

Rodney Jacobs
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Dear Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environment;

I am writing to share my views and ultimately express my opposition to HB 2656. Although I am only able to speak for myself, I believe that many other foresters and individuals knowledgeable with current forest practices would agree with my view that HB 2656 is ultimately a solution to a problem that does not exist.

For nearly twenty years I have been responsible for overseeing the application of herbicides, road building and clearcut harvesting on forestland in NW Oregon. The majority of this work was performed on forestland that would be adversely affected by HB 2656. In every instance, I believe the forest landscape was left in a better condition than when work began. Improvements begin with forest infrastructure upgrades, legacy roads are reconstructed or abandoned, culverts are upgraded to allow for fish passage if applicable and the overall road drainage system is improved. During harvest activities snags are created to improve habitat for birds and bats, large woody debris is placed in fish bearing streams when appropriate to create resting spots and gravel beds for spawning fish. Post-harvest, clearcuts are promptly reforested with vigorously growing seedlings that will quickly reforest and dominate the site within a short period of time. Herbicide and fertilizer applications are being performed by a smaller set of contractors who are better prepared and trained than their predecessors. GPS technology has allowed for accurate applications and subsequent monitoring to a detail that could not have been imagined a decade ago.

When working in watersheds that provide water to public water systems, it is common practice if not required by the Forest Practices Act to notify and work with the water master to establish mutually acceptable timeframes to perform the work and if feasible, modify the plan to accommodate the water masters concerns. It is not uncommon to find that the best tasting or cleanest water comes from watersheds that are actively managed for forest products.

Science does not support a need for HB 2656. Third party testing and analysis of herbicide applications have confirmed safe drinking water thresholds are being met on a consistent basis. Forest practices are vigorously enforced by the Forest Practices Act. Working forests make up a small percent of the total land base in the state while playing a significant role in Oregon's economy by employing over 60,000 Oregonians and seasonal workers.

Overall, good things are happening in the woods. HB 2656 would put an end to all these accomplishments for no better reason than for some being able to say "Not in My Back Yard".

Thank you for your consideration on this matter and please protect Oregon's Forests by voting "NO" on HB 2656.

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