

# Redwood Nation Earth First!

“Hack’n’squirt,” is the preferred method used by Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC) to kill millions of non-marketable hardwood trees, mostly tan oaks, on its 220,000 acre ownership. Workers inject the chemical Imazapyr into a gash slashed into tree trunks. The herbicide kills the trees slowly from the bottom up, increasing fuel loads and fire danger in California’s fifth year of drought.

According to The Nature Conservancy’s “Weed Control Methods Handbook”, Imazapyr is a “non-selective herbicide used for the control of a broad range of weeds... including... grasses and broadleaved herbs, woody species, and riparian and emergent aquatic species. In soils, Imazapyr is broken down by microbes, with a half-life of one to five months. It doesn’t bind to sediments, so leaching through soil into groundwater is likely.”

“Because Imazapyr can affect a wide range of plants and remain available, it may...adversely affect the surrounding desirable vegetation with little to no control of the target species. Inert ingredients can cause severe, irreversible eye damage.”

Depending on many variables, Imazapyr can move quite readily through soil and water. Toxic compounds can be released from treated wood if exposed to heat, threatening fire fighters and residents with contaminated smoke when inhaled during a fire.

Answering hack'n'squirt with 'lock'n'block' on June 21st was a hoot! Two women nonviolently attached themselves to the logging gate, while others hung banners from the branches of a convenient conifer still standing along the road and held signs reading: “Let our Forests Heal!” and “Stop Hack & Squirt!”.

Except for honks of approval from passing cars, it was eerily quiet. Reporters videoed and interviewed the activists, but no workers appeared. Finally, a lone mechanic drove up to



the gate. When asked where everyone was, he said he’d received a call from the Company that morning telling him not to come to work because “something was going on.” Evidently, we’d shut down logging for the day without any confrontation at all! How’s that for nonviolent?

The good news is that Measure V won by a whopping two thirds majority of the June 7<sup>th</sup> vote declaring the intentional leaving of dead standing trees a Public Nuisance. The bad news is — MRC is still hacking & squirting as usual, flipping the bird to the voters and flouting enforcement by the cash-strapped county.

Measure V focused solely on fire danger because herbicides cannot be regulated by local authorities. This power was usurped by the State in the 1990s, after an Initiative banning aerial spraying passed by Mendocino County voters was overturned by the Legislature. Aerial spraying resumed but public outrage after school children at the Comptche bus stop were hit by poison drifting from Louisiana Pacific's timberlands, finally forced its cessation.

Regardless of legal circuitries, concerns about the safety hazards of Imazapyr, as well as MRC use of Roundup and Garlon remain.



On July 19, we rallied at the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors to press for proactive enforcement of V, starting with disclosure of the companies' plans to use herbicides, *before*, not after, application. Later that day, we protested at MRC's Ukiah log deck, where the sky-high piles of skinny redwood logs undercut MRC's claims to sustainable forestry.

Holding banners and signs, activists, including grandmothers, positioned themselves across

the front gate while others blocked a rear entrance, stopping trucks for several hours. Again, the company tried to dodge publicity by declining to arrest and again, our story got out anyway. A repurposed washing machine labeled "MRC Green-Wash Machine" was deposited at the front gate. Despite no arrests, media covered both actions and called MRC execs for comment.

Meanwhile, the Willits Bypass is nearing completion. We are staying focused on the lawsuit filed by Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians and the Round Valley Indian Tribes against Caltrans, now in Federal Court. This

historic effort seeks to hold Caltrans accountable for the destruction of over thirty villages and sacred sites in the path of bypass construction and to prevent such travesties from happening again. The suit would impose stricter protocols, strengthen tribal monitoring throughout California and wrest final decision making power over artifacts and ancestral sites from Caltrans.

Your unstinting support empowers direct action by helping cover volunteers' expenses, materials, and

nonviolence trainings. With all the trouble we've stirred up lately, your help is all the more needed and greatly appreciated. Please contact me to volunteer or donate money using the enclosed envelope.

Solidarity,

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