



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 22-1392, Version: 2

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Steve Madrone

Agenda Section: Initiated by Board Member

SUBJECT:

Resolution Opposing Application of Herbicides on County Lands at Any Time or Without County Consent and on Private Lands Without Landowner Consent (Supervisor Steve Madrone and Supervisor Mike Wilson)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the resolution opposing the application of herbicides on county lands at any time or without county consent and on private lands without landowner consent.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Not applicable

DISCUSSION:

On Sept. 29, 2022 the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors learned of a proposed plan by the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) to apply herbicides on hundreds of public and private parcels throughout the county. This announcement was immediately met with widespread community opposition. Humboldt County residents have contacted PG&E and the county expressing their opposition to the application of herbicide on their lands or on any public lands within the county.

This instance has sparked the need for the county to clarify its position on herbicides. The county has avoided and minimized the use of herbicides on county lands since 1987. In 1997, Humboldt County approved a policy urging the California Department of Transportation to discontinue roadside spraying within the county. This was the result of widespread community opposition to herbicide application in that specific context. In addition, local jurisdictions have acted to limit and prevent the application of herbicides on lands they own and/or manage.

Herbicide application is controversial because of the significant amount of scientific research indicating that herbicide application threatens human and environmental health. The International Agency for Research on Cancer, the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization, determined in 2015 based on a review of all of the scientific evidence available that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic to humans." And peer-reviewed research has documented that glyphosate can persist, accumulate and spread through soils, impacting soil and crop health. Because of this quality, herbicides threaten not only the soil they are directly applied to but

also nearby soil and watercourses, and organic farms.

This resolution would clarify that Humboldt County is opposed to the application of herbicides on county land at any time or without county consent and on private lands without landowner consent. This clarification is necessary given the currently proposed plan by PG&E but also due to the potential for future proposed projects involving the large-scale application of herbicide.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

N/A

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

PG&E and CalTrans

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. City of Arcata Pesticide Reduction Plan
- B. Resolution

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A