

Gustavus Disposal & Recycling Center (DRC) Quarterly Staff Report
Ian Barrier, DRC Manager/ Operator
Wednesday, May 7th, 2025

General Operations and Management

Labor

During this latest quarter I have had Tiffany Mortensen working at the DRC for two days a week, Wednesday and Saturday. It has been nice to have her around to help out at the DRC even though it has only been a few days a week. During her short time here she has gained knowledge of many different hand tools and powered equipment while also improving upon existing skills such as problem solving. She has learned of the inner workings of many everyday objects and she says she will never look at everyday objects the same, a mattress is one example she gave. She has also learned a lot about recycling including what objects are recyclable, the differences in materials, and where and what may happen to the materials that are recycled. Additionally, Syd Glasmann has returned to work at the DRC for her third season in a row. She has leased a house for 1-year and will be staying her first winter in Gustavus. This is a big deal for me as it will be my first winter since working at the DRC I will have a well trained operator working with me and I am very excited to see what we can accomplish together.

Equipment

This quarter I had to buckle down and make some serious structural repairs/overhaul of our Cram-A-Lot baler due to the fact that many of the welds on the baler have cracked causing certain parts to warp out of there original shape. This includes the rear of the baling chamber which was spread apart enough that bales would become stuck inside the chamber and would be difficult to remove even with our skid steers. The final motivator to get the baler overhauled was I had a piece of scrap metal puncture the side wall of the baler leaving a golf ball sized hole and spider-web tears around the puncture area. After repairing the puncture on the baler I formulated a plan on how to get the rest of the baler back into shape which involved squeezing the rear of the baler back together and squeezing the rear side U-channels back into position as they were virtually broken off the baler. To do this I found enough pieces of chain and hooked the sidewalls of the baler joining the chains in the center with several large turn buckles. Next was the scary part which involved cutting relief cuts on structural members of the baler as it wouldn't be possible to reshape the metal with the equipment I have on hand. After the cut was made I was able to tighten the turn buckles slowly and was able to squeeze the rear of the baler about 5/8 to 3/4 of an inch. I then welded the relief cut and seam welded inside and out the u-channels that are positioned at the rear corners of the baler. In addition to this serious repair, I decided it was time to flatten the sidewalls which were also severely bowed out. To do this I had to make several cuts along the walls of the baler to beat the walls back into shape one small section at a time. I reached out to Glacier Bay National Park before starting this and asked if they were able to provide me with 1/4 inch steel plating. They were, and I used this to plate over the existing walls which doubled the thickness. After adding the steel plates I had some thick u-channel from the original towers that I used to rib the exterior walls of the baler for extra strength. So far none of my welds have failed and it was a great learning experience for me and my welding skills have improved substantially. I'm not sure of the exact weight but my guess is that I have added at least 150 pounds of additional steel and welds to the baler, which includes the 30 pounds of 1/8 6011 electrode used just for the welding, and it will need more. Currently I am about 75% through this project as I have one more section to flatten and reinforce but that will have to wait until summer is over. Its difficult to describe the whole process so feel free to come and take a look if your curious.

