

Watts Remy

From: Myrtle Glen Farm <myrtleglenfarm.oregon@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2019 11:14 PM
To: SENR Exhibits
Subject: Yes on Senate Bills 931 and 926

Chair Dembrow and members of the Committee,

I'll speak in more detail for SB931 as one of the more experienced users of the FERNS system, but would like it to be known that for the same reasons aerial spray is prohibited on federal lands, so it should be on all lands, including state.

My name is Dan Pennington, resident of Coos County. My partner and I run a small farm bed and breakfast (Myrtle Glen Farm) on 27 farm and forest acres along Middle Creek, which is the middle fork of the North Fork Coquille River. Our neighbors are BLM, Lone Rock Timber, and Roseburg Forest Products. Our two main water sources are a spring that originates on Roseburg Forest Products property, and when that runs dry in the summer we drink water from Middle Creek.

Because we live so near the headwaters of Middle Creek, our only upstream neighbors are industrial scale logging companies and federal forest land. Since we drink water from Middle Creek, we are reliant upon sufficient water quality and quantity to survive and grow our business. But when it comes to informing ourselves of what is in our water, we have found it incredibly difficult. Not only is there a dearth of data regarding herbicides in small rural streams, but trying to find ways in which we can put on our citizen scientist hats and test ourselves is stunted by the lack of transparency by the industry. Not only are we given a window of spray activity that can span an entire year, but we also are given a laundry list of potential chemicals. Testing for each chemical is an expensive endeavor at \$150 per chemical and knowing when to do so is critical in understanding when we are safe to drink our water. If the companies that spray do not test the water, and agencies like the DEQ don't have the budget for comprehensive testing, the impetus is on small landowners like myself, who are dependent on safe water for survival, to understand the risks. And I cannot do the bare minimum if laws are not written to require sensible ethics in transparency by the companies who are endangering their downstream neighbors with chemical toxins.

I'd like to offer a success story with the FERNS system. Lone Rock Timber clear-cut their property that borders our property to the north (just upstream from our water source). Because we were alerted to their activity, we were able to keep up communication with Ryan Bronson, who made effort to listen to our concerns when it came to their impending spray. When we were notified by Ryan that they would be performing an aerial spray, that would have had a helicopter drop a chemical toxic soup only 30 yards from our home, we requested that they instead do a ground spray. Ryan took our request into consideration and Lone Rock ended up agreeing to doing a ground spray. This is an example of how the system can work for both rural residents and corporate logging landowners alike. However, if it weren't for someone as amicable like Ryan, who went out of his way to keep us up to date on the chemicals they would be using and a shortened window to allow us to know when we should not be drinking creek water, we would have been at the mercy of the FERNS system which would have essentially informed us of nothing under current rules.

Another point I'd like to make is a little about the volunteer work my partner and I do in Coos County. One, we are both board members on the Coquille Watershed Association. While I do not speak on the association's behalf, I would like it to be taken into consideration that I spend part of my free time advocating for both economic and ecological watershed health. Our association contains a board with farmers, environmentalists, hunters/anglers, loggers, and scientists.

I am also a member of the Coast Range Forest Watch, which is a citizen scientist activist group who advocates for forest health. Our group has helped form Spray Free Coast which is a coalition of small communities and groups along the coast who seek to inform and help folks who are concerned about aerial spray. On our own time, we travel to

communities and teach folks how to use the FERNS system. Because of this I have a great understanding of the limitations within the system. Our group was fortunate enough to sit in a room with Peter Dougherty, the State Forester with some of our concerns that are outlined in this bill. We were told that they only had a budget to make two or three improvements and that those improvements were not going to be on the public end of the system. We were told that if we wanted our common sense changes made, that we ought to implore our senators and representatives to give ODF a bigger budget. I want to reiterate, we are people who volunteer our time to teach other concerned landowners how to use a buggy system and when we volunteered our time to travel to tell the forester and the FERNS operator of these bugs, we were told that we needed to volunteer more of our time to convince our representatives to increase the budget of ODF. Who is ODF working for if not for the public?

Last, I would like to address the argument that increasing transparency would somehow lead to eco-terrorism, as I've heard this may be a concern to some legislators. This is the type of fear-based hogwash that erodes pathways of empathy and common good. Our small group of citizen scientist activists are teaching the tools to members of our communities of ways they can inform themselves of pertinent forestry activity. Not once, in all of our meetings with others has anyone ever so much as hinted an act of violence. Quite the contrary. The people that have shown up are landowners, concerned community members, people who have been sprayed, people who want to know if it's safe to drink their water. I can't fathom how out of touch someone must be to imply that these people are anything but good hard-working members of our local southern coast communities. And I can't imagine other communities are any different.

Thanks you,
Dan Pennington
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