



WaterWatch of Oregon Protecting Natural Flows In Oregon Rivers

HB 4109

Testimony of WaterWatch of Oregon

By Kimberley Priestley

Submitted to the House Committee on Health Care

February 11, 2020

Founded in 1985, WaterWatch is a non-profit river conservation group dedicated to the protection and restoration of natural flows in Oregon's rivers. We work to ensure that enough water is protected in Oregon's rivers to sustain fish, wildlife, recreation and other public uses of Oregon's rivers, lakes and streams. We also work for balanced water laws and policies. WaterWatch has members across Oregon who care deeply about our rivers, their inhabitants and the effects of water laws and policies on these resources.

WaterWatch supports HB 4109

Chlorpyrifos is a highly toxic pesticide that poses a significant risk to human health and fish and wildlife. It is widely used in agriculture, including spraying of crops such as strawberries, apples, citrus, broccoli, corn, and more. Residues can be found not just in food, but also in drinking water. In addition to chlorpyrifos risk to human health (particularly farm workers and children), chlorpyrifos also poses a significant threat to Oregon's fish and wildlife.

Chlorpyrifos makes it into Oregon's waterways through a number of routes, including aerial spray application. The state of Oregon has documented chlorpyrifos above water quality criteria at times in the Middle Rogue, South Umpqua, Middle Deschutes, Yamhill, Clackamas, Hood, Wasco and Walla Walla River Basins. See e.g.

<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/RegulatoryIssues/Documents/Documents/ChlorpyrifosWorkgroup/ChlorpyrifosMonitoringResults.pdf>.

Chlorpyrifos is very toxic fish and aquatic invertebrates. In 2017, a NOAA Fisheries biological opinion found that chlorpyrifos (one of three chemicals that were the subject of the biological opinion), harm salmon and their habitat to the point that their survival and recovery are at risk (see National Marine Fisheries Service ESA Section 7 Biological Opinion for EPA's Registration of Pesticides containing Chlorpyrifos, Diazinon and Malathion, 12/29/17). For chlorpyrifos specifically, NOAA Fisheries made jeopardy and adverse modification of critical habitat calls for all listed Pacific Salmon and steelhead. NOAA Fisheries also made jeopardy and adverse modification of critical habitat calls for all three pesticides (including chlorpyrifos) for Southern Resident Killer Whales, which depend on salmon for their diet (for more information see: <https://earthjustice.org/news/press/2018/chlorpyrifos-pesticide-harms-salmon-and-orcas-government-report-says>).

The science is indisputable: Chlorpyrifos harm people, fish and wildlife. To keep Oregon safe, please support HB 4109.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Contacts: Kimberley Priestley, Water Watch of Oregon, kjp@waterwatch.org, Jack Dempsey, jack@dempseypublicaffairs.com, (503) 358-2864

WaterWatch of Oregon
Main Office: 213 SW Ash St. Suite 208 Portland, OR 97204
Southern Oregon Office: PO Box 261, Ashland, OR, 97520

www.waterwatch.org
Main Office: 503.295.4039
S. OR Office: 541.708.0048