Shipping

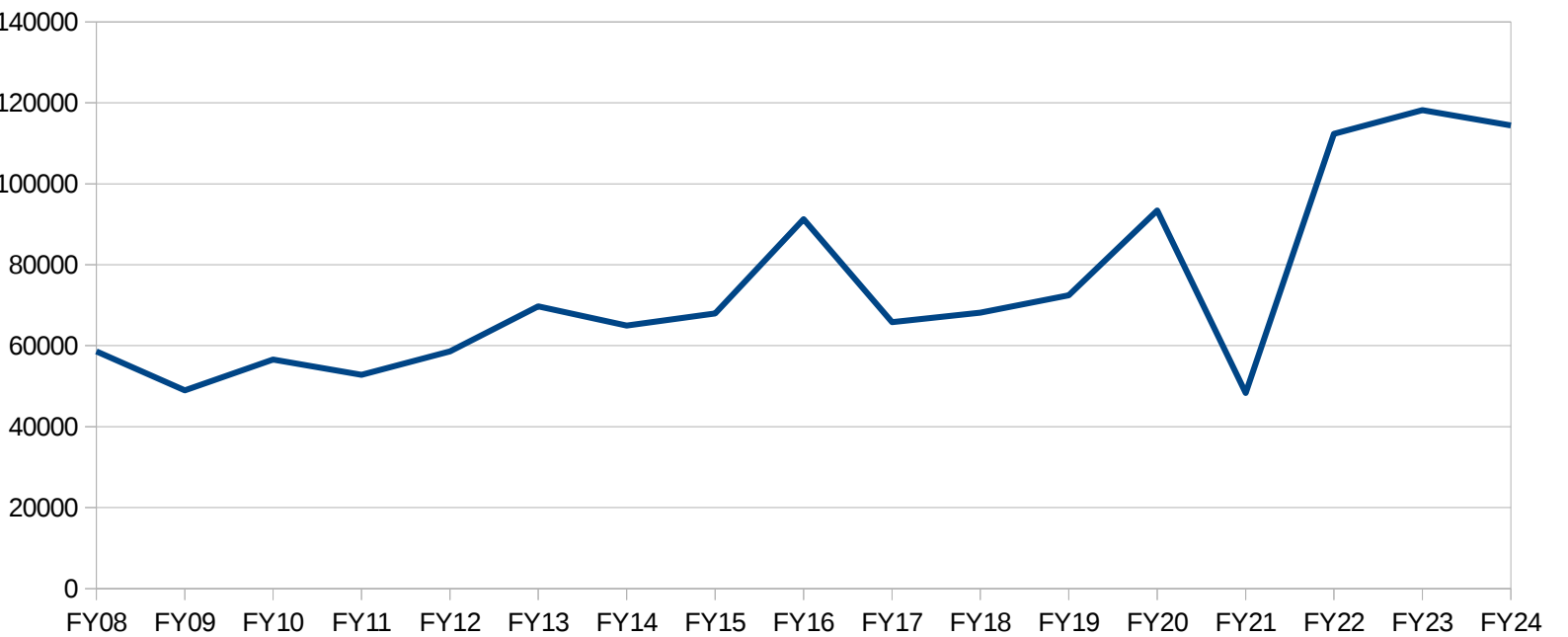
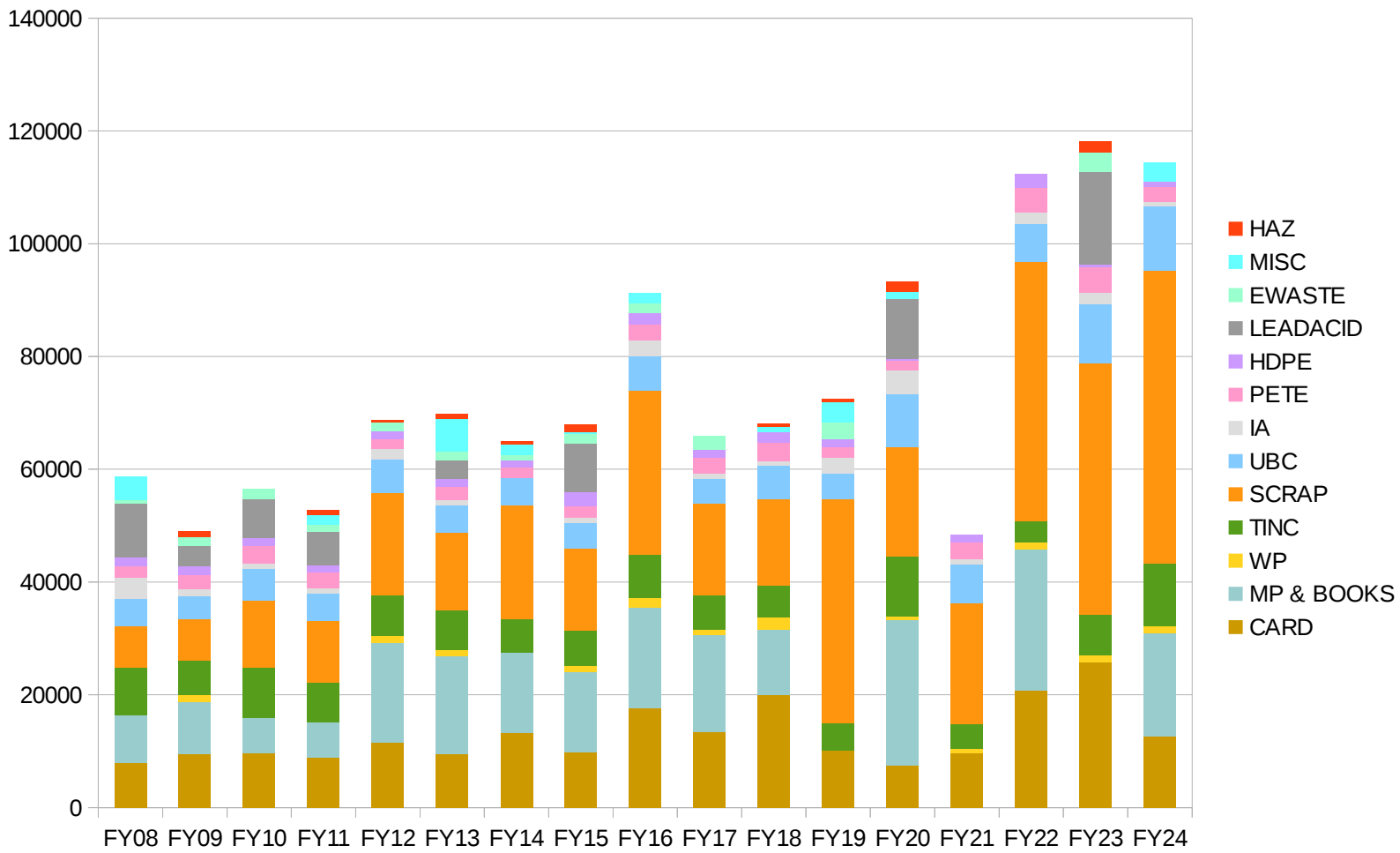
During this quarter I have prepared my first e-waste shipment to Metro Metals in Seattle. It felt good to finally ship out our e-waste that has been accumulating for years; in fact I'm not even sure the DRC has ever shipped out e-waste other than TV's in the past. One thing that crossed my mind when I was preparing this shipment is the massive amount of space CRT TVs take up. I started to investigate if it is feasible and legal for us to process CRT TVs before shipping them out. What we would do is strip the TVs of plastic, separate the PCBs (Printed Circuit Board), strip out the copper, and smash the tubes into a DOT approved drum which would reduce the volume substantially. The rules around this are fairly strict, and the first thing we would need to do is find a recycler that accepts CRT glass. The rest of the rules are all related to containment. As many know CRT glass contains lead and we definitely want to keep the glass particles contained. We will see if this turns into anything. Otherwise I have been stripping down LCD TVs because they are easy to process and only contain a small amount of e-waste while the rest is metal and plastic. This is already reducing volume. I am also looking to see if we can reduce the volume of e-waste in general, since we currently pack e-waste in gay lords and they take up a lot of space. Metro Metals has told me everything gets ran through a shredder. If this is the case, they might be okay with us baling our electronic waste which would be more efficient for us.

