

# Large-scale “hack-and-squirt” herbicide use poses increased forest fire, environmental risks!

*Speak out against poisoning our forests and watersheds!*

Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC) and its sister-company Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC) currently are practicing a relatively new method of forestry called ‘hack and squirt’ to poison tree species such as tanoak. This procedure uses a non-selective broad-spectrum herbicide called Imazapyr -- applied by cutting around the base of a tree and spraying into the open wound.

MRC and HRC have applied herbicides to over 100,000 acres of their ownerships since 1999, or roughly one fourth of their total holdings. Since 2012 alone, MRC has killed over 5 million trees on 24,000 acres!

Although tanoaks play an important ecological role in forest succession and recovery, the companies are using hack-and-squirt eradication because it is the cheapest way to get rid of less-marketable tree species that may compete with the more-profitable redwood or Douglas-fir.

But research indicates increased fire intensity is one result of leaving standing dead trees on the landscape! The dead trees thereby pose a risk to firefighters and nearby residents and communities. The use of these toxins also may pose threats to water quality and wildlife.

David Shew, Staff Chief, Planning and Risk Analysis, for the California Department of Forestry (CAL FIRE), recently wrote, “From my education and experience, a forest with dead standing timber can pose additional and different risks versus a healthy forest.”



<http://deadforests.org/galleryphotos/larsen.jpg>



## FORESTS FOREVER

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According to Will Russell, assistant professor of environmental studies at San Jose State University, “Tanoak (as the most common and dominant hardwood) is a highly important component of the redwood forest. Its acorns make up a significant portion of the diet of birds and mammals in the North Coast region. It is thought that the mycorrhizae [fungal network in soil] associated with tanoak play an important ecological function in the redwood forest.”

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reported that the half-life or persistence of Imazapyr can continue up to 17 months.

Timber industry practices have long featured pesticide use, including such notorious compounds as Agent Orange in the 1970s. Public pressure helped stop the use of Agent Orange in America’s national forests; now it’s our turn to raise our voices in questioning the practice of industrial-scale “hack-and-squirt” forestry!

### **HOW YOU CAN HELP:**

- 1. Vote in favor** of the citizens initiative “Shall the People of Mendocino County Declare Intentionally Killed and Left Standing Trees a Public Nuisance?” on the June 2016 primary ballot.
- 2. Get friends and family to sign the petition!** Locations to sign and copies of the petition can be found at: [CitizensForFireSafeForests.com](http://CitizensForFireSafeForests.com)
- 3. Contact Forests Forever (below) to volunteer to collect signatures** or otherwise help the campaign as needed.



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References: [http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw\\_gtr229/psw\\_gtr229\\_262.pdf?](http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr229/psw_gtr229_262.pdf?)  
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