



Date: March 26, 2017

From: Bob Sallinger, Audubon Society of Portland

To: Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Re: Support for S.B. 928 and S.B. 929

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Audubon Society of Portland strongly supports passage of Senate Bills 928 and 929. SB 928 would require labeling of any pesticide product containing neonicotinoids. SB 929 would require the Oregon Department of Agriculture to classify neonicotinoids as a restricted use pesticides. Neonicotinoids are persistent and widely used pesticides that are causing well documented harm to wildlife and in particular, pollinators. SB 928 and SB 929 would represent significant steps forward in protecting our state's biodiversity.

The threat presented by neonicotinoids was recognized by the US Fish and Wildlife Service which in 2015 announced a ban on use of neonicotinoids on over 150 million acre of public land. While these two bills would allow continued use of neonicotinoids in Oregon, they would put in place important place important safeguards to protect the state's wildlife, provide information to the public and help ensure that application was only done by trained professionals. We view both bills as common sense steps.

The dramatic impacts that neonicotinoids have on bees have appropriately received tremendous attention over the several years. In Oregon, seven neonicotinoid insecticide applications in the summers of 2013 and 2014 caused the death of nearly 100,000 bumble bees, representing hundreds of colonies. Poisoning incidents occurred in Beaverton, Eugene, Portland, Wilsonville and other cities. However, bees are just the tip of the iceberg. Neonicotinoids eliminate a wide array of terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates on which many species including salmon and birds depend. With regards to birds, neonicotinoids can have profound impacts:

- A single seed treated with neonicotinoids can kill a songbird;
- Chronic exposure to neonicotinoids can have significant sub-lethal effects including decreased fecundity;
- Neonicotinoids destroy the insects which many bird species depend on for survival. A recent study correlate declines in bird insectivorous bird populations with declines with neonicotinoid contamination and concludes that neonicotinoids eliminate insects on which serve as a primary food source for birds.

We urge the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to pass both SB 928 and SB 929 out of Committee and to move both bills towards passage.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bob Sallinger". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bob Sallinger
Conservation Director
Audubon Society of Portland