

**Proposal to the Board of Forestry**  
**by Pesticide Poisoning Victims United, a Division of**  
**The Pitchfork Rebellion**

“An Uprising of Forest Dwellers”

Mail: *Pitchfork Rebellion, Box 160, Greenleaf, OR. 97430*

**WHO WE ARE**

**“Background to this Proposal”**

*The Pitchfork Rebellion* is an Uprising of Forest Dwellers who are tired of being abused by Big Timber and Big Pesticide – i.e. ‘Big Agriculture’ – and who believe, as documented in our ongoing *Investigation of the Influence of Big Business on State and Federal Agencies*, that the government agencies charged with protecting the environment and the public health have been effectively co-opted by private industry to the profound detriment of the environment and the public health.

Our movement began with a *very unusual* protest rally! On February 11, 2005, about 70 forest-dwellers from the heavily clear-cut, heavily pesticide-sprayed Triangle Lake area gathered in Greenleaf, Oregon, carrying – you guessed it! – **PITCHFORKS!** We called this demonstration *The Pitchfork Rebellion* in order to make the following point: **We are country folk, not your usual big-city environmental protesters!** Besides the pitchforks, we carried lambs, goats, chickens, baskets of produce, and other farm-related items. The location in Greenleaf was the sight of yet another mudslide caused by a clear-cut, this one had damaged a house and shut down Highway 36. That highway is the only route into or out of our community – our only way to get groceries, gas, or get to work – and was shut down **TWELVE TIMES** that Winter due to clear-cut related mudslides. But mudslides were one of our small concerns! The main reason we held this protest rally – which, by the way, was the largest rally of any kind in the history of tiny Greenleaf! – **was to protest the ongoing pesticide aerial assault by Timber Industry helicopters on our community, an assault that has sent children to the hospital and resulted in many cancers and other illnesses, and to protest against the State and Federal government agencies that permit this assault and call it legal.** (We call it ‘Eco-Terrorism’!)

That demonstration, the beginning of the forest dweller uprising called *The Pitchfork Rebellion*, was documented in the March 16, 2006, issue of *Eugene Weekly*. There we read:

“Drive west along Oregon’s Highway 36, past Triangle Lake... and you’ll find yourself in coastal mountain country.... It *should* be pretty. But the clear-cut hills that rise steeply from the highway are an eyesore.... Families own the lowlands, but city-based timber companies hold deeds to most of the hilltops. They manage them for short-term profit, clear-cutting ... then dousing the naked slopes with herbicides.... You’ll likely pass more logging trucks than cars on Highway 36. The sound of helicopters is as regular as birdsong. Its been that way for decades.... But something snapped in Greenleaf recently, and it wasn’t just a tree under the weight of a mudslide. You could see it on the side of Highway 36 on Feb. 11, at the base of a particularly homely clear-cut.... folks in jeans and baseball hats held hand-printed signs saying ‘No Spray’ and ‘Health is Wealth’. They took turns at a microphone, lambasting big timber and pesticide companies for poisoning them for profit, politicians for failing to pass substantive laws to protect their families, and the media for not noticing. This was the beginning of The Pitchfork Rebellion.”

The demonstration was filmed by a public access television show in Eugene and shown many times on television. That film was turned into a DVD and widely distributed. As word spread of *The Pitchfork Rebellion* and our crusade against the aerial pesticide assault of forest dwellers by the Timber Industry, our ranks swelled. We are now most likely the largest movement of forest dwellers organized for any issue in the State of Oregon.

Now, two years after that first *Eugene Weekly* cover-story, we again find ourselves on the front cover of the Eugene weekly. The current issue (dated February 28, 2008) pictures our Triangle Lake School surrounded by a fifty-five acre clear-cut that is being doused with herbicide and is titled: **TRIANGLE LAKE SCHOOL UNDER PESTICIDE ASSAULT**. The article interviews members of our community who have been made sick by herbicide spray drift and asks the question: **WHY IS THERE A BUFFER ZONE TO PROTECT FISH BUT NO BUFFER ZONE AROUND SCHOOLS OR HOMES?** Currently, there is no legal buffer zone to prevent a Timber Industry helicopter from spraying right up to your property line, even if your child's bedroom window is a few feet away, and the sprays can drift more than a mile!

Which brings us to this moment before the Oregon Board of Forestry and the following proposal to the Board by *The Pitchfork Rebellion*.

## PROPOSAL

WHEREAS The Board of Forestry has acknowledged that their most recent 'Issue Scan' found the issue of forest-related pesticides to be the **number one concern expressed by the public** to the Board and that no other issue was even a remotely close second place; and,

WHEREAS *The Pitchfork Rebellion* has reason to believe that the Board of Forestry intends to do very little about this issue even though it is **NUMBER ONE** on their own 'Issue Scan'; and,

WHEREAS We believe that this lack of adequate action is due to the fact that this Board consists of a majority of persons with clear financial conflicts of interest that render them decidedly pro-Timber Industry; and,

WHEREAS On the front page of the webpage of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) we read: "Federal environmental laws effectively prohibit persons with a 'conflict of interest' from serving on the Environmental Quality Commission"; and,

WHEREAS The State of Oregon has chosen not to apply that common ethical standard to the Board of Forestry, currently permitting up to three of its seven members to have significant financial conflict of interest and does not include Board Chair Steve Hobbs in that number although, in our opinion, he should be

counted (reasons available upon request); and,

WHEREAS

We want to give this Board a fair chance to vote on a proposal generated by the forest-dwelling public who have been harmed by herbicides; **WE MAKE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL AND ASK THE BOARD TO SHOW US SOME RESPECT BY ACTUALLY VOTING TODAY ON THIS TWO-PART PROPOSAL:**

1) We propose that the Board of Forestry respond to the results of their recent 'Issue Scan' by announcing a date for an all day Special Session dedicated to public comment on the following specific question: **"SHOULD THE BOARD OF FORESTRY GO ON RECORD AS ENDORSING, AND DOING EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER TO SEE IMPLEMENTED, A BUFFER ZONE ON AERIAL SPRAYING OF HERBICIDE AROUND SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE HOMES."**

2) We propose that the Board of Forestry vote on a proposal that would advise the State of Oregon to apply the common ethical standards regarding conflict of interest that require that no person serving on the Environmental Quality Commission can have a financial conflict of interest in violation of Federal environmental laws **to the Oregon State Board of Forestry where it is currently not applied.**

**END OF PROPOSAL.**

**WE ASK THAT ONE OF YOU ACTUALLY INTRODUCE THIS PROPOSAL ON OUR BEHALF AT THIS BOARD MEETING!**

**NOTE:** Be it known that we support a buffer zone for all forms of herbicide application, ground application as well as aerial, but have above limited our proposal to a buffer zone for aerial spray for the following reason. A legal buffer zone on the aerial spraying of pesticides around homes and schools would be much easier to obtain than one including ground applications. That is because any buffer zone on pesticide application will not only affect the Timber Industry but also non-organic farmers. Because very little farm application of pesticides is done by air these days, and because the portion that is done by air could be done by ground, the Agriculture Industry that controls Salem – where the laws are made – will not mount as aggressive of a challenge as they would if the proposed buffer zone included all ground applications. Although we forest dwellers know that even ground applications create drift and poison our water and soil, we feel that aerial spray is somewhat worse in that it is harder to keep in the intended target area and inflicts more noise and emotional trauma on our community. We are thus willing to accept a buffer zone on aerial spraying around homes and schools at this time, with the goal of one day achieving even a buffer zone on ground applications.