



Leadership  
For a  
Clean and Just  
Oregon

**BEYOND  
TOXICS**

**SUMMER  
2015**

Photo by Carla Hervert



## Beyond Toxics **NEWSLETTER**

# The local approach to saving bees is **SWARMING** across the nation!

by John Jordan-Cascade

**O**ur simple April 1st Facebook post reached more than 25,000 people around the nation and was shared 208 times; the Twitter-sphere was likewise abuzz with the news: Portland will no longer use bee-killing neonicotinoid pesticides ("neonics") on city property. The vote by Portland City Commissioners was unanimous!

This amazing victory is, in large part, thanks to the leadership Beyond Toxics provided to the Portland city commissioners.

The threat to bees is grave: American beekeepers reported losing between 40 and 60% of their hives since April 2014. Yet, sadly, the President and Congress have been far too slow to act. A city by city approach started early last year when (with our initiative) Eugene became the first city to ban the use of neonics and was crowned, "America's Most Bee Friendly City."

Setting the idea in motion in Eugene, it spread to Seattle and Spokane. Portland is the second largest city in the nation to go bee-friendly!

What is unique about Portland's ordinance? In addition to banning its use, the city of Portland will no



Photo by Judit Covarrubias Garcia

longer purchase plants doused with neonicotinoid poisons. The City's commitment will create a strong market incentive for plant suppliers in the Portland area to use organic pest management methods.

That directive is especially important because these systemic insecticides can persist in the plant's nectar and pollen for years. Bees visiting a sprayed plant or

flowers of a tree can be harmed long after the original application.

These changes go far beyond their impact on bees. At the most fundamental level, neonics destroy the very web of life. Neonicotinoids accumulate in water and soil, killing the small things--water bugs, caddis flies, worms--that form the first link of the food chain. Without such creatures, there is nothing for the birds and bats, the salmon and trout to eat. The use of neonics harms the near-invisible and helpful micro-organisms that create ecosystem balance by giving life to soils. And healthy soils are essential to growing plants

that are pollinated by bees and give us the healthy fruits and vegetables we need and enjoy.

We are ready to work with more Oregon cities wanting to stand up for bees and ecosystem balance!

To find out how you can get involved, please call us: 541-465-8860.



Photo by Dena Reynolds

## The heart of the matter is to end aerial sprays

by Lisa Arkin

**B**eyond Toxics and our members in rural Oregon counties have accomplished the nearly impossible...with hard work and unwavering perseverance we put the dangers of aerial pesticide drift at the top of environmental policy discussions in Oregon's state legislature.

It all started with a three-page *Eugene Weekly* insert I wrote in early 2014 about the outrageous poisoning of over three dozen people in Curry County. From that point, more stories of residents and workers harmed by herbicide drift sparked a series of bold journalistic accounts, from national coverage at *PR Watch* in Washington D.C. to the front page of *The Oregonian*!

For the first time in forty years, attention was focused on updating laws to protect people and wildlife habitat from pesticides sprayed on timber clear-cuts. I served on both the Senate and House workgroups to consider two different bills to regulate aerial sprays. There was momentum to pass a bill that would bring some small measure of relief to rural residents while pursuing bigger forestry reforms.

Representing Beyond Toxics members, I was invited to speak at key legislative hearings. I brought along those who suffered physical harm from aerial sprays. They came from Curry, Douglas, Tillamook, Josephine and Lincoln counties.

The timber industry, their lobbyists and lawyers decried our attempts to find consensus, in the very least, to protect schools with a modest 100 foot buffer. Their lobbyists claimed that any benefit to children's health wasn't worth the health of their bottom line! I was shocked to hear them admit their callous motives. Only environmental advocates challenged them. As we go to press, the legislature seems reluctantly poised to pass a bill with 60 foot buffers for homes and schools. That's hardly a solution!

Going toe-to-toe with the industry over tiny no-spray buffers doesn't address the true problems with clear-cutting and covering the forest with a blanket of herbicides. It is time to ban aerial herbicide sprays in industrial forest land. We must defend the future of our children and the delicate balance of Oregon's forest ecosystems.

Aerial pesticide spraying in our forests is an obsolete remnant of Vietnam-era defoliation tactics. Beyond Toxics and our allies are continuing to fight from a place of hope. We have the higher moral ground and we are not backing down.

Our plan is to continue pursuing justice for all Oregonians and protections for our natural habitat, in the media, in the courtroom and in the halls of power, until a new forest stewardship ethic of public health and safety takes root.

**“ Their lobbyists claimed that any benefit to children's health wasn't worth the health of their bottom line! ”**

**YOU CAN JOIN DONATE TODAY**

### What they're saying about us...

*"This is one of the few groups that actually gets stuff done!"*  
~ Victor Rozek

*"...what you are doing is truly wonderful...and of great value, not only for the bees of Oregon but to all living beings of our world. Thank you so much for all the things you do to preserve our environment!"*  
~ Judit Covarrubias Garcia

*"I am inspired by the organization's need to make a difference for our community, overcoming many obstacles to achieve the mission of environmental justice."*  
~ Wendy Harris

Monthly donations create a consistent foundation of support and help us to...

