

Jan Zuckerman <ses_janz@yahoo.com>

Dear Rep. Helm and Committee Members,

The Safe Waters Act can make right, years of wrongdoings, by keeping our drinking water safe, addressing the climate crisis and by encouraging industrial forest practices that are smart and benefit all Oregonians, not the the pockets of a few.

When I first moved to Oregon in 1976, I was awestruck by its natural beauty. I believed that I had discovered a secret paradise. Now, I look around at what once was, disoriented, and shocked at the how quickly and efficiently the industrial timber industry has changed the landscape, poisoned our water and killed our fish. It isn't surprising when the Oregonian reports that our elected officials are getting paid off by industry, while pollution is allowed to penetrate every inch of our soil, water and atmosphere. I never thought that in my lifetime, I would witness the collapse of our ecosystem and it is terrifying. What is more terrifying, is that we allow it to continue.

Timber companies claim that their trees need to be free to grow, unencumbered by other plants. Don't our children have a right to grow free and unencumbered by poisons? Or do some deserve to be sacrificed so others can profit? Timber companies justify the millions of pounds of chemical herbicides sprayed on Oregon forests because of the economical benefits. Yet, I wonder, is it economical to destroy the very ecosystem that we depend on for water, for life?

In the end, who benefits? Certainly not the children who drink the water riddled with cancer causing toxins. Certainly not the salmon who are struggling to survive in tepid waters. Certainly not the people of Oregon who are counting on laws to protect our natural resources and guarantee that we have a healthy place to live, work and raise our families.

You have an opportunity before you to support the Safe Waters Act and demonstrate to the people of Oregon that you have the backbone to take bold action at a time when it is most needed. Please, I implore you to do what is morally right and support this act.

Thank you,
Jan Zuckerman
Portland, Oregon