

from
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to
Oregon Board of Forestry

regarding
Testimony to BOF 9/9/09

Mr Chair, Board Members--

Please include or review my previous testimonies to you from the last two years on the subjects of reducing human and environmental damage from timber management practices, especially harm reduction from state-encouraged timberland pesticide treatments. My main point in all past testimonies is that modern scientific understanding of managing the biological reality of forestlands and watersheds is undercut and contradicted by the soil-destroying management practices encouraged by state laws that need to be changed, especially the Forest Practices Act.

I have also asked the Board of Forestry to request the legislature address the problems of state-encouraged, liability free pesticide treatments that are converting industrial forestlands into dangerous biological deserts. The explicit prioritization of human and environmental health needs to be re-inserted as a main goal of the Forest Practices Act. In addition, the two laws causing the most problems and needing the most remedy, are the laws that promote reckless, unnecessary and dangerous pesticide treatments, know as the Poison Protection Laws, specifically the liability exclusions of the Farm and Forest Practices, ORS 30.930-30.947, and the Pre-Emption laws, ORS 636.057.

Forests can supply human needs for fiber, food, fisheries, clean water, clean air and recreation. Current industrial tree farms produce crappy, weak wood and poisoned air and water. This is unacceptable, and even more unacceptable is the proposal now before the board to have the publicly-owned state forests adopt the same poisonous and destructive management practices as the industrial tree farms we see today-- monoculture plantations that produce for a 30-year rotation then degrade into dangerous biological deserts that are no more sustainable than the next tanker load of ammonium nitrate from Siberia, pesticides from China, or oil from the Middle East.

The answer to the needs of cash-strapped counties is not to cut, burn and poison the state timberlands, but to restore the equitable timber taxes eliminated by the 1190's legislature dominated by Republicans and large timber companies. The state-owned timberlands must be managed for the greatest good, which means fisheries, wildcrafting, and recreation as well as second-growth timber. Based on strong new science, the greatest values for state-owned forestds come from carbon sequestration and biological preserves.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

John Sundquist