- \* Protect the health of Oregonians by reducing toxics and being a leader for environmental justice
- \* Keep our rivers and watersheds clean for both people and wildlife
- \* Be a tenacious and effective advocate for Oregon's environment

Make an online donation:  
[beyondtoxics.org/donate/](http://beyondtoxics.org/donate/)

## Envisioning a pollution-free future for West Eugene by Joel Iboa

**A** community's quality of life, and even the property value of homes, can be determined by how planners put industrial land close to homes and schools.

The Eugene City Council recently approved a tentative plan for Envision Eugene that seeks to "...determine the best way to accommodate up to 34,000 more people by 2032."

The Envision Eugene Plan will be the city's blueprint for growth by adding land for parks, schools, manufacturing, and retail. What concerns me is the way Eugene plans to convert agricultural land in West Eugene for industrial uses.

Why is this a concern? As many of you already know, West Eugene and the rest of Eugene look like two very different places. This circumstance is no accident.

West Eugene has been disproportionately affected by toxic waste and brownfields. West Eugene does not have as many grocery stores and health care centers as the rest of the city. West Eugene has no city-supported community gardens, but it certainly has plenty of corporate big box stores.

West Eugene neighborhoods are getting the short end of the stick by being the place the city puts things the rest of the city would never allow near homes and schools.

The Envision Eugene Plan recommends that 642 acres of farm land and wetlands at the upper boundary of West Eugene's Bethel neighborhood be rezoned for industrial use. According to city staff this area is ideal for large lot parcels reserved for industrial use, some of them as large as 70 acres.

In February we met with Eugene's Mayor Piercy and the city planners to express our concern that Eugene's land-use code tends to promote the encroachment of polluting industries on neighborhoods. Adding more smokestack industries will certainly exacerbate existing air pollution and health problems such as asthma.

As a result of our testimony and conversations, the Clear Lake Sub-Committee was formed to discuss environmental justice concerns. The ongoing conversations we're having are necessary to ensure equal access to clean air and clean water, as well as sustainable jobs that pay a living wage.

Because of our thoughtful and collaborative work, the Envision Eugene Plan may be Oregon's first land use zoning plan that prioritizes environmental justice, air quality protection and community health! When the Plan goes to the City Council for approval, we will need your voice to support this innovative approach.

## Legal brawn harnessed for Beyond Toxics board



**O**ur board welcomes new member David Bahr, who has important legal skills to further enhance our work. David has been a public interest attorney for over twenty-five years. He litigates public record and environmental cases throughout the United States. His clients range from national environmental groups to journalists covering the

Columbia River salmon wars to a small non-profit Ohio water district locked in litigation with the DuPont chemical corporation.

Dave was an attorney at the Western Environmental Law Center from 2003-2009. One of his most memorable cases was spearheading the federal lands travel management program to regulate motorized vehicle use on public lands. He also led a national initiative to ensure better transparency and access to state and federal agency public records.

Proudly, Dave received the 1999 Kerry L. Rydberg Award for accomplishment in public interest environmental litigation, a recognition bestowed by the UO Public Interest Law Conference. He is also the recipient of the Sunshine Award from the Society of Professional Journalists.

In his hours away from his legal office, Dave is a volunteer official with the Oregon Ducks' track and field and cross-country programs. He enjoys backpacking and cross-country skiing with his family, playing guitar and playing chess with his daughter.

## The Quick and Feisty Report: Beyond Toxics (so far) in 2015

Nearly 100% of all our income goes straight to accomplishing environmental protection work.

- Staged a well-attended Advocacy Day and Legislative Briefing about SB 613, the *Public Health and Water Resources Protection Act*. Beyond Toxics staff, along with 60 constituents from around the state met with over 40 legislators.
- After months of work educating Portland City Commissioners about the dangerous decline of bees and the link to neonicotinoid pesticides, we shepherded the passage of an ordinance banning use of neonicotinoids on Portland public property.
- Co-hosted the Bee Jubilee Gala in Portland with Neil Kelly and Elephants Deli to celebrate Portland's ordinance to ban neonicotinoids.
- Provided the impetus for interviews and source material for dozens of effective media stories to help the public learn about the harm done to Oregonians around the state from chemical trespass.

- Presented lectures at dozens of classes and meetings on environmental justice, the dangers of neonicotinoids to bees, aerial forestry pesticide sprays, including a sermon for a Eugene-area church.

- Initiated a series of meetings and hearings with Eugene's mayor and city planning staff to encourage inclusion of an environmental justice perspective for the Envision Eugene Plan.
- Organized five community town hall meetings in Curry, Douglas, Lane and Tillamook counties, featuring experts and local residents speaking about pesticide drift. Over 600 people attended.
- Arranged an Environmental Justice tour of pesticide-impacted communities for students of the UO Environmental Studies Department. A documentary film was produced as a result.



  
**BEYOND TOXICS**  
*Leadership for a Clean and Just Oregon*

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