

October 3, 2019

Anne-Louise Smallen
Northampton, MA

Subject: Please ban the use of glysohate on public lands

Glyphosate poses unacceptable risks to human health, as well as to the health of non-target soil microbiology, insects and pollinators. This broad-spectrum herbicide, the most commonly used in the United States, is not just an herbicide, it is a biocide (life-killing). Glyphosate has been determined by the World Health Organization to be a probable human carcinogen.[1] Converging lines of evidence also associate glyphosate with endocrine disruption,[2] liver disease,[3] birth defects, reproductive problems,[4],[5] and disruption to gut microbiota.[6] It has also been shown to impact populations of earthworms and microbes in soil[7],[8],[9] and to damage the gut microbiota of honey bees.[10]

In August 2018, a California Superior Court ruled that Monsanto knowingly and deliberately suppressed research that found that glyphosate-based weed killers (including Roundup®) increase the risk of non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a cancer of the lymph system. The proceedings and evidence from this lawsuit have been collected and published by the plaintiff's legal team and U.S. Right to Know as The Monsanto Papers.[11] There are currently an estimated 9,300 lawsuits pending against Bayer (which recently acquired Monsanto) alleging that the plaintiffs' exposure to glyphosate caused their or their loved ones' non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Glyphosate is often assumed to be a necessity, both agriculturally and in the control of invasive plants. However, people were growing food and controlling invasive species before the product was introduced in 1975. Because of its widespread overuse, as of 2013 more than 70 million acres of U.S. agricultural land were burdened by glyphosate-resistant weeds, often resulting in the use of even more deadly chemicals[12].

The overuse of glyphosate and other biocides is a major factor in our national and global health and ecological crises, from the loss of biodiversity to rising levels of cancer and autoimmune disorders. They must be phased out wherever possible, and we should aspire to support regenerative organic solutions instead.

Please ban it from our Northampton public lands and from the Community Garden. Thanks

Anne-Louise Smallen

October 3, 2019

Elizabeth Burkhart
Northampton, MA

Subject: Glyphosates

How can you even begin to justify using this life-killing chemical anywhere, never mind downtown Northampton!

Please stop immediately!
Thank you!
Elizabeth Burkhart, LICSW



ELIZABETHBUR
KHART.vcf

October 4, 2019

Hayat Nancy Abuza
Northampton, MA

Subject: glyphosate use on Northampton lands

To the members of the Northampton City Council:

I am glad to know that you are doing a serious review of glyphosate use on city lands.

I feel that sufficient evidence has now accumulated in the scientific research to show that glyphosate is a possible endocrine disrupter and carcinogen.

As a physician, I would urge extreme caution and suggest that Northampton refrain from using glyphosate, as many other jurisdictions have already done.

Thank you.
Hayat Abuza, MD

October 4, 2019

Linda Matson
Northampton, MA

Subject: suggestions for committee

Dear committee members,

Firstly I am presuming that by "pesticide" you are also including herbicides. The conflating of the two terms bothers me, but never mind.

My suggestion regarding pesticide reduction is both simple and complex. Firstly I suggest we just STOP the purchase of non-organic pesticides and herbicides. Do not use them. Period. What to use instead requires analysis of the individual problem and education of the DPW and other staff as well as the public.

As an example, last year I wrote a complaint to the previous principal of the Leeds school suggesting that the students who have "adopted" stretches of the bike path, in addition to picking up trash also pull out invasives, particularly mentioning garlic mustard and sending a picture. The ridiculous letter I received in return said that there would have to be "permission" from the city to do that, and that the children who feel so good about their trash job would feel bad if taught about the invasives. I'm paraphrasing of course.

Oftentimes the solution is just human labor pulling out things. Use interns, use students in community projects. Perhaps burning is appropriate. For mosquitos, spreading knowledge about standing water and encouraging mosquito-eating insects (which would be otherwise KILLED by pesticide use) and birds. String trimming work along highways instead of Roundup. Mowing fields at the proper time to encourage wildflowers. Planting fruit bearing plants which attract insect-eating birds. Putting up bat shelters. Educating the public that the lovely red burning bush in their yard is harming the woods.

More costly, yes. I don't see that we have a choice.

Thanks for listening.

Linda Matson
lmatson@library.umass.edu

October 7, 2019

Tusi Gastonguay
Northampton, MA

Subject: Glyphosate in Northampton

Dear Committee Members,

I've heard that the City of Northampton might spray glyphosate on Japanese knotweed near the Northampton Community Gardens. I strongly oppose ANY spraying of this harmful toxin on anything. Here's why, and I'm quoting a friend who has done the research.

A Yale study (Environment 360) states that glyphosate is harmful to bee larvae and bee guts, and thus threatens their existence, and may have a part in their decline.

A Michigan State study states that glyphosate is responsible for the large scale death of monarch butterflies.

A Univ. of Pittsburgh study showed that glyphosate kills tadpoles and frogs and causes neurological problems in salmon.

A New Zealand Dept of Conservation study showed that glyphosate affects the ability of lizards to survive, esp the lizards that eat ticks (CA), thus increasing the tick population and lyme disease.

Farmers have witnessed glyphosate hardening their soils, creating more runoff, and eventually erosion. The microbiology of soils are harmed by glyphosate as the good bacteria are killed. Glyphosate is in our food and water, supposedly "not harmful" but these chemicals add up and may affect the good bacteria in our guts.

Studies have shown that glyphosate creates abnormalities in rat embryos. Several U.S. cities and some countries have banned glyphosate, including France and the Netherlands. A Cornell University study states that glyphosate is toxic to wild birds. The NCBI states that "there is a strong case for glyphosate emerging as an organic contaminant".

I'm aware that Japanese knotweed is invasive and difficult to get rid of. However, it has nutritional and medicinal qualities, and it can be cleared with a lot of helping hands.

Please don't allow the application of any glyphosate anywhere in Northampton.

THANK YOU, Committee, for your good work on our behalf.

October 8, 2019

Linda J. Baker
Northampton, MA

Subject: To the select committee

Please do not allow our gardens, our drinking water, our environment in general, to be poisoned with glyphosate. We are already inundated with toxic substances and will only be harmed further if this poison is used in our city.

Sincerely,

Linda J Baker
Northampton, Ma

October 9, 2019

Kit Boos
Northampton, MA

Subject: Herbicides in General glysohates in particular

To whom it may concern:

Please do not put appearances over the health of people and planet. Some plants may be bred to be Round-Up Ready—a preposterous idea when it kills everything else around it—but people are NOT. There has to be less lethal ways of landscaping that don't kill us and our environment. It could be surmised that people and our ecosystems are not valuable commodities to the Glyphosate industry, which you are enabling.

We can work with nature, not against it, and be more tolerant of all the different life that we rely on in the ecosystem, even "weeds" to some extent. We are not the Ultimate who can do whatever we want with impunity. We are stewards of the earth, not kingpin selfish dictators. Have a little empathy and humility, for the planet and the people who rely on it.

sincerely, Kit Sