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Comments to Oregon House Energy and Environment Committee on HB 2656:

Please preserve all protections of our drinking water sources in HB 2656 and bring it to a vote in time for full consideration by both Houses with a "Do Pass" recommendation.

Our Oregon Legislature and state agencies have allowed Oregon law and practice to harm our watersheds greatly by not regulating forest practices in watersheds that feed our drinking water supplies. California, Washington, and most other states care much better for their peoples' water supplies than has the Oregon Legislature and Departments of Forestry and Environmental Quality.

You owe us correction now of the Legislature's long neglect of our drinking water and health. It will take time to recover. We cannot afford what you have allowed to be done to us, and, much less, the much greater harm coming upon us if you don't pass HB 2656 this session.

Our future survival and well being depend on stopping extreme global warming, having good, potable, reliably available drinking water, and having adequate food. Obviously.

When these degrade, jobs and profits cannot save our well being, health, and lives. We will die without these. We can live, sometimes unpleasantly, but we can live with and overcome economic difficulties. Destruction of healthy water supplies cannot be soon overcome.

We need an economy and jobs that improve our health, well being, and environment. Our Legislature needs to act with vision to meet our needs: that is what healthy governance and economies do. When we are active in managing healthy communities, we get meaningful, good jobs.

That is why we need HB 2656.

We need it to protect our drinking water sources from further toxification and other degradation due to

- clearcutting and other destructive logging and forest practices,
- logging roads, and
- chemicals -- herbicides and pesticides especially, petroleum products, and fertilizers released to plants, the ground, waters, and air.

These practices cause erosion and stream cover removal that

- Decrease our dry-season water supplies so that we don't and won't have enough drinking water for our needs.
- Produce huge, harmful algae blooms in the warmer water and with the phosphorus, nitrogen, and other nutrients they find in the runoff from these practices. These algae blooms ruin our drinking water.
- Prevent normal water retention, causing faster runoff from the clearcutting, roads, and other ground clearing and decrease in vegetative cover, resulting in

1. destructive wildfires that we're having,
2. worse flooding, and

3. stream and out-of-stream erosion, landslides, and other, costly damage to what we have built, grown, and protected, often destroying or damaging people's sources of income or homes.

The chemicals and materials used

- poison our drinking water.

We need this Committee and our entire Legislature to dedicate themselves to cleaning up our drinking water and all potential water sources that we and our wildlife will need in the future.

Create productive jobs and a healthier economy with protection and prevention rather than pollution and destruction in our forests and downstream in our communities.

Pass HB 2656 this session ASAP. This is way overdue! We cannot afford more delay.

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