

February 17, 2016

My name is Margaret Lynwood and I have been to numerous pesticide related meetings held by this Committee as well as TWIC and subcommittee meetings.

I welcome the new community members and have hope that this new group may actually address the serious pesticide concerns of the community this year.

I'm very concerned about the wildlife we all know and love in this area; in fact, that is why many of us moved here in the first place - for a more rural, serene life. It wasn't long ago I would see many hawks and kestrels in the area, and hear the owls at night. Now there are many fewer in the area.

The reason I am here this morning is to ask you to please look closely at the deplorable use of rodenticides by the county. Those that apply the chemicals will tell you that such a small amount is used. What is there to worry when only a few ounces are used over a large area?

If rodenticides are so potent that eating even one mouse can kill a bird of prey or a dog, does it matter that the Dept. Of Agriculture uses only a couple of pounds a year if this can take thousands of non-target wildlife by secondary poisoning? We have to look at the potency of these rodenticides. Diphacinone, the poison used by our Dept. of Agriculture, (who also sells them to cities throughout our county) is killing wildlife. The State Department of Fish and Wildlife have documented that they have found animals who are dead due to diphacinone poisoning alone.

Considering that only a small percentage of dead animals actually end up getting autopsied, having laboratory evidence of diphacinone found in dead wildlife should be enough reason to take these poisons off your list for controlling ground squirrels.

Please look at the neighboring counties who use no rodenticides in opens spaces like Marin, San Francisco, and Santa Clara counties.

Why should we treat our wildlife with such low regard? I do not want my tax money going to support unethical treatment of wildlife. Please recommend that the county utilize trapping and other methods that are working for other counties. If they can avoid rodenticides, why are we not also using the most sensible method that helps protect our disappearing wildlife?

Thank you for your concern.

Margaret Lynwood  
Walnut Creek