



## ...Blowin' in the Wind

by Lisa Arkin

### Forestry Pesticides Project Update

*...how many times can a man turn his head  
Pretending he just doesn't see?  
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind.*

I don't know if Bob Dylan had aerial pesticide sprays in mind when he wrote this song in 1962. Perhaps so, because in 1961, the US military began spraying the infamous defoliant Agent Orange concoction, half of which was the herbicide 2,4-D, across Vietnam's landscape.

Agent Orange was banned in the 1980s. Shockingly, Oregon continues to allow 2,4-D to be sprayed, despite evidence of its toxicity to fish and people. This spring, as they do every spring and fall, helicopters will spray 2,4-D over acres of forests and streams and drinking water.

Why? To "manage" Oregon's forest-like tree farms: clear-cut, spray, plant fir trees in long rows and spray again.

One day last October, this component of Agent Orange was sprayed from a forestry helicopter in Cedar Valley, a rural area along the Rogue River in Curry County. A state investigation discovered that the helicopter pilot sprayed a chemical cocktail of products, of which 2,4-D was but one, that were known or suspected carcinogens, liver toxicants, endocrine disruptors, and neurotoxicants. The chemical



brew landed on the faces of people working in their yards and over their dogs, horses and private property.

Over thirty-two Cedar Valley people were sickened. Their symptoms included coughing up blood, intense stomach pain, nausea, rashes, blurred vision and severe headaches. People sought help at hospitals and took their animals to veterinarians, incurring expensive medical bills. Many have abandoned using their water because it comes from surface streams that were sprayed. Grandparents won't let their grandkids visit, fearing exposure to herbicides in drinking water. People report they can still smell chemicals volatilizing up from the soil after a rain. This is known as toxic trespass.

Historically, Oregon's state agencies and elected officials turn their heads away from rural communities harmed by toxic trespass.

Oregon agencies *pretend that they just can't see*; however, communities—from Curry to Tillamook counties—are crying out for help. Beyond Toxics is truly there

for each community. We aim to end the pretense that aerial spraying is "safe" and underscore that toxic trespass is a human rights violation. As we are doing in Cedar Valley, Beyond Toxics is helping rural communities join together to stop aerial pesticide drift from *blowin' in the wind*.

## BEE JUBILEE CELEBRATION

Please join Beyond Toxics for our Bee Jubilee! Come celebrate our work to protect bees from dangerous pesticides. Eugene's children and bees are much safer because of the city's February resolution banning the use of bee-killing pesticides on city-owned property. Enjoy outdoor, family-oriented games; Coconut Bliss dessert; prizes; coloring books; open mic poetry and a bee-keeping demonstration. Eugene poet, Carter McKenzie will also lead a poetry workshop for kids.

May 31, 2014 from 1 to 3 PM Washington Park Community Center in Eugene



Special thanks to Smith Family Bookstore and Coconut Bliss for sponsoring the Bee Jubilee!

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Dear Friend and Supporter,

Oregonians who have been damaged by chemicals and find no help from government agencies often turn to Beyond Toxics. Here's an example of our work to empower Oregonians who must defend their right to an uncontaminated environment and fight for healthy future generations.

Last October, John Burns of Cedar Valley, Oregon, was pruning his apple trees when he heard a helicopter. He looked up and felt a mist settle on his face. Immediately, he felt sick. When his symptoms – blurry vision, loss of balance, coughing, respiratory irritation, intense fatigue, and severe headaches – continued, he called his doctor. A nurse practitioner tried valiantly to find the source, but was told by state agencies that no one would disclose what John was exposed to, hindering his medical care. Soon John learned that more than 32 of his neighbors, including infants, also were sickened after that pesticide spray.

John is head of the Emergency Response Team for Cedar Valley's fire department, and his wife Barb is a retired nurse. They know about health. In January, they represented their community by attending a Pesticide Analytic Response Center agency meeting in Salem, a five-hour drive from Cedar Valley. Despite eight agencies that should have been able to help, John could not get information about the spray that sickened him and his neighbors. State agencies refused to test their drinking water for the presence of herbicides and refused to conduct a health survey. John and Barb learned that Oregon laws regarding forestry and herbicide sprays prevent them from getting timely information and block them from seeking a solution in a court of law.

Feeling frustrated, angry, and still sick, John and Barb reached out to Beyond Toxics for justice and help. Beyond Toxics held government agencies answerable by petitioning two federal agencies to become involved in the investigation. The official investigative report found that the helicopter pilot broke the law by over-spraying, allowing chemicals to drift onto residential properties and falsifying records during federal and state investigations. In addition, the Oregon Attorney General agreed with Beyond Toxics that state agencies must release herbicide information to impacted communities.

We played a critical role in getting a more thorough investigation and forcing the truth to come out. We all agree that pesticide trespass is a violation of human rights norms. Beyond Toxics is committed to helping citizens across the state change the laws to protect public health.

Please consider a donation of any amount to help us continue this important work. Each dollar you donate goes directly to support our work in your community and throughout Oregon. Please visit our web site and click "**Donate**" or mail in your check. Thank you for investing in a healthier and more just Oregon.

I'd love to hear from you if you have questions about our work or want to volunteer.



