

Lobbyists work for pesticide restrictions

Senate bills reflect ecological concern

By CATHERINE SIEGNER
Of the Emerald

The 1979 session of the Oregon Legislature is into its second month, and environmental groups are scrambling to keep up with bills as they move through the law-making maze.

The Hoedads, a Eugene-based tree planting cooperative, is hoping to see passage of a bill tightening existing restrictions on pesticide and herbicide use in Oregon.

The bill, not yet numbered, would prohibit spraying within 200 feet of Class 1 streams on land zoned agricultural and on land within 500 feet of occupied residences, unless the occupant consents. Current regulations do not apply to these additional areas.

The State Department of Agriculture could refuse to register pesticides for use if methods that

could accomplish the same purpose would pose less harm to animals or humans, and would be equally or more cost-effective.

"It's kind of vague," admits Gail Slentz, Hoedad president and legislative coordinator. "But it's a start."

Lobbyists funded through the Northwest Forest Workers Association, which includes all such cooperatives look after the Hoedads' interests with mixed results.

Last session, the treeplanters fought the widespread use of Thiram, a pesticide which coats tree seedlings so animals will not eat them. They were not completely successful.

"Thiram will come up again this session," Slentz says. "It still can be used, although now there are some restrictions. I've heard there's not much hope for new re-

strictions on pesticides this year, but we'll know more when it's assigned to a committee and has a hearing."

"It will be interesting to see what happens," she says. "But even if it doesn't pass, a public forum will be worthwhile."

The Oregon Environmental Council, a coalition of conservation groups across the state, has hired a full-time lobbyist to coordinate testimony and direct efforts to specific bills.

"We're looking at a lot of different areas — land-use, forestry, herbicides and water quality," says Merrie Buel of the council. "They're all of equal importance."

Senate Bill 135 would extend automobile inspection by the state Department of Environmental Quality to the Eugene-Springfield area. It is currently in the Senate Environment and Energy Committee, where one hearing has taken place.

The OEC is sponsoring a bill with the Sierra Club to add two more rivers to the Scenic Rivers system, but it has not yet been introduced. A scenic rivers designation prohibits dams, mining, billboards, logging and other projects.

Sen. Ted Hallock, D-Portland, recently introduced SB 34, also favored by the OEC, which would limit the storage of high-level radioactive spent fuel in Oregon to one month.

Portland General Electric Co., major owner of the Trojan nuclear plant, is vigorously opposing this bill because it says passage would end the plant's operation.



Graphic by Tom Ettel

The Sierra Club, the OEC and the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group are jointly supporting legislation to alter composition of the state Board of Forestry.

SB 444, not yet introduced, would call for seven members ap-

pointed at large by the governor. Current law requires the governor to appoint 13 members to the board, six of whom must be representatives of the timber industry.

Sen. Lenn Hannon, D-Ashland, (Continued on Page 12A)

Plan fails to provide transit expansion aim

By LORRAINE NELSON
Of the Emerald

Lane Transit's Transportation Development Program is unacceptable to the Transportation Planning Committee because it contains no suggestions to increase ridership.

Ollie Snowden of the TPC told the LTD board Tuesday night that the transportation program does not provide a clear linkage to the long-range ridership goals cited in the T-2000 plan.

The plan was adopted in 1978 as the long-range transportation program for the Eugene-Springfield area.

Snowden said the plan fails to consider increasing transit service on current routes, increasing coverage and expanding to newly-developed areas.

LTD's current long-range and short-range goals rely upon external factors, such as the availability of gas and parking, to spur ridership growth.

The TDP, a short-range planning document that will guide public transportation development during the next three years, states that in order to lessen reliance upon external factors, significant improvement in service would have to be made.

However, Dick Jones, chair of the Eugene Area Chamber of

Commerce's mass transit subcommittee, told the board that LTD service was at an adequate level and should not be expanded until ridership had increased "significantly."

Jones also said the board should find a new form of funding, should develop an emergency plan in the event of a sudden shift increase in LTD ridership, and should increase fares consistent with cost increases.

The TDP recommends fare increases of 10 cents in 1980 to 45 cents and five cents in 1981 to 50 cents.

Other recommendations and objectives cited in the TDP include:

- Increasing the marketing budget by 40 percent in July and placing emphasis on community education and public relations, market research and ridership incentives programs.

- Having fare revenue make up 25 percent of total operating costs by the end of June 1982.

- Attempting to reach a vehicle productivity of 26.5 rides per vehicle hour. (LTD is now operating at 22 riders per vehicle hour.)

The LTD board will hear further testimony on the TDP at a noon public hearing on Feb. 26.

The board will consider the program for final approval at its March 20 meeting.

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