



Leadership  
For a  
Clean and Just  
Oregon

FALL  
2018



Photo by Carla Hervert

## Beyond Toxics NEWSLETTER

### Our children's health is more important than perfect laws

by Lisa Arkin and Kristina Lefever, Board Member

Beyond Toxics launched our Non Toxic Oregon campaign to tackle a serious problem: *killing common weeds with cancer-causing and brain-damaging pesticides has taken priority over the health of children playing on school grounds and in city parks.* Decades of science proves that, even in very small amounts, children's exposure to pesticides, especially early in life, leads to higher incidences of cancer, developmental disabilities and asthma.

We are encouraged that positive change is close at hand now that the science was upheld in the courts. In October, a Superior Court judge delivered a landmark verdict against Bayer (Monsanto), confirming the jury's findings that their flagship product, Roundup, is directly linked to the onset of cancer. The plaintiff, a school janitor and groundskeeper, regularly sprayed Roundup as part of his required duties.

Why is Roundup still on store shelves? Why are Roundup and other products containing glyphosate routinely sprayed on school grounds? Let's challenge the post-WWII habit of using chemicals and pesticides to tend our landscapes and invite a paradigm shift! We can do better for the children, families and recreation-minded folks who spend time in our public schools and parks.

Under the banner of our Non Toxic Oregon campaign, Beyond Toxics works with cities and institutions to switch from a pesticide-based landcare system to an organic system. Oregon cities like Talent and Springfield are already adopting the model and evolving toward improving family and pet health, beauty and working smarter and not harder in their park maintenance.

We know that organic landcare management systems work! Cities and schools across the country (from Irvine, CA to Willamette University in Salem) have already made the switch for their parks and green spaces. City and school officials feel good about the decision, knowing they are reducing costs and protecting nearby water ways and that people, pets and pollinators are no longer being poisoned by toxic pesticides.

Help us ensure that science-based evidence, not corporate-concocted mistruths, are the basis of pesticide policies. Beyond Toxics will soon launch a series of science pubs to help you follow the history, medical evidence of harm, and environmental fate of pesticide use.

Please invite us to your town. We want each of you to become strong advocates and to hear your voice supporting our upcoming pesticide reform legislation. We'll need you at the State Capitol for our Legislative Lobby Day to defend two bills--one to protect workers, water, soils and pollinators from insecticides and the second to protect rural communities from herbicide drift.

We're eager to join with you, our supporters, to make this the paradigm shift now.



A kindergarten child stands next to sprayed grass at her Clackamas County school.

## #BeeGiving for Giving Tuesday: Nov. 27th

by Ephraim Payne

One in every five of Oregon's children feel what no child should ever feel, the gnawing pains of hunger. Without bees to pollinate our food, children and families statewide who already face food insecurity will get even hungrier.

Plummeting bee populations threaten our food supply and people struggling to put healthy food on the table. One in seven Oregonians faced food insecurity last year, including a disproportionate share of minority households. Rising food prices and decreasing supplies of nutritious, culturally appropriate foods will place the burden of pollinator decline onto communities already unfairly impacted by environmental degradation and hunger.

You can fight this untenable risk. November 27TH is Giving Tuesday, a day of global giving. Please donate to Beyond Toxics now in honor of Giving Tuesday to help us take bee-killing Neonicotinoid pesticides (neonics) off store shelves. We are introducing strong new policy initiatives to solve this problem and working with organizations serving communities of color to attract more bees to pollinate community gardens. It is essential to tackle the issue in our communities as well as the state legislature! You can give using the enclosed envelope or online at [beyondtoxics.org/donate](https://beyondtoxics.org/donate).

Neonics kill bees, butterflies, birds and beneficial creatures at very low doses. They can poison good microbes in our soil for years and pollute our waterways. Overwhelming scientific evidence shows neonics and other systemic pesticides harm key species, sending rippling impacts throughout entire ecosystems. We must act now to save Oregon's bees and other beneficial insects at the core of the food chain, and support everyone who depends on them.

