

The Oregon Coast: Your Dream Vacation Hiking and Swimming in Big Timber's Pesticide Poisons



IN THE FALL OF 2016, groups of concerned coastal citizens launched an impressive effort to stop toxic aerial herbicide sprays in industrial timber holdings near Oswald West State Park and Short Sands Beach. Here we are again, it's Summer 2018 and coastal residents, fish, pollinators and birds all face the same threats of herbicide drift in the air and run-off into our life-giving streams and rivers.

The Weyerhaeuser Company continues to poison the coastal streams, their latest aerial herbicide spray just recently applied in late May. The corporation used helicopters to aerially spray three herbicides – Indaziflam, clopyralid and sulfometuron methyl on hundreds of acres of their industrial timber holdings. The sites are very close to Oswald State Park, the Oregon Coast Highway US 101 and the Tillamook State Forest. The aerial sprays are also very close to the Neahkanie Mountain Loop Trail and also run alongside Necarney Creek. At some locations, the aerial sprays are within 1000 ft. of popular public trails. The spray site is directly north of and adjacent to Necarney Creek, a designated fish habitat stream and upstream from Short Sands Beach, a public recreation site.

Beyond Toxics joined with Rockaway Beach Citizens for Watershed Protection and Oregon Wild to file a public records request with the Oregon Department of Forestry expressing concern with two particular aerial spray operations. The sprays around Necarney Creek, specifically Necarney Falls and Necarney Flats, are particularly egregious because of the potential herbicide exposure risks to salmon, people and aquatic organisms. The fact that these sprays occurred after clear cut logging on steep slopes carries additional risk of unstable soils and herbicide run-off on bare soils after rain.

All of us find it unacceptable that ODF allows Weyerhaeuser to spray Esplanade F made by the Bayer Corporation, which contains the active ingredient Indaziflam. Even the Bayer Corporation admits on its product label that the active ingredient Indaziflam is prone to run through soils and leach into groundwater.

What is even more concerning is the original EPA's pesticide assessment for Indaziflam. The EPA warned that Indaziflam "may not be applied by air." When ODF and ODA were asked about the contradiction of allowing a pesticide to be sprayed by helicopters that cannot be applied by air and should never be used near salmon streams below steep slopes, agency staff were not at all concerned. They replied that Weyerhaeuser is using Esplanade F, which is a special formulation that doesn't have a restriction on aerial application. Nonetheless, Bayer is not required to disclose its inert ingredients or formulation, so there is no guarantee that Esplanade (the product with the "No Aerial Spray" requirement) and Esplanade F are any different once the chemical is in the environment.

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There are substantial environmental hazards warnings on the pesticide label of products with the ingredient Indaziflam. Esplanade F has a Surface Water Advisory: "This pesticide may impact water quality due to runoff of rainwater. This product is classified as having a high potential for reaching surface water via runoff for several months or more after application."

The problems associated with aerial sprays of Esplanade F continue to mount. This pesticide also has an Environmental Hazard Advisory: "This product is toxic to fish, aquatic vertebrates, and plants. Do not apply directly to water, or to areas where

surface water is present or to intertidal areas below the mean water mark."

The spraying of Necarney Creek and the Neahkanie recreational area started in years past. The public protested the 2016 sprays. Also, in September 2017, the same steep slopes, tributaries and the riparian area of Necarney Creek were aerially sprayed with glyphosate, imazapyr, sulfometuron mythyl and metsulfuron methyl. Beyond Toxics asked ODF in our complaint: "How do state agencies, as stewards of our natural resources and wildlife, account for the accumulation and bio-persistence of multiple chemical applications in a single drainage?" We've not received a satisfactory answer to this question.

Have you gone for a swim or surfed in and around Short Sands Beach? You may be exposing yourself and your family and friends to a pesticide for which the manufacturer issued the following cautionary notice: **WARNING - Organ Damage.** Specific target organ toxicity - repeated exposure: Category 2.

This warning means that, based on a federal Hazard Communication Standard (HCS 2012) there is evidence that Indaziflam is presumed to have the potential to be harmful to human health, even after a single exposure. The research on the chemical confirms that it causes neurobehavioral effects and neuropathological changes in other mammals such as dogs and rats.

This aerial spray application is not safe for people, fish, aquatic invertebrates and potentially other beneficial insects. What about the safety of people using Necarney Creek for recreation downstream of the pesticide application? Aerial pesticide drift is known to travel long distances, a situation that is potentially exacerbated by common weather conditions on the Oregon Coast (wind, rain, steep slopes, fog, water vapor, etc.). People recreating along the Oregon Coast Trail and Short Sands Beach should not have to fear the potential of pesticide exposure through inhalation and/or dermal absorption from nearby aerial herbicide sprays.

Beyond Toxics has asked that ODF establish rules protective of people, fish and aquatic ecosystems. Such protections should include no less than a 0.5 mile no-spray buffer near resources that include recreational areas (i.e., hiking trails, public beaches, streams used for swimming and fishing, public parking lots, etc.) and fish streams. However, understanding the risk of pesticide drift, we really should be challenging the entire practice of aerial herbicide sprays in Oregon's coastal regions.

On behalf of thousands of Oregonians who recreate in the Oswald State Park area, Neahkanie Mountain, Short Sands Beach and the Tillamook State Forest, there must be public discussion, public hearings and protective action taken on this matter at the Oregon State Legislature.

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