



Aerial Spray & FERNS

2019 Legislation Factsheet

What is Aerial Spray?

Aerial Spray is what we call it when helicopters apply herbicides to a fresh clearcut, to ensure that only the "crop tree" grows, and to kill off native plants like sword fern, maple, & huckleberry. Oregon's aerial spray regulations are less stringent than neighboring states, despite years of advocacy from Oregonians who live near industrial forestlands calling for change. People who live next to clearcuts have no way of protecting themselves from drifting toxins, even from chemicals classified as probable carcinogens. Oregon's Federal public lands stopped aerial spraying decades ago, but Oregon has continued this practice on State public lands.

What is FERNS?

The **F**orest-activity **E**lectronic **R**eporting and **N**otification **S**ystem is an online tool provided by the Oregon Department of Forestry. FERNS is used by logging companies to notify department, as well as adjacent landowners of upcoming logging, roadbuilding and aerial spray activities. Currently, a neighboring landowner is given a 6 month window in which aerial spray *may* occur, and it is very hard to find out exactly what was sprayed after the fact. Nearby residents and visitors need to know when spraying will actually happen, and what was actually sprayed.

Our Top Priorities in 2019

SB926 - End Aerial Herbicide Spraying on State Lands.

State forests provide drinking water to downstream communities as well as trails, rivers and forests for all Oregonians. Our public forests should provide safe drinking water, not put rural communities, hikers and anglers at risk of exposure to herbicides.

SB931 – Update FERNS System - neighbors have a right to know.

The Oregon Department of Forestry online notification system needs improvement so rural residents can protect themselves from aerial sprays and nearby clearcuts. These necessary updates will require companies to give information that is more complete in a timelier manner.



Additional forest related bills Oregon Wild Supports in the 2019 Legislature

- HB 2656 – The Forest Carbon Incentives Act - Ends tax breaks for clearcutting, invests in climate smart forestry.
- HB 2659 – The Safe Waters Act would restrict the most damaging logging practices in public drinking watersheds.
- HB 3044 – Requires more stringent recording and reporting of flight information when companies apply pesticides from the air.
- HB3042 – Authorizes local cities and counties to prohibit or regulate application of chemicals by aircraft.

GET INVOLVED

For more information on how you can be involved in advocating for this legislation to protect Oregon's rural communities from aerial spray contact:



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