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REPORT: Oregon's Industrial Forests and Herbicide Use: A Case Study of Risk to People, Drinking Water and Salmon – *Media Fact Sheet*

What does the report tell us that wasn't public before?

- Timber companies spray “chemical soups,” i.e., tank mixes of many dangerous chemicals, and are not held accountable for what goes into that tank. For example one major company is using tank mixes of 3 or more herbicides all at once. By doing so, timber companies increased the amount of herbicides they sprayed in the headwaters of salmon habitat by 99% in just three years.
- One large timber company consistently applies dangerous herbicides by air that rank very high on a scale of environmental damage and harm to human health. Oregon law does not prevent this risky practice.

What was available before the report but was unknown to the public?

- Oregon does not protect all surface waters with no-spray buffer zones, but other states do.
- Oregon does not protect schools and homes from forestry herbicide sprays. An herbicide typically sprayed by timber companies was found in a rural school drinking water from the school well, located just downhill from a hillside behind the school that was sprayed.
- Oregon does not allow its trained state foresters to comment and require modifications to pesticide spray plans, even when the spray is taking place close to homes or critical wildlife habitats, including threatened coastal Coho salmon.
- If a member of the public presents credible evidence that a pesticide spray will cause irreparable harm, they are required by Oregon law to post a minimum of \$15,000 to pay the timber company for any loss of profit if the Board of Forestry places a hold on the project until a solution can be found to avert the harm.
- Aerial pesticide applications take place on the same sites multiple consecutive years. Sprays repeated on a seasonal and annual schedule may contribute to the persistence of toxic chemicals in soil and water. These repeated applications can result in chronic exposure to people and aquatic species.

Why is this important?

- In Oregon, surface water, drinking water and human health is poorly protected, or not protected at all, especially compared to the regulations and policies in place in our neighboring states of Washington and Idaho. Something is very out-of-touch and antiquated with Oregon's Forest Practices Act.

Why is this important? *cont.*

- The industrial practice of spraying pesticides throughout our forestry ecosystems and rural communities is so secretive that even medical professionals cannot find out what has been sprayed in the event of a medical emergency, and thus are delayed or prevented from treating their patients in a timely and effective manner. Something is very broken with Oregon's Forest Practices Act.
- These issues are very important to Oregonians. Most communities get their drinking water from Oregon's rivers. Clean and safe drinking water is critical for the health of future generations, whether we are talking about people or fish.

Beyond Toxics recommends...

- All forestry pesticide spray records should be made available to medical professionals within 6 hours of a spray, and available to the public on a publically accessible web site with 72 hours.
- All homes, schools and residential areas should be protected by a 5-mile, ***no-aerial-spray buffer zone***, in keeping with the acknowledgement by the Oregon Health Authority that aerial pesticides are known to drift as much as 4 miles.
- All surface water should be protected with a no-spray buffer zone for aerial and ground sprays.
- Oregon should ***not*** have weaker forestry pesticide laws than Washington State; after all, large timber companies such as Weyerhaeuser have long operated in Washington without any problem and are still making good profits and providing good jobs.