

MCKENZIE RIVER WATER SAMPLING

SAMPLING SHOWS TRACE IMPACTS

In addition to reviewing the scientific literature about insecticides, fertilizers and herbicides, Trees to Tap identifies six locations where water quality sampling had been conducted. Sampling is done to determine chemical levels likely linked to forest management activities.

The Eugene Water and Electric Board's (EWEB) sampling of the McKenzie River is instructive. Some 88 percent of the McKenzie watershed is forested, with both public and private ownership. Industrial ownership makes up about one-third of the forested portion of the watershed. Sampling over the past decade has found detections of forest chemicals, but at extremely low levels.

According to the EWEB Strategic Plan, quoted in the report, the utility considers forested lands to produce higher-quality water than from any other surface water source. Use of herbicides does constitute a risk, but according to one EWEB report, the utility considers the risk comparatively low (Morgenstern et al., 2017).

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) came to a similar conclusion, stating "these results indicate that effects of forestry pesticide use are negligible at these locations in the river system" (Kelly et al., 2012).

"The majority of compounds that present a documented threat to drinking water quality ... are associated with agricultural and urban land-use applications rather than forestry."

- U.S. Geological Survey

