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Oregon Department of Environmental Quality  
Water Quality Division  
ATTN: Andrea Matzke  
811 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97204

February 10, 2011

RE: Written comments relative to proposed Human Health Toxic Pollutant rule changes.

Ms. Matzke:

I manage a 6000 acre agricultural operation (short-rotation woody crops) in the Lower Columbia Region of Northwest Oregon. The existing Area Plans and Rules have successfully improved water quality as it relates to non-point agricultural sources. If there is need for rule change; administration, regulation, and enforcement should continue to remain under ODA for agricultural activities. Complying with water quality standards is not an issue, enforcement authority being relegated to EQC and DEQ (as well as ODA) is a serious issue.

ORS 568.912(1) provides ODA with sole authority to regulate farming practices and adopt rules that "shall constitute the only enforceable aspects of a water quality management plan." To try and expand that authority to other agencies is in conflict with Oregon law. And in practicality, would add one more regulatory layer for Oregon agriculture producers to attempt to comply with and understand.

It is in the best interest of Oregonians to not further confuse and confound agriculture and forestry interests with additional or overlapping layers of bureaucracy. Existing regulatory agencies exist in ODA and ODF. If there are changes needed to rules or best management practices, please work within these existing regulatory an enforcement agencies.

Oregon has made large strides in improving (and regulating) water quality in the last forty years. Additional rule making should come about based upon the best available sciences of both agriculture and silviculture. ODA and ODF are best positioned to implement this, not DEQ or EQC.

The Lower Columbia Tree Farm is continually looking at methods to reduce use of herbicides and maintain soil health and productivity. We have been successful in reducing our annual chemical input (on a per acre basis) while maintaining productivity. Additional regulation and enforcement by DEQ and/or EQC as in proposed language (proposed OAR 340-041-0061(11) would add to regulatory uncertainty, therefore increasing economic risks for agricultural and forestry investments.

Thank you,

Rick Stonex  
Westside Tree Farm Manager