

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/6/2023 1:48:25 PM

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Comments: Dear Foresters,

I am adamantly opposed to the use of any pesticides in the National Forest Project #60192, the Telephone Gap. Obviously, invasive plants that have made their way into the forest should be dealt with to prevent additional spread and damage to the native species. But the solution must be through the use of alternative methods.

Pesticides are chemicals that will kill not only the unwanted plants (if you are lucky), but also spread into the soil. Precipitation carries the applied poisons away from the target area, both laterally and below ground, allowing them to make their way into the waterways and infiltrate aquifers. Pesticides include the effective active ingredient-an herbicide, insecticide, fungicide-and inert ingredients, some of which are not listed in the contents, as they make-up the trademarked product that the chemical company has created to help the pesticide be more effective. Since the companies will not allow these inert ingredients to be revealed, they have never been tested for safety. In addition, much of the research on the safety of the active ingredients is provided by the companies themselves. Often, this research is never peer-reviewed.

Glyphosate-in the most popular product known as Roundup-has patents as a chelator (1964), an herbicide (1974), and an antibiotic (2010). It kills living things, including the microbiome in the soil, in plants, and probably people (but what people would sign up for that trial?) Glyphosate's champion Monsanto/Bayer has now lost several cases when sued by people who have non-Hodgkins lymphoma due to their use of glyphosate.

Does it make sense to use glyphosate or any other pesticide in the forest? The trees depend on their mycorrhizal fungi symbiotic partners to help them ward off insects and disease, to enable them to attain the minerals that they need from the soil (such as Mg, Ca, Bo, Fe,etc), and to improve the soil for water penetration to help the trees survive drought conditions. During the last few summers, there have been drought conditions in parts of Vermont. Will destroying the fungi and bacteria with pesticides help the native trees to thrive in the forest? Will contaminated soil help the trees? Will contaminated water help the forest?

In Vermont thousands of pounds of pesticides are being used every year; during 2018 (the most recent year that data is available to the public), 1,076,286 pounds of pesticides were sprayed on farm fields, railroad tracks, roadways, lawns, and forests. That is an increase of 38.5% since 2010. Please do not add to this destruction of our ecosystem.