

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/5/2020 1:48:13 PM

First name: BARBARA

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Supervisor Jewett:

I recently moved here full time because of the majestic mountains, the varying topography, the clean clear mountain streams and waterfalls, and the multiplicity of flora and fauna found in this most splendid area of the country and in my beloved forests.

I was shocked, appalled and dismayed to learn about the Foothills Landscape Project Plan (specifically the Vegetation Plan) and the proposed herbicide application on approximately 74,500 acres of my beloved forest lands. I understand the need for the limited application of herbicides for kudzu reduction and the treatment of infested hemlock and ash trees however, I was stunned to read that the Foothills Landscape Vegetation Plan references the risk assessment methodology developed for the Forest Service by Syracuse Environmental Research Associates in 2011 and in my opinion, this is absolutely not "the best science available" in 2020. As a retired medical professional, I would find it highly questionable and exceedingly unprofessional to rely heavily on information from a study obtained in 2011 for a medical treatment or for a drug to be used on an individual much less on a widespread population in 2020: then possibly rely on that same information for years to come. The Foothills Project affects so much more than us mere mortals but affects our total ecosystem. From the bears and birds and the berries they eat, to insects, fungus and microbes that inhabit the forest floor, to wildlife in streams and rivers, to the eventual runoff and the watershed that ultimately provides potable water to our area of the state and is used recreationally for both residents and visitors alike; this all will be affected by the proposed widespread herbicide use and in untold ways for years to come. All one has to do is the look historically at "ecocide" which occurred in Vietnam with the "Rainbow Herbicides" of agent blue, pink, purple and orange, to the widely used herbicides glyphosate and atrazine on amphibians, fish, mammals, birds and terrestrial plant species. Correspondingly, "inert ingredients" such as ethoxylated nonyl phenols used in commercial atrazine formulations can act as "co-carcinogens," increasing the potency of chemicals that cause cancer and can also cause twice as many mutations in wetland wildlife than when atrazine is applied by itself. Additionally, these chemical herbicides have been found in areas miles away due to runoff contaminant in rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands. Furthermore once airborne, it is known that these chemicals can travel hundreds of miles from application site and can persist for decades.

As in medicine, the field of "ecoscience" is constantly evolving with new information coming forth on a continual basis. We owe it to our children and future generations to use the most judicious and limited application of any herbicide in our beloved forest. After all, once something is destroyed or damage done, we may not be able to right the wrong. I would urge the Forrest Service to be extremely prudent with any application of herbicides and let the taxpayers be aware what, when and where it is to be applied before the application.

Sincerely,

Barbara Beckham