to protect the beautiful place we all call home.

Our Objectives for the new year include:

- Continue actions to prevent additional heavy industry from entering Jefferson County

- Increase community awareness regarding elected officials actions (government transparency) to ensure citizens understand how the changes they are enacting affect the county
- Support community activism including voter education and the election of citizens interested in government transparency and environmental stewardship

Rockwool: *The Soissons, France Story*



Rockwool has long been interested in setting up a facility in the small town of Courmelles near Soissons, France. They first attempted to do so from 2006- 2008. However, the project did not launch due to the global economic crisis. In 2018, Rockwool announced the relaunch of their new plant in Soissons. At first, the project was welcomed due to the loss of jobs in the area over the past thirty years. However, public opinion quickly changed and citizens started a petition highlighting the environmental and health risks associated with the facility. Many local residents began to express adamant opposition to the project, and doctors in the surrounding area warned about the release of toxic substances, including fine particulate matter, ammonia, and hydrochloric acid. Local residents soon formed the environmental conservation organization, *Stop Rockwool*, in opposition to the project.

In February of 2019, Rockwool held several meetings to discuss the concerns of local residents after coming under pressure to defend themselves regarding controversy that has accompanied their plants in

other countries. However, many residents left with questions unanswered. The project has also received an unfavorable opinion from the investigating commissioner, who concluded that the disadvantages of the project heavily outweigh the advantages. While the Courmelles City Council voted unanimously against the project, the greater Soissons regional government voted in favor of the project and approved the sale to Rockwool in November 2019.

In April 2021, the Aisne local authority in France authorized the establishment of a Rockwool factory on a plateau above the city of Soissons. The legal fight against Rockwool Soissons soon began after two nonprofit organizations, Picardie Nature and Sauvons Soissons, submitted appeals with the Administrative Tribunal in Aimens in July 2021. The appeals criticized the incomplete nature of the environment impact study and the negative effects of the project on public health and the environment.



Stop Rockwool Demonstration on May 31, 2021. PC: Stop Rockwool.

In recent months, the planning commission of Courmelles has refused to approve the building permit for the Rockwool facility. Rockwool and the Aisne prefecture challenged this decision by filing appeals. The legal battle has just begun for Soissons and public sentiment is firmly supported by a group of nonprofits in the region.

Wherever the location, the Rockwool playbook remains the same. Show your support for *Stop Rockwool* by signing their petition. You can also read more about their story [here](#).

Sign The Petition

Attending local government meetings is another important way you can be active in the community. Your presence helps to hold our officials accountable to the values and concerns of Jefferson County's citizens. "Think global, act local!"

View This Week's Meetings

Please consider a gift to support our critical work if you are able to. We greatly appreciate every donation. All proceeds benefit JCV's efforts to lead legal, political, and community action to support sustainable growth, without heavy industry, and to empower our citizen's voices to ensure a clean, transparent government in Jefferson County.

Donate To Support Our Work



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