In gratitude,

*Lisa*

Lisa Arkin, Executive Director

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**UO Students Travel with Beyond Toxics:**  
*"This experience was the most meaningful of my college experience."*

**Community Collaboration**

For a second time in two years, University of Oregon students chose Beyond Toxics as their environmental studies learning laboratory. During winter term, dozens of students experienced environmental justice advocacy in action. They did so by participating in field work in rural communities seeking protection from aerial forestry pesticide sprays.

Executive Director Lisa Arkin was invited to make a presentation to a university class on how Beyond Toxics uses environmental justice research to help rural communities threatened by pesticide drift. Students voted to adopt the issue and work with Beyond Toxics for the winter term. After diving into assigned readings and listening to guest speakers, students fanned out in small groups to interview rural residents throughout western Oregon.

Eight students accompanied Director Lisa Arkin on a trip to Cedar Valley, a rural community on Oregon's southern coast (see page 1). They met nurses, loggers, fire fighters, Vietnam vets and third-generation timber families. These neighbors had one thing in common: all of them fell ill when helicopters sprayed nearby private timber clear cuts in October 2013.

"At first I was not really happy about going to this conservative Oregon logging town," said Niria Garcia, one of the undergraduates. "I thought to myself, 'I won't have anything in common with them'; but it became one of the most important experiences of my college education."

The students collected interviews from residents who were exposed to the toxic herbicides and learned about their lives in a timber-dependent community. They listened to unforgettable stories about seeing a loved one's health deteriorate after the aerial pesticide sprays.

Deeply impacted by these encounters, many students chose to write essays and term papers recounting their impressions.

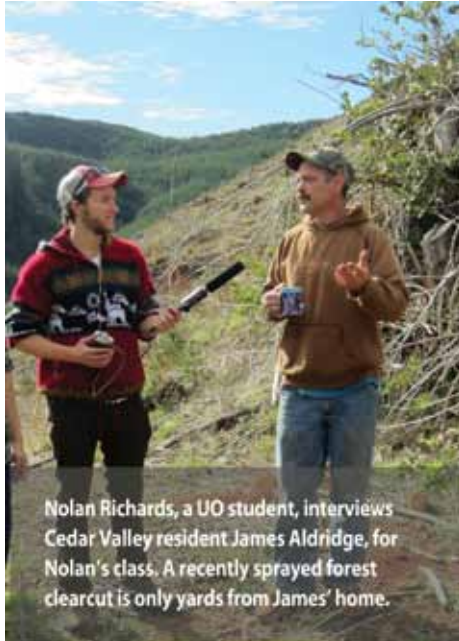
One student will be using the project for her master's thesis. Aylie Baker, a UO graduate student said, "Traveling to Gold Beach with Beyond Toxics was truly eye-opening. We were welcomed by a community of people who are courageous, creative and tirelessly working on an issue that ultimately affects all of us. I am eager to use multimedia journalism to describe complicated environmental problems and get the public involved."

Despite being disparaged by state agency leaders and timber land owners, the residents' accounts of pesticide trespass were corroborated

by the findings of a state and federal investigation.

The students were able to experience being at the center of an environmental criminal investigation. They also got a close-up look at the failures of Oregon's forestry policy.

We are proud to be guiding the next generation of environmental justice advocates.



Nolan Richards, a UO student, interviews Cedar Valley resident James Aldridge, for Nolan's class. A recently sprayed forest clearcut is only yards from James' home.

**Beyond Toxics welcomes two new board members...**



We are pleased to welcome **Dr. Lauren Herbert** as a new board member. Dr. Herbert is a pediatrician and pediatric infectious diseases specialist with PeaceHealth Medical Group. While she has been a physician for over 25 years, her initial interest was in environmental issues. Dr. Herbert works

primarily with local Latino immigrants to address their health and environmental issues. Dr. Herbert was especially drawn to the work of Beyond Toxics because, as she said, "...it addresses both social justice and

environmental issues."



We also welcome **Marcela Mendoza, Ph.D.** to the board. Marcela is a published scholar of socio-cultural anthropology. As adjunct faculty at the University of Oregon Department of Anthropology, her focus is indigenous peoples in Latin America and hunter-gatherer societies. Marcela

collaborated with Beyond Toxics to advance environmental justice work in West Eugene and served as Commissioner with the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

## Oregon sets important new legislative precedents moving bee protection forward

Friends of Healthy Bees Project Update

### Important victory in Eugene makes for a model policy for every American city

On February 26th, at the request of Beyond Toxics and neighborhood leaders, Eugene's City Council unanimously passed a Council Resolution, "Enhancing Current Integrated Pest Management in Parks," which bans the use of neonicotinoid pesticides on all city property. According to bee advocates around the nation, Eugene is the first city to ban these persistent pesticides. The groundbreaking resolution also expands the current Pesticide-Free Parks program and requires all city departments to adopt official IPM standards, meaning less chemicals and safer practices all over.



Photo by Ellen Morrow

### Oregon legislature passes "Save Oregon's Pollinators Act" in March, 2014

The Oregon legislature passed a new law heralding the start of meaningful bee protections in our state. The law requires everyone applying for a pesticide license to take a course on pollinators and pesticides and pass the exam. HB 4139 establishes a Task Force directed to continue the research on bee health and pesticides for legislative action in 2015. Governor John Kitzhaber signed the bill on March 6th, marking the beginning of a promising process of reforms that would protect bee health. Beyond Toxics played a key role in spearheading the law and will continue to be out in front in the fight to protect bees.

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