

August 20, 2014

Dear Representative Lininger,

My family lives in Florence, Oregon, in a neighborhood directly adjoining a very large forestry project (almost 80 acres). The area directly adjoining our neighborhood has been clear cut by private owners, aerially and ground sprayed and a massive burning operation has taken place. It at one time seemed impossible to us that such a destructive and dangerous project of this magnitude could take place directly within a neighborhood, but what is actually even more unbelievable is that ***our neighborhood and the forestry project are located directly within the Clear Lake Watershed "Protected" area, a sole source dunal aquifer that provides the drinking water for thousands here in Florence.***

When the initial clear cutting was complete and the aerial spraying began, our neighborhood was in a state of extreme panic. "God Help Us!" was typical of the emails that were being sent. Because of our extremely close proximity to the project, my family and other neighbors realized the only way to escape the danger was to leave. We were displaced for six weeks, and became \$1,500 into debt because of it. I was exposed to the aerial spraying when I went home to retrieve something (I was feeling sick afterwards, and was told that it had taken place hours just hours before - it was not supposed to happen till the next day). From that point on, as the spraying continued, it was surreal and very traumatizing for my family to have to wear masks when entering our home.

We had already been financially burdened from having to leave our home for six weeks to avoid the dangers of the herbicide spray. When the gigantic slash piles all around our neighborhood were set on fire, we were unable to leave. We had to just shut all our doors and windows and hope for the best. What happened next was absolutely horrific. Our house filled up with smoke. We had burning red eyes, raw and constricted throats along with runny noses. I woke up during the many of the nights unable to breathe. The fires continued to smolder for two weeks.

The clear cutting was allowed to happen on very steep slopes that surround our neighborhood. The cutting took place directly in front of (just across the street from) neighborhood homes. We live in an area of very high winter rains. We've already had to deal with runoff and sludge coming down from the hills since the clear cut. They've weakened our already fragile roads. We now fear a landslide similar to what was experienced recently in Washington in coming winters.

We receive absolutely notifications as to when the sprayings or burnings will happen. A neighbor subscribes to the permit notification website, but that only gives a span of months that the spraying could take place. We constantly worry about when the next spraying will take place, and about the health risks that we and our families face from the unwanted exposure to harmful toxins. The stress wreaks havoc on us. My health has continued a downturn. I have high cholesterol and the beginnings of hypertension due to the stress (I am an active person, at a good weight, with no other risk factors). The stress of living in this sort of situation is absolutely unbearable and far beyond description.

There is nothing for us to look forward to in this horrific scenario. This project has no end in sight. In fact, just this week, we have information that the owners are planning another herbicide spray, with an even stronger herbicide. I have been unable to sleep since I heard this news, and it has put extra pressure and stress on our family. This is just a continuation. All of us in the neighborhood including families with children, the sick and the elderly will be exposed to many more years this. All of the thousands in Florence who drink the water within the Clear Lake Watershed are and will be affected by this for many, many years to come unless this sort of thing can be stopped.

We've had poisons and smoke inhalation forced upon us against our will, and our drinking water has been jeopardized. We are being forcibly subjected to a barrage of emotional hardship, physical danger and trauma, financial stress and indescribable fear. Oregon must stop allowing this horrific assault on its citizens to continue. Please, please, do all that is in your power to help to change Oregon forestry laws to better protect all of us.

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