Landfill Expansion

During this quarter Chuck Shroth was hired to take down the trees; mainly cottonwoods, that were in the way of the landfill expansion. The job definitely needed an excavator as several of the trees would get hung up on one another and had to be pushed pretty hard to come down. A few were leaning hard in the opposite direction and I had to help by jumping in Chuck's excavator to push while he made the cuts. I instructed Chuck to stack the logs separately from the brush and branches with the intentions of having enough of my own spare time to buck them up for firewood. In the fall or early winter I plan to torch the brush pile. I will be saving up wood scraps to aid in the burning process. I also had Chuck transplant several willow trees in a row to help create cover. Overall I'm happy to say we were able to leave quite a few fair sized trees that should become quite large over the next 10 years concealing the majority of the landfill from the roadside. From the perspective of the beach the removal of the trees was much less jarring than I would have predicted. The next steps are to rip out any small bushes that are remaining and to construct the fence. The total cost for this project was estimated to be around \$110,000 and so far we have about \$46,454.19 left in that estimate for the installation of the fence. With the installation of the fence (estimated labor cost of \$25,000) and monitoring wells (estimated cost of \$12,000) the only tasks for the project remaining, we are well within my original estimate. I originally wanted to install the fence ourselves, but I don't think that is going to be feasible for the DRC staff during the busy summer with only one employee in addition to myself.

Shipping Data

I took some time this quarter to graph the weight of our recycling shipments per fiscal year based off the data in our annual reports going back to FY08. The bar graph below shows what was shipped and the weight, the line graph shows total recycling shipped. In the graph you can see a steady increase in the amount of recycling we have been shipping out per fiscal year with COVID in FY21 being a slow year and FY16 and FY20 being above average compared to previous years. I will be interested to see what our totals for this fiscal year are, and if it ends up being a surpassing FY23 which is the current record year according to the data.



Community Chest

I don't have any amazing news this quarter for the Community Chest. What I can say is all of the volunteers have done an amazing job this year with organization at the Community Chest and purging of old items. As this is my last report for FY25 I would like to give thanks to all the individuals who volunteered at the chest this fiscal year. Those volunteers starting with last name followed by first name are as follows below.

Allen Cathie, Archambault Jozee, Bender Vicki, Boesser Kate, Bona Dea Artemis, Brook Meadow, Burley Hailey, Chandler Stephanie, Cook Penny, Darnell Connie, DeHart Jeanette, Elder Carolyn, Gallagher Joyce, Garrett Vikki, Glasman Olivia, Grose-Bray Michelle, Gutman Ilana, Hanson Betty, Hardy Judy, Heacox Melanie, Healy Mary, Hineser-Riggan Martine, Jarvis Maribeth, Johnson Deb, Jones Robynn, King Becky, Kitchen Paula, Lupro Joyce, Mackovjak Annie, Mulligan Jess, Ney Kim, O'Brien Maggie, Ohlson Bre, Pratchner Denise, Schaller Fay, Sharman Ellie, Smith Cheryl, Vandenberg Kelly, Williams Mary, Williams Roger, Zarate Nina

End of the Fiscal Year

As this is my last report for the fiscal year I want to take a moment to let everyone know that the year went by quickly and smoothly. I feel as if I am constantly making small improvements to the DRC and to myself. I hope this trend continues forward at a relatively steady pace before reaching its plateau. I also want to thank everyone for continuing to be supportive of the Disposal & Recycling Center and its staff.

The End, thank you.
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