

Open Letter to Mr. Sorn Nymark, ANE Forests of Oregon

RE: Timberland Spraying

September 5, 2023

Seal Rock Water District (SRWD) and our area coastal communities recognize that your enterprise, ANE Forests of Oregon, supplies valuable timber for consumers and generates needed revenue for our local and state economies. We also acknowledge your right, granted by Oregon law, to spray your 475 acres of clear-cut timberland in the South Beaver Creek watershed. We understand spraying is common practice in forestry management and even viewed as good stewardship by those in the business.

SRWD is concerned about good stewardship, too. The South Beaver Creek watershed is the water source for our 5500 residential and commercial customers and the emergency water we provide to Newport. Our system, comprised of the raw water intake on Beaver Creek and our water treatment plant and service network, became operational in 2021. This milestone was the culmination of a seven-year collaborative effort involving stakeholders representing fish and wildlife preservation, environmental protection, regulatory permitting, water rights law, and private property owners. The U.S. Department of Agriculture wholeheartedly endorsed the project as the most viable way to provide our central coast communities with a safe, reliable, long-term water supply.

Like you, we have much at stake in the proposed spraying of your timberland. We are vitally concerned about the known (and unknown) effects of chemical spraying in the Beaver Creek watershed and the underground water supplies of private property owners. We believe you're concerned, too, as evidenced by your agreeing to abide by state regulations governing timberland spraying. But we're all aware that even with presumed safeguards in place – strict guidelines for aerial and ground spraying, stringent water testing for contamination, and constant monitoring of vegetation, fish, and wildlife – there is the potential for poisonous chemicals ending up in our water supply and natural habitat. If that were to happen, it would threaten the safety and well-being of our communities and negatively impact your enterprise.

SRWD, our local communities, and ANE would be well served by working together to reduce the risks inherent in your proposed spraying – risks that extend to all of us. To that end, we respectfully urge you and representatives from ANE to be available to hear our input, and for you to offer yours, on how a workable balance might be achieved between protecting your timberland and the safety and well-being of our communities.

Respectfully,

Rob Mills, SRWD Board of Commissioners
Adam Denlinger, SRWD General Manager