

Scott Shurtleff <bethwooddad@gmail.com>

Dear Chair Ken Helm,

I am writing in strong support of HB 2656, Oregon Safe Waters Act 2019.

Clearcutting and aerial spraying of our forests must be greatly reduced in Oregon. Our natural forests are being depleted through these practices and water supplies are being polluted. Recent toxic algae blooms in major watersheds are a direct result of these practices.

I recently attended a presentation by Micha and Dan from Myrtle Glen Farm near Coquille. They own a 27-acre farm that borders private lands owned by timber companies that use clearcutting and aerial spraying on timber plantations. The timber companies' practices have increased sediment in Middle Creek, which flows through the farm and is used for irrigation. Aerial spraying on the lands and near the creek risks chemical pollution in their water.

It's absurd that Oregon has the weakest forest and stream protections in the Pacific Northwest. How can it be that conservative Idaho has much wider buffer zones than Oregon? It's just embarrassing that Oregon defers to big timber companies, especially since they represent such a small part of Oregon's economy.

We need to strengthen our environmental protections for our streams and manage our forests sustainably. HB 2656 is one step towards this goal.

Scott Shurtleff  
4147 SE Taggart St, Portland OR 97202  
203-640-3500