

From: Stephen Miller
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Westmanland, 04783
2/23/21

Testimony submitted in favor of LD 125.

I live in the Town of Westmanland . It has been our home for the past 50 years. Much has changed over that time span and some of what has changed has been painful to witness,

Presently, ninety percent of this township is owned by Irving corporation. Their "practice" is to clearcut large tracts of our diverse natural forest and convert it to monoculture softwood plantations. Accomplishing this requires destroying the robust natural regeneration that grows in the wake of a total over-story removal. To that end just about every year helicopters have been brought in to spray yet another tract of newly cut-over land with a toxic chemical mix which includes the herbicide/biocide , Glyphosate.

The emerging science with regard to the effects of Glyphosate is evermore worrisome. I'm sure the committee is aware of the documented hazards to human health as well as the perverse effects it has on soils and above ground biota. This begs the question as to why, in light of the many risks, such practice is still being allowed ?

A few additional points and observations:

- > It is notable that Germany (home to the world headquarters of Bayer) plans a total ban on glyphosate by 2024 joining a growing number of countries that have done so . Among the reasons given for the German ban is the damage Glyphosate inflicts on insect populations.
- > This effect on insects is apparently related to glyphosate disrupting natural gut microbiota .(which is documented in vertebrates as well). Since beekeeping has played a role in our personal economy for decades this is a particular concern to me . The acreage being sprayed is well within the forage range of my bees.
And, if native insect populations are also impaired , there is concern about the health of all the higher trophic levels that depend on insects as a food source.
- > What about watersheds? ...The many springs and rills that flow in our now cut -over hillsides take a direct spray hit. In Westmanland these flow into the Madawaska Stream or Madawaska Lake. Both are valued trout fisheries. Don't we have a mandate to preserve and protect that resource ?

A personal incident:

On 9/1/19 I was bicycling along Westmanland Road when I encountered a roadblock. I was informed that a clearcut adjacent to the road was about to be sprayed. And indeed it was! I was barely able to take my leave before the helicopter arrived.... This is a paved, residential road. There was no obvious signage or other forewarning and there are two residences within few hundred feet of the block being sprayed .
On 9/3/19 I filed a formal complaint with the BPC (inspection # 190903KRB01). Were any violations found? ... I was never informed.
Perhaps this sort of incident is OK with the BPC ?? It is absolutely NOT OK with me !

There are a multitude of reasons why the spraying of herbicides over Maine forestlands should be prohibited. If ,once again, this does not happen the Town of Westmanland is empowered to enact an ordinance to prohibit aerial herbicide spraying within the town .
To do so would be a last resort. If there is no other option, it will be considered.

Thank You

Stephen Miller