

NANCY HATHAWAY TESTIMONY
MARCH 22, 2017

My name is Nancy Hathaway. I live in Corvallis. I'm an active tree farmer owning almost 1000 acres. We own 3 properties in West Lane County, and others in Douglas County, Coos County, Polk County, but mostly in Benton County. My entire schedule revolves around supervising planting, backpack spraying herbicide, limbing with my chainsaw, cutting brush, etc, etc, etc. I'm here today because it's raining and I can't apply deer protection to my young seedlings, but above all, because I feel strongly about these issues.

I oppose SB 0892 and SB 0500 both of which I consider thinly veiled attempts to end timber harvesting. We tree farmers keep getting whacked by these attempts one after another. I particularly take offense at SB 0500 which I consider a sneak attack land grab.

If, after up to 3 years after an herbicide spray, a person who wants to claim a loss comes forward with a law suit against you, it will be almost impossible to examine for evidence after so long a time. Additionally, the expenses in hiring investigators and attorneys may result in having to sell the tree farm to pay your bills.

Regarding SB 892: I try to do all spraying by backpack, but sometimes it is just too big a job or too steep. I have done aerial spraying in the past. I used a consultant who bunched a group of us small woodland owners together in a cascade progression usually piggybacking on a large landowner. So, on the given day, if it starts to rain there could be up to 7 tree farmers scrambling to re-schedule. Once, I had only 4 acres of huge maple trees to spray and was only able to afford this by piggybacking with a neighbor.

It's tough enough in Oregon to decide what to wear when heading out for a day-long event. Raincoat? Umbrella? Rubber boots? Rain hat or sunhat? Sunscreen? It's really incredulous that we should now be expected to rely totally on a weather caster who has a less-than-perfect record of predicting. And 30 days out with a 5 day window? More complications? That's insane!

Weather here is just too unpredictable. Most of this aerial spraying takes place in March and just look at the rain we've had this March.

Regarding the 2015 ^{subscription system} Pesticide Reform package. It seems to be tilted to the side of complainers, who often have no concept of what's involved in maintaining a forest. Nothing in this bill protects timber growers from harassment. Let's at least give this a chance to work before adding other restrictions.

These complainers who call themselves "conservationists" have probably never conserved anything in their lives. We are the real conservationists and environmentalists who spend our lives encouraging trees to grow and discouraging alien and noxious species. We also are providing clean water and wildlife habitat at our own expense. The term environmentalist, in my view, is coming to mean someone who files frivolous lawsuits in which the landowner has to prove innocence.

I am not a professional forester. I am an ordinary person willing to work hard for a distant reward and because I like being outdoors. However, I regret that more and more of our time is spent coming to Salem to deal with these preposterous ideas.