

ACTIVIST ALERT

- The Civil Liberties Defense Center is recruiting bilingual people to become **Know Your Rights trainers for the immigrant community**. CLDC says, “Now more than ever our immigrant neighbors are facing danger when they interact with ICE or law enforcement.” CLDC is seeking to increase its trainer capacity “in order to teach more people what their rights are and how to assert them.” Trainings are 6 to 9 pm Thursdays for six weeks starting Nov. 30, with a break for the holidays. Email info@cldc.org for more information, or to receive an application. If you are not bilingual, CLDC says you can still become a trainer for other Know Your Rights trainings given to activists, youth, the unhoused and more.

- Beyond Toxics is providing an 18-passenger van to bring farmworker advocates to the OSHA public hearing at the Medford library Dec. 5th. The van leaves 2 pm that day from the main entrance of Hayward Field on the UO Campus. You can help **provide testimony and support for migrant farmworkers**, Beyond Toxics says. Please contact Beyond Toxics or visit BeyondToxics.org for more information.



- There is a **fracked gas pipeline proposed** to run through 230 miles of public and private land in southern Oregon. The gas would be liquefied at a plant in Coos Bay, then be exported to buyers overseas. The event hosted by 350 Eugene features: Ada Ball, a local tribal member who speaks to the devastation and disrespect of fossil fuel projects to indigenous people; Deb Evans, landowner on the pipeline route threatened with eminent domain; and Charlie Miller, an oceanographer familiar with the extreme hazards of methane production in a tsunami and earthquake subduction zone. The Fracked Gas Resistance Community Forum is 6:30 pm Thursday, Nov. 16, at First United Methodist Church [1376 Olive] in Eugene. “Attendees will have a chance to take action against the pipeline.” Go to world.350.org/eugene for more info.

LANE COUNTY AREA SPRAY INFORMATION

- Weyerhaeuser Company, 541-744-4600, plans to spread urea fertilizer pellets on 8,866.9 acres near Dorena and Culp Creek. See ODF notification 2017-771-13353, call stewardship forester Tim Meehan at 541-726-3588 with questions.

- Roseburg Resources Co., 541-679-3311, plans to spread urea fertilizer pellets on 340.0 acres near Alma. See ODF notification 2017-781-13313, call stewardship forester Dan Menk at 541-935-2283 with questions.

- Weyerhaeuser, 541-746-2511, also plans to hire Strata Forestry, 541-726-0845, to spray 30.4 acres north and northeast of Fall Creek Reservoir with imazapyr, triclopyr with amine and/or MSO Concentrate. See ODF notification 2017-771-13335, call Brian Dally at 541-726-3588 with questions.

Compiled by Gary Hale, *Forestland Dwellers*: 541-342-8332, ForestLandDwellers.org

PAINT THE TOWN GREEN

Seneca accused of greenwashing after joining GreenLane board



SENECA CLEARCUT PHOTOGRAPHED BY CASCADIA WILDLANDS WHILE CHECKING A BLM TIMBER SALE

PHOTO: CASCADIA WILDLANDS

The leadership of a local sustainable business network changed this month in a dramatic meeting that some now-former members are calling a coup. GreenLane Sustainable Business Network is an organization meant to connect businesses that are trying to become more sustainable and give them resources and information that may help them on that path.

The controversy in this month’s meeting, which took place Wednesday, Nov. 8, was the election of Seneca Sawmill to the board. This election gives Seneca the ability to set policy alongside the other nine board members, a leadership position that caused multiple organizations to leave the network, citing Seneca’s poor record of sustainability.

“It’s perfect greenwashing,” says Shawn Donnille, co-owner of Mountain Rose Herbs, an organic herb, spice and essential oil vendor. “We made a very clear stance upon hearing that they were going to join the board that we would step down.”

