

Please pass HB 3239. This legislation is critical to Oregon. We are yet early in our understanding and safe management of the new marijuana growing and processing industry.

As a resident on Jaquith Road since 1988, just a few hundred yards from what became the Chehalem Mountain fire this past year, we were painfully reminded of the critical resource balance in our area. (Due to prevailing winds and heroic action of firefighters, our home was thankfully spared - we grieve with the many Oregonians who lost so much that season.)

Our property includes a residence and a small agricultural growing operation reaching seamlessly into the firs of our mountain. Designated a "limited ground water area" we rely on our well, reliable so far. Trees, agriculture and water are in balance.

On that frightening evening last year, a new landowner celebrating his purchase couldn't put his campfire out. Then, neither could the fire department. This small mistake almost cost us everything. In the smoky days and weeks that followed, we had plenty of time to appreciate how easily those unfamiliar with our area can upset the balance.

Now, we have been dealing with a marijuana growing and processing operation, which aims to put a locally unprecedented strain on our aquifer and use a combination of energy and volatile chemicals suited to an industrial area, not our forrest. County officials are helpless or fearful. The next tinder is legally set.

In some areas fences make good neighbors. But, fences don't stop fires and hold groundwater. It is respect for our fragile ecosystem that makes for good neighbors, even friends.

We welcome new agriculture, including this one. But, an industry which places itself into our forrest under that guise requires guideposts for safety.

The industry has deep pockets - we have our Oregon neighbors and friends.

In that spirit, we ask your help assuring our new neighbors are safe neighbors and our balance is assured a bit longer.