

news Briefs

SPRAY DAYS RETURNING

Roseburg Forest Products leads the pack in herbicide spraying in the patchwork of private forestlands southwest of Eugene, according to an independent compilation of data provided by the Oregon Department of Forestry.

The compilation was done by the Forestland Dwellers No-Spray Group (FDNSG), a small local organization dedicated to reducing or even eliminating the use of toxic chemicals in areas where air drift or groundwater migration has a potential impact on people, domestic plants and animals. March is when spraying of logged forestlands usually begins in earnest, and the spraying is done by helicopters, trucks along roads, or by hand, using backpack sprayers.

"The timber companies claim their practice of 'chemical pruning' is a matter of dire economic necessity," says Lynn Bowers of FDNSG. "The truth is aerial spraying costs \$60 an acre and it costs \$90 to \$100 an acre to do it by hand." She figures the local timber economy would get a boost by employing young people to do manual

But a spokesman for Roseburg Forest products says aerial spraying of herbicides can cost as little as \$30 an acre. "Hand remediation costs can run much, much higher," says Dan Newton, manager of land and timber for Roseburg, "and in many cases it's less

effective." Newton says blackberries and scotch broom, for example, grow back quickly after manual cutting.

Bowers lives on rural Fox Hollow Road outside Eugene and was featured in an *EW* story last year (see archives 4/1/04) after she and other residents organized to protest aerial spraying of Oust, Transline, Lv6 and other herbicides that could drift or otherwise migrate to local water supplies in the area, including the town of Creswell two miles away from the spraying.

The new data for 2004 shows Roseburg spraying 24,400 acres in the Long Tom Watershed, followed by Weyerhaeuser spraying 10,000 acres, Swanson 4,300 acres, Seneca Jones 3,700 acres, Transition 2,000 acres, Giustina 780 acres and Roseboro 750 acres.

Bowers says no state or federal laws require private forestland owners to notify residents in the area about spraying, but residents can pay an annual fee of \$5 per section to get on an Oregon Department of Forestry spray notification list. But she says the notification doesn't say what will be sprayed, only lists possible products that might be sprayed.

She urges rural landowners near private timberland to join the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (www.pesticide.org), talk to neighbors, get on notification lists, call timber companies to get specific information on spraying, and lobby lawmakers to restrict or even ban aerial spraying of toxic materials.

"Herbicide use is increasing in the forests," says Bowers, despite a long-standing ban on spraying BLM forestlands. She blames clear-cutting ("You don't have to spray if you don't clearcut," she says), disregard for local residents' health by some timber companies, and aggressive marketing of herbicides by manufacturers' salespeople.

Newton says Roseburg follows state forestry guidelines for all its spraying, "and



Lynn Bowers

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



we take every effort to protect the water and adjacent property owners. Our objective is to renew the forest with native conifers using the safest and the most effective treatment possible. And we believe that in many cases that is through the judicious use of herbicides."

As an example of timber company responsiveness, Bowers praises Roseboro Lumber of Springfield for only using herbicides as a "last resort" and providing larger buffers when requested between spray areas and private properties. "Roseboro has agreed to 500-foot buffers," she says, "and if you're going to spray at all, that's probably pretty reasonable." — *TJT*

RALLY CALLS FOR ENDING ED CUTS

A mass rally in support of education is brewing for noon Monday, Feb. 21 on the

steps of the State Capitol in Salem. The demonstration is being organized by Stand for Children (SfC) and is cosponsored by a broad coalition of education, business and activist groups.

Buses are being organized from around the state, including a bus from Eugene. Contact Stand for Children at (503) 235-2305 or e-mail rally@stand.org

According to the Legislative Revenue Office, Oregon today spends \$611 less per pupil than in 1992, when adjusted for inflation. Gov. Kulongoski's 2005 education report indicates that his \$5 billion budget for K-12 will result, for many districts, in bigger class sizes, a shorter school year, less help for the students who need it most, and stagnation in achievement gains.

"The message from all of the sponsoring organizations will be the same; we simply can't stand by and watch while Oregon's schools face further erosion from inadequate funding," says rally organizer Jonah Edelman of SfC. "The rally will call on legislators to

SLANT

- So what's going on with power politics in the neighborhood associations? Former Mayor Torrey's involvement in a takeover of the Cal Young Neighborhood Association (see News Briefs, Feb. 3) has us speculating that the pro-sprawl conservatives in town might be looking to groom someone for the City Council in 2006. No one on the council right now is an obvious candidate to run against Piercy in 2008 and that must make some folks nervous. Being a councilor or former legislator is not a prerequisite for the mayoral race, but it helps give candidates exposure, credibility and a voting record to wave in front of potential campaign donors.
- Would that every American could hear the panel that spoke Saturday at the Day of Remembrance symposium at the UO Law School. As one speaker put it, "we didn't really understand what was happening to us," when 120,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast

were forced to leave their homes and go into concentration camps in 1942. Seventy thousand were American citizens. We read stories every day about Americans of Middle Eastern descent being arrested and shipped off to today's version of concentration camps, again in violation of their civil rights. When will we ever learn?

- Can we have too much of a good thing? We're not there yet. Expanding Eugene's Toxics Right to Know law to include more polluting businesses is a good idea, despite the unfortunate costs proposed for small businesses to help pay for the program. Let's not forget that the biggest reason for those high costs is industry lobbying the Legislature to put a \$2,000 cap per business on reporting fees. Why the cap? We figure it's not because big industry can't afford to pay their share, but rather its purpose is to sabotage the program by making it unpopular with small businesses. Our

local Chamber of Commerce exacerbated the problem by backing the interests of big industry over small businesses. This is a battle that will continue locally, statewide and even globally, but in the end, full disclosure serves the public interest. We have a right to know what toxic materials are around us, and how much are being emitted. It's also good for businesses to accurately track their toxic materials, and hopefully look for safer (and often cheaper) alternatives.

- Let's hear it for blank spaces on the map of Oregon. That's what Bill Sullivan championed last Friday at the City Club meeting. It was a pleasure to hear this expert on outside Oregon talk about the importance of keeping blank spaces on the map of our 146-year-old state. He should know, having hiked through and written about many of the most beautiful blank spaces now gracing the state.

- Our Slant last week on the closing

down of *AVA Oregon* generated a slew of unflattering words from Hart Williams, former chief of the Lane County Democrats, a former state House candidate and a recent contributor to *AVA Oregon*. Williams writes about *EW* on his blog and calls the paper "basically glorified parakeet cage liner," and goes on to say that "generally, the parakeets contribute the best material to the paper." He describes *EW* as a "pseudo-'alternative' paper," noting that *EW* gave scant attention to his political opponent Paul Holvey's out-of-district campaign contributions in the last legislative primary (see News Brief 5/6/04). "They started raking muck where there was no muck, and NOT raking muck where there was," he writes. He calls *AVA*'s Bruce Anderson "the only honest editor in Eugene," and "the only editor that I know of on the West Coast with any balls." Read all about it at www.hartwilliams.com where there's a link to his blog.