The new Seneca board member, senior vice president of public relations Casey Roscoe, says, “Our company is built on a sustainable business model.” She says they have “the cleanest running biomass plant in America,” efficient saws that prevent waste, and a large tree farm. “We manage it sustainably,” she says. “We have 92 percent more stock on it than we did 20 years ago.”

Donnille, on the other hand, says Seneca is a poor steward of the environment. He points out their policy of aerial spraying, which puts his own organic industry in jeopardy. “They want to be a member of GreenLane to use that as a future PR move.” Donnille decided to pull Mountain Rose Herbs from the membership to avoid that association, adding, “it’s an absolute coup.”

Ephraim Payne of Beyond Toxics — a nonprofit that fights against pollution from pesticides — was elected to the board in the same election as Casey Roscoe with Seneca, but he resigned in protest at that very same meeting.

He says he’s a fan of GreenLane’s mission. “People are on different stages, and it’s really helpful to come together to learn from each other, to learn together, to draw support.” He suggests that Seneca’s membership in GreenLane is acceptable because it may help them on the path to sustainability, but he resigned once they took up a leadership position on the 10-person board.

“They embrace the most unsustainable forest practices instead of looking for sustainable solutions. They’re notorious as an aerial sprayer,” Payne says.

“The truly sustainable businesses and organizations in Eugene have worked hard for years to build social capital around sustainability. Seneca is coming in to harvest that capital, to extract that capital, just like they extract forest resources — without consideration for the effects on the community and the environment as a whole,” he says.

“They are not doing sustainable actions. They don’t have the bare minimum forest sustainability certification. They’re

not making an effort. What they’re doing now, it’s pretty clear to us and other groups, is trying to rebrand what they do as sustainable without changing their practices.”

In response, Roscoe says Seneca is pursuing a West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau certification. But Donnille says, “That is actually a pro-trade group that just does self-policing, it’s not a third-party certification agency.” He suggests that Seneca get certification from the Forest Stewardship Council if the company is serious about sustainability.

Cascadia Wildlands, a nonprofit defending wild ecosystems, also pulled its support. Executive Director Josh Laughlin says, “Seneca serving on the board of GreenLane is like Scott Pruitt running the Environmental Protection Agency.”

Fellow environmental nonprofit Oregon Wild is also pulling its membership from GreenLane in protest. According to Jason Gonzales of Oregon Wild, “While other companies try to change their practices, Seneca hasn’t even sought out even the most basic certification for sustainability, let alone ones that are actually meaningful.” He says he’d be happy to return “if Seneca Sawmills was to take serious steps toward better practices in our forests by stopping chemical spraying [and] limiting clearcutting.”

“I think it’s perfectly appropriate for a company like Seneca to have a membership at an organization like Green Lane. The line we draw is that they took a leadership position,” Gonzales says.

Payne takes issue with how GreenLane’s board handled the controversy in the lead-up to the election. Though the candidates were introduced at last month’s meeting, he says, there was no open debate surrounding the candidates.

A week before the meeting, GreenLane’s board sent out an email stating that Mountain Rose Herbs “disagrees with having a representative from the Seneca Family of Companies on the GreenLane board,” but did not specify why. There was no discussion of the issue before the vote took place at the Nov. 8 meeting.

“People were saying ‘We don’t know what’s going on,’ and they didn’t address it,” Payne says. “I don’t think that the institution handled this issue as effectively as possible.” He says GreenLane was caught off guard, and that members didn’t have enough information to make an educated vote.

Robin Forster of FeelSoAlive Marketing Group is a current GreenLane board member. She says she’d prefer that the group focus on their philanthropic efforts rather than this controversy. She wrote in an email to *Eugene Weekly*, “We are sorry to see those folks who choose to leave, leave. Their voices will be missed. Their points of view will be missed.”

Seneca’s Roscoe says, “Being a sustainable business, it makes sense to be part of the sustainable business network.” She says of the controversy, “It was an emotional thing for me; it wasn’t about our practices.”

“They made a decision and stood behind that decision,” Roscoe says. ■