Neonics are the top-selling insecticides in the world. Anyone in Oregon can buy them, often unwittingly. Pesticide products commonly used in home gardens often have no warnings. As a result, home gardeners can apply their ingredients in much higher concentrations than is considered safe. Shockingly, some of these products recommend drenching the soil every six weeks, causing repeated exposures for all nearby creatures.

With your help, we can keep highly toxic systemic chemicals out of our streams and soils to protect Oregon's bees and other pollinators. Please donate now. Together, we can ensure that the most vulnerable Oregonians don't have to feel increasing hunger pains brought on by food insecurity from collapsing bee populations.

## 2000+ Ponderosa pines killed by herbicide spray

by Lisa Arkin

An unusual, massive die-off of mature Ponderosa pines in Central Oregon prompted Beyond Toxics to file a complaint with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) demanding an in-depth investigation into the cause. It turns out that approximately 2,000 colossal pines near Sisters and Bend, many hundreds of years old, stand dead or dying on federal forestland, destroyed by an Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) roadside spray. The agency used a tank containing a mixture of four different herbicides.

Forced to re-open what had been an incomplete and cursory inquiry, ODA will now examine paperwork behind years of roadside spraying. An earlier report by the US Forest Service (USFS) concluded that the likely cause of the tree die-off was an aminocyclopyrachlor-based herbicide, Perspective, manufactured by Bayer (the same company that makes neonicotinoid insecticides known to kill bees).

On September 24th I met with the USFS, ODOT and ODA to tour the poisoned area between the headwaters of the Metolius River and Black Butte Resort. After learning that the herbicide impact was spreading to a wider geographic area than expected, I urged ODA to broaden their investigation and include the possibility of contaminated ground water. Four days later, ODA announced the agency would enact a temporary ban on the use of aminocyclopyrachlor on roadsides. The ban, in effect through March 2019, doesn't remove the larger danger of other herbicides being sprayed on state, county and city roads in Oregon.

It is not only for the sake of majestic trees that we demand a non-toxic policy shift. People getting their mail, children waiting for school buses, bicyclists and folks taking an evening walk all use roadsides. Across Oregon, roadsides are often adjacent to streams, rivers and culverts that act as a point source for pesticides to run into our waterways, impacting drinking water, wildlife and all aquatic life. Beyond Toxics plans to pursue the issue through policy change and, if necessary, the courts.



## Pesticides, Food and Activism

### A Framework for Analysis

Food is the foundation of healthy communities. A functioning, biodiverse ecosystem is the foundation of a resilient food system. How we grow and eat food today is largely linked to environmental degradation, human health, and social inequality. Since the end of WWII, pesticides have been successfully marketed as a way to help farmers grow food. However, our reliance on synthetic pesticides has always been a short-term solution that ultimately breaks down the backbone of the ecosystems necessary to uphold food production into the future. These chemicals have altered the infrastructure upon which we rely to build thriving communities. Today's society is far more educated and technologically advanced than it was 70 years ago. So why are we still using the methods used during the rise of post-war, industrial-chemical corporations?

### Examples and Observations

Over the past two decades, scientists and environmental organizations have raised the alarm about systemic insecticides, especially neonicotinoids. Due to their widespread use in agriculture, landscaping and home gardens, neonicotinoids make their way into the base of the food-web by accumulating in soil and water where they persistently harm invertebrates and microorganisms. However, the very strong focus on neonicotinoids in bee declines has perhaps obscured the broader implications of widespread neonicotinoid use in the environment.

### Modernizing Oregon's Policies

Healthy soil and clean water are the foundation of a dignified way of life. The pathway forward is founded on sustainable land management practices and building healthy soils. We need

strong ecosystem integrity to help society survive an unpredictable future. Think about it: if we continue to allow policies that degrade Oregon's environment with toxic chemicals, our food systems and climate action plans will crumble. Let's create a movement that will influence decision-makers to support public policies that advance access to clean food grown in healthy soils and shift away from synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

### The Need For Activism

Throughout history activism has empowered people to end slavery, challenge dictatorships, protect workers from exploitation, save endangered species, promote equality for women, oppose racism, and many other important issues that continue to threaten today's societies. Right now we can take steps to transition away from these destructive industrial practices towards organic practices that support people, nature, and local food production.

As consumers, we can drive small changes by buying local, sustainable goods. But as citizens, we can drive great change by demanding more from our government, from our employers, and from ourselves. Let's join forces to push our decision-makers to support organic agriculture and sustainable land management policies. We can't stop until we have achieved a change in how our society operates.

### Moving Forward

Beyond Toxics is spearheading the Non Toxic Oregon project and will introduce legislation in the 2019 state legislature to drive a more sustainable and equitable future for all Oregonians. Our goal is to restrict neonicotinoid pesticides for consumers' purchase and address the threat of the most dangerous pesticides. We will join more than 20 states, cities, federal agencies and universities that have already taken steps to restrict neonicotinoids. Oregon can be a leader in the protection and preservation of soil, water, and biodiversity so vital to our natural ecosystems and local agriculture.



Beyond Toxics organized an Earth Day work party at Churchill Garden in West Eugene. | Photo by Ephraim Payne.



PABLO ALVAREZ

From Sept 12th through Sept 14th, California Governor Jerry Brown held the much anticipated Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS) in San Francisco. Prominent figures, such as Harrison Ford, Jane Goodall, Al Gore, Dave Matthews and Alec Baldwin were present at the Moscone Convention Center expressing what they believed were solutions to the global climate crisis. Hundreds more from multinational corporations to global NGOs flooded the luxurious PARC 55 hotel. The wealthier among the attendees anxiously awaited their limos with chauffeurs or private drivers to take them to this summit where \$4 billion would be pledged to combat climate change. Panels of elite scientists and political leaders would attempt to convince government officials around the world to aspire to the goals of the Paris Accords.

“  
Although I do not have all the answers,  
one thing I certainly know is that those  
solutions are with the people...  
who have been fighting  
this struggle on a daily basis.”  
– Pablo Alvarez,  
Environmental Justice  
Community Organizer

Those noticeably absent were the 500 participants of the *Solidarity to Solutions Summit* held 4 miles away at La Raza Park. There, you could find two proud Beyond Toxics travelers, myself and my co-worker, Ana Molina, discussing possible solutions with the people who are most affected by climate change and the environmental devastation that awaits them. There were organizers, community members and elders of communities from all around the world, primarily people of color and women. They discussed daily struggles such as the de-forestation of the Amazon in Brazil, toxic pollution spreading in California cities from EPA superfund sites, democratizing energy production in Indiana, farm workers poisoned with pesticides in the Pacific Northwest, and so many other concerns experienced by frontline communities who attended this gathering.



Pablo Alvarez, Environmental Justice Community Organizer

Reflections on the “Solidarity to Solutions” Summit in San Francisco  
by Pablo Alvarez and Ana Molina

Many participants were in San Francisco for an entire week. We all took part in the *Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice March* which attracted 30,000 people. Attendees participated in local environmental justice tours and actions and came together to learn the work being done for climate justice in each other’s communities across the nation and around the world. The summit was an opportunity to listen to each other and offer advice and get to know each other and discover our commonalities. We offered solidarity and showcased the solutions that were working in our own communities and let each group take what they wanted.

This grassroots, democratic approach is what is lacking from big global summits like GCAS. The voices of the people on the ground and who daily live the struggle are missing from the “top-down” approach. The people who attended and lead the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS) might indeed find solutions, might have the resources to implement such solutions. Their intentions are certainly good. However, they must recognize, that their solutions will continue to be “false solutions” as long as they do not elevate the voices of frontline communities and give them a place at the planning table to plan the future of civilization.

Opening day of the Solidarity to Solutions Summit in Raza Park began with a blessing from an indigenous people’s representative



Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice - The Eugene Team: (L to R) Ana Molina (Beyond Toxics), Sydney Sampson (NAACP) and Pablo Alvarez (Beyond Toxics)

ANA MOLINA

Imagine activist, organizers, leaders, young, old, children and primarily people of color who are Black, Latinx, Indigenous and from all the way across the globe coming together for a weeklong event on climate justice. Do you see all the power we hold? Do you feel the energy of the people building a movement that is Just? Do you hear our chanting down the street demanding climate justice? That is exactly what happened at the It Takes Roots: Solidarity to Solutions Summit (Sol2Sol) in San Francisco in September!

