

Resolution #1  
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs

### **Curbing Aerial Spraying of Herbicides and Pesticides**

**Submitted by:** Indian Creek Botanical Mission

**Background:** Twenty years ago, the State of Oregon was a national leader in pesticide and herbicide reduction. But in 2001 the Oregon Integrated Pest Management law was abandoned.

Eighty-five % of the 82,000 chemicals registered for use in the US have never been tested for toxicity. Most were grandfathered in free of scrutiny when the Toxic Substance Control Act was passed in 1976. For new chemicals, the EPA looks only at the industry's "available" data. If no data is provided, the burden falls on academic scientists to prove a chemical hazardous.

Residents, including children, of Triangle Lake, Oregon have been tested and found to have Atrazine and 2-4D in their urine. They live in an area where many forest clear cuts were sprayed with herbicides after timber harvest to prevent grasses and shrubs from growing. As a result, Atrazine is found in 75% of streams and in 45% of ground water in agricultural areas.

Under the current economic paradigm our regulatory system bases decisions on a risk assessment model that asks "how much public health and environmental harm is acceptable". This assessment allows timber companies to give more weight to economic costs than to environmental health.

This is particularly true of aerial spraying of herbicides and pesticides, which often results in off-target drift of spray in the atmosphere of rural schools and residences. The Oregon Department of Agriculture and Oregon State University state that drift is unavoidable. Off-target drift occurs due to weather conditions, steep slopes, changing wind direction, and pilot error.

Oregonians who live in rural areas on land zoned for residential uses are frequently exposed to herbicides and pesticides from aerial applications made on privately-owned industrial forest lands. These applications are being carried out near schools and parks, increasing the risk that both children and adults will be exposed to drift.

It's time our regulatory agencies began protecting farm workers, children, our rivers and wildlife - not promoting aerial applications of health-endangering chemicals. Congress is currently considering enactment of the Safe Chemicals Act of 2011 (S 847, introduced by Senator Lautenberg of New Jersey on April 14, 2011), which would strengthen the decades-old Toxic Substances Control Act. This legislation, while a step in the right direction, would still fall short of Precautionary Principle adopted by the European Union, which states that that no chemical can be marketed unless its producers and processors provide scientific data showing it to be safe.

**Resolution: The FWOC urges that chemical companies and processors be required to test the pesticides and herbicides they produce, and that they also be required to provide detailed scientific information to Environmental Protection Agency, as well as state and local regulators and the general public, regarding the chemicals in these products, and recommended safe practices for the use of these products.**

Contact: Jan Walker, [spooky7@frontier.com](mailto:spooky7@frontier.com)