



Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Oregon Legislature
900 Court St. NE,
Salem Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

I am writing on behalf of the Audubon Society of Portland and our 17,000 members in support of Senate Bill 853 and its companion legislation on the House Side, HB 3058. SB 853 and HB 3058 would prohibit the use and sale of the insecticide, chlorpyrifos in Oregon and would restrict use of neonicotinoid pesticides to licensed pesticide applicators. We believe that both of these actions are essential to protect communities and the environment.

Chlorpyrifos is a highly toxic organophosphate insecticide related to nerve gas that is used on a wide variety of crops which puts consumers, farm workers and the fish, wildlife and invertebrates at extreme risk. The EPA proposed to ban chlorpyrifos use on food crops in 2015, then reversed itself in 2017 under heavy pressure from the insecticides manufacturer, Dow Chemical Company.

A [biological evaluation](#) produced by the EPA in cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service found that chlorpyrifos was “likely to adversely affect” 1778 out of 1835 federally listed fish, bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian, invertebrate and plant species reviewed. This included 91 out of 108 bird species.

This highly toxic insecticide simply posed too high of a risk to people and the environment and Oregon should move forward aggressively and do what the federal government has failed to do and ban this insecticide.

Neonicotinoids are persistent and widely used pesticides that are causing well documented harm to wildlife and in particular, pollinators. The dramatic impacts that neonicotinoids have on bees and other pollinators has appropriately received tremendous attention in recent 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.

Classifying neonicotinoids as “restricted use” in Oregon would allow for their continued use, so long as applicators receive training and certification on how to do so safely. Oregon currently requires certification and training in order to buy or use over 500 restricted pesticides. Adding neonicotinoids to this list is a common sense step to minimize the risk of harm to bees, other pollinators, freshwater invertebrates, fish and birds.

We strongly encourage you to pass SB 853 and HB 3058,

Thanks you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,

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

Bob Sallinger
Conservation Director
Audubon Society of Portland