As part of the Oregon Just Transition Alliance, I was very proud to represent Beyond Toxics as I traveled with a contingent of organizers with Got Green and Community 2 Community in Washington and our partners OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon. We joined the many who came together as members of four national alliances: Climate Justice Alliance (CJA), Right to the City, Grassroots Global Justice (GGJ), and Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN). Amid the throngs of activists, organizers, people in marches, workshops, and non-violent direct action, we understood the Sol2Sol summit was not environmentalist protesting environmentalist. It was a coordinated protest aimed at California Governor Jerry

“  
The planet should not be sold!  
It is loved and protected.  
Solutions for climate change  
should come from front line communities  
that are most impacted across the globe.”  
– Ana Molina,  
Environmental Justice  
Campaign Liaison



Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice march  
Tens of thousands march in San Francisco calling for a fossil-free world

Brown’s Global Climate Action Summit to criticize proposals of global, market-based solutions to climate change.

This approach proposes that the very same industries who have poisoned our air, soil, and water are the ones we should trust to develop solutions they think we need. Their solutions are designed and implemented behind closed doors, without the voices of Indigenous, Black, Latinx and people of color, all of whom are the most impacted by rampant environmental injustices made worse by the ravages of climate change. What brought people together to the Sol2Sol Summit is our common dedication to fight for climate justice and advocate for our communities every step of the way.



## Environmental Justice Grows Stronger

by Ana Molina

The Environmental Justice Health Alliance (EJHA) recently released "*Life at the Fenceline*," an online map of more than 12,500 hazardous chemical facilities that are federally regulated under the Risk Management Plan Rule. The map clearly illuminates the fact that minority communities, predominately African-American and Latinx people, reside in closer proximity to hazardous industrial emissions than do higher income people.

Beyond Toxics has recently embarked on a new project with two of our long-time partners, NAACP Eugene/Springfield and NOWIA UNETE Center for Farmworker and Immigrant Advocacy in Medford to continue to build an environmental justice movement that is led by the communities who are bearing the brunt of environmental pollution. This collaborative project will work with and engage Oregon communities to advocate for policies that help reduce the consequences of industrial development throughout Lane, Josephine, and Jackson counties.

Our initiative will develop alliances between groups impacted by environmental injustices: Latinx and African-American people. We will work to empower our communities to create a strong, unified voice across the valley to come together and advocate for clean air, water, soil, and other issues important to our communities. This alliance will bring Latinx and African-American voices into public engagement and community-based research, while building opportunities to advance the statewide environmental justice movement. It's important to incorporate the voices of Oregonians most impacted by pollution and food insecurity before making decisions that impact their health and access to nutritious, affordable food.

In order to bring justice to the communities most impacted by environmental racism, we need to elevate their voices and raise their visibility in places where policies are decided. Our collaborative project will include many different narratives and experiences in the Latinx and African-American communities in order to better understand our shared struggles and triumphs.

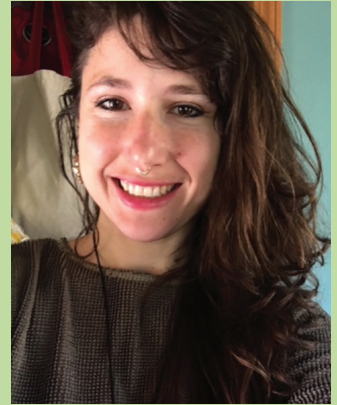
This partnership has allowed each of our organizations to hire an organizer to advance environmental and worker justice.

### **Bianca Ballara – Beyond Toxics**

#### **Environmental Justice Organizer, Phoenix, OR**

Born in Miami, Florida to Cuban immigrant and working class parents, Bianca has been familiar with racism and classism from a young age. She believes that what we may lack in privilege, we make up for in a deep knowledge of the importance of family and the land's integrity.

Thus, she is prepared to empower highly marginalized Latinx and communities of color experiencing the brunt end of environmental injustice in Jackson and Josephine counties.



### **Pablo Alvarez – NAACP and Beyond Toxics**

#### **Environmental Justice Organizer, Eugene, OR**

Pablo was born and raised in Guatemala City. He came to the U.S. at age 14 in pursuit of greater opportunities and an education, which he obtained at the University of Oregon, with a focus on human rights. As an organizer for both Beyond Toxics and NAACP,

Pablo builds the alliance between Latinx and African-American communities in Lane County. He brings an understanding that their fight is rooted in the same oppressive systems.

### **Nick Morales – UNETE Environmental Justice Organizer, Medford, OR**

Nick was born in southern Oregon to parents who have been long-standing advocates for their community. As UNETE's first Environmental Justice Organizer, Nick strengthens the coalition by bringing to the table UNETE's long history and understanding of farmworker and immigrant community needs in the Rogue Valley.



## Beyond Toxics welcomes 3 new board members!



### Yolanda Gomez

Yolanda is an anti-racist activist and Thurgood Marshal Fellow at Oregon State University School of Creative Writing. She has been published in *Nat Brut*, with a forthcoming publication in *Rest for Resistance*. She is the co-editor and contributing author of *Red Umbrella Babies*, a sex work and parenting anthology. Before focusing on writing, Yolanda's academic work was in Gender and Women's Studies, and Middle Eastern and North African Studies. She has extensive community organizing experience through anti-violence outreach, advocacy and event planning with the Wingspan Anti-Violence Project, the Sex Worker Outreach Project, Hey Baby Art against Sexual Violence, and Take Back the Night in Tucson Arizona. Currently, in addition to her work as a writing fellow, she is working in community mental health.

### Julie Sonam

Julie Sonam is a real estate broker at Windermere Lane County.

She previously worked as a Registered Nurse and as a self-employed entrepreneur. Education, advocacy, and contribution are very important to her. Most importantly, she is an advocate for health—health of the people, animals, the land, water, and the air. She is very involved in the local community and is also a founding member of the Palmo Center for Peace and Education. She believes that participation as well as education is crucial to creating the world we all want to live in.



### Nicole Metildi

Nicole is a graduate student at Oregon State University studying activist and environmental rhetoric and the role that storytelling plays within both. Before she came to Beyond Toxics, she volunteered with and served as the interim Community Organizer with 350PDX, the local Portland group of 350.org. There, Nicole focused on empowering individuals and helping them find their place within the climate justice movement. By empowering others and helping them think critically about climate change and how it impacts communities most vulnerable to environmental degradation, she believes we can work together to address environmental and climate injustices in our communities.



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Beyond Toxics weaves social justice and human rights advocacy into environmental protection policies.

**Leave Oregon a Non Toxic Legacy with a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA**

Did you know that you may be able to receive a tax break for donating up to \$100,000 to Beyond Toxics directly from a traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA)? Donors who are at least 70½ may use a QCD to satisfy the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) of their IRA without the money being added to their adjusted gross income.

To qualify, QCD contributions typically must be made by December 31. Support of this kind is especially convenient for donors who are at least 70½ and must take an RMD from their IRA. If you don't depend on all or part of this income, making a QCD contribution to Beyond Toxics gives us the increased capacity to make effective and meaningful changes for real environmental health achievements.

Please contact Lisa Arkin, Executive Director or Ephriam Payne, Development Director to learn more about your planned giving options with Beyond Toxics at 541-465-8860.

**We've Moved!**

After 18 years, Beyond Toxics has outgrown the small white house in downtown Eugene. Thankfully, because of the generous support of our members and the faith our community has in our work we're excited to announce that this month we're moving to the Mahonia Building. A sustainable, mixed-use building, the Mahonia is an architectural symphony of energy efficient technology, non-toxic materials and salvaged and repurposed building materials.

We're eager to invite you to an Open House soon to help us mark this new chapter and celebrate our unceasing feisty and tenacious environmental advocacy! Watch for the announcement!