



Lincoln County Watershed Watch Alliance
John H. Colman-Pinning
3315 N. Bayview Road
Waldport, Oregon 97394
563-4689

May 7, 1993

Jim Buisman
County Road Supervisor
880 N.E. 7th
Newport, Oregon 97365

Re: Roadside herbicide spraying program

Dear Mr. Buisman,

We are an informal group of Lincoln County citizens who are highly concerned about the hazards of herbicide applications in our area. We have recently learned that your department intends to apply herbicides in several areas of Lincoln County for control of roadside vegetation. We write to ask that you not allow the application of herbicides along roads maintained by Lincoln County until there is better understanding of the scope and effects of that program.

We are particularly disturbed by notices of impending herbicide applications on roadsides near our homes and in riparian areas where the herbicides would unavoidably cause water pollution. In fact, some of the signs are posted on stakes in small streams and wetlands.

We also have particular concerns about the possibility of our children suffering high exposure while waiting for school buses and while walking, biking, and playing along rural roadsides.

We question the propriety of applying herbicides where they will cause water contamination and believe that such applications are prohibited by federal and state laws requiring compliance with herbicide label instructions.

For these and other reasons, we ask that you provide the following information before allowing any herbicide applications to proceed:

1. Copies of complete label instructions for each herbicide you intend to apply on Lincoln County roadsides;
2. Copies of all guidelines for ensuring that label instructions are adhered to by pesticide applicators

employed by the county;

3. A description of what steps the county is taking to ensure that children are not exposed to herbicides at bus stops and through other activities along rural roadsides, such as berry picking, hiking, biking, etc.;

4. A complete description of each road to be sprayed in the county, application methods and volume to be applied, identification of the products to be applied, and the schedule for such applications;

5. Identification of all carrier materials used for each roadside application;

6. An explanation of whether the county road department has -- as the U.S. Forest Service has done in the same localities -- developed a long-term plan for reducing and eliminating dependence on herbicides for roadside management (we are particularly curious why the county is still using herbicides when the Siuslaw National Forest has successfully managed its roadsides without herbicides for the last ten years);

7. An explanation of the criteria that are used to determine why some roads are maintained through a combination of herbicides and mowing, and other county roads are maintained by mowing only, with no herbicide applications;

8. An explanation of the county's legal authority to apply herbicides where they will unavoidably invade private property (i.e., chemical trespass).

Please understand that we are not seeking confrontation and have no wish to cause public embarrassment. We are more than willing to meet with you to discuss these issues and to seek amicable resolution. However, we hope you will also appreciate the fact that we genuinely fear the effects of herbicides on our children, our environment, our aquatic resources, and ourselves. We are particularly concerned about the cumulative amounts of herbicides that have been applied in our watersheds for decades by timber companies, government agencies, and others, without any regard for the cumulative doses administered to residents and their environment. We are very determined that that situation be changed immediately.

Sincerely,

John H. Colman-Pinning
For Lincoln County Watershed Watch Alliance