

I am extremely grateful for these bills (SB 926 and SB 931). I am hopeful that this is a sign of a paradigm shift in the way we view and manage our forests. I say *our* forests because they belong to everyone and *everyone* (people and wildlife) should be taken into consideration when planning and conducting any type of operation.

We need to shift our current paradigm of basing decisions primarily on economics to one where we look at the big picture and not ignore the fact that people and animals are being harmed by current practices.

“Sound management” touted by the Forest Service, Dept of Forestry, Agriculture and timber interests should not include casualties! Entire communities have been sickened by spraying and who knows how much wildlife has been harmed. The chemicals used are deadly to much needed insects like bees and have been known to cause miscarriages in people and wildlife.

Looking at the big picture will show that current methods like clearcutting and checkerboard style land use is the root cause of the imbalance that creates pests and invasive species problems in the first place.

If aerial spraying is banned and backpack spraying is not practical, then ways that do not require these chemicals—like no more clearcutting! (or at the least, non-toxic methods like organic or biodynamic practices) will need to be implemented.

When I talk to people from out of state or from areas that are not by timber lands about how Oregon manages its forests and that poisonous chemicals are sprayed by helicopters they look at me with disbelief—it’s astonishing to them how this is even legal (me too!).

My home borders an area that gets sprayed and I live in terror all summer at the sound of aircraft. When I hear a plane or helicopter, I go back and forth on whether to protect myself and stay inside or go outside to see where it is headed. I have horses and many species of wildlife come through my backyard and I worry for them too. What if one of those aircraft that come by are the ones that are spraying...how am I supposed to load my horses up in minutes and where do I take them? And what about my health? I am very sensitive to chemicals and already have chronic health issues. Exposure to a trace amount of any of the chemicals commonly used could cripple me, put me out of work, I could lose everything.

These bills are not asking for that much. In fact, it will increase jobs due to manual labor requirements, people and wildlife will be healthier and forests will be more resilient.

Please vote yes!

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