

Margaree Environmental Association
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September 4, 2020 (by Email)

Honourable Gordon Wilson
Minister of Environment
Nova Scotia Environment
PO Box 442.
Halifax, NS
B3J 2P8

Dear Minister Wilson,

The Margaree Environmental Association (MEA) is strongly opposed to the NS Dept. of Environment's issuing of permits to spray glyphosate herbicide on 1498 hectares of forest land on mainland Nova Scotia. Furthermore, MEA supports the efforts of individuals and groups protesting the herbicide spray program, as spraying has been shown to be dangerous to human health, destructive to the environment, expensive, and totally unnecessary.

Studies throughout the world have demonstrated that glyphosate is dangerous to human health. The World Health Organization, after extensive review of independent scientific studies, has concluded that glyphosate is a possible human carcinogen linked to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Myriad legal claims against Bayer, the multi-national that manufactures glyphosate, by individuals suffering from the effects of glyphosate in the US and Canada has caused the company to pay more than \$10 billion to resolve the claims. Yet, Health Canada and the province of Nova Scotia choose to believe the studies provided by the manufacturer, and approve the wholesale use of this potential carcinogen.

The wholesale killing of broadleaf trees and shrubs by chemical spraying in order to "release" planted conifers is destructive to the environment, and the interdependent ecosystems that comprise the Acadian forest. In addition, the chemical, in its process of breaking down over time, has been shown to kill fish, and impact all species along the food chain. Studies have shown that aerial drift of chemicals off of spray sites is significant, killing non-target broadleaf trees and shrubs on neighbouring properties.

The aerial spraying of herbicides is costly, and benefits mainly the multi-national German company Bayer, the owner of Monsanto and manufacturer of glyphosate, and to a lesser degree, the companies contracted to do the spraying. The alternative method of conifer release of manual weeding has been shown to be effective, where necessary, and provides needed employment within the forest sector, without the detrimental impact of herbicide chemicals.

Such manual weeding has been found to be more accurate and controlled, with better results, and a more positive contribution to the economy.

The aerial spraying of glyphosate on our forests is totally unnecessary. Beginning in the 1990's, the experience of Stora Forest Industries, then Newpage, and now Port Hawkesbury Paper, all of which have banned the use of herbicides, has been positive, and demonstrates that herbicide spraying is not needed. In addition, the rejection of herbicide treatments has enabled Stora, Newpage, and PHP to acquire Forest Stewardship Council certification of best practices, which has given them access to more lucrative markets worldwide. More and more businesses are demanding such certification, as a demonstration of commitment to a healthy environment.

The people of Nova Scotia have shown repeatedly over the past 40 years that we do not want herbicides sprayed on our forests, and it is time that our provincial government listens to the people, complies with the independent studies, and bans the use of chemical herbicides in forestry. Such a ban is overdue. In light of all of the above, the Margaree Environmental Association demands that you withdraw your approval of herbicide spray permits on 1,498 hectares of woodland, and initiate the policy of banning herbicide use on forests in the future.

I would be happy to discuss these issues with you in the future at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Brian Peters

Brian Peters, Co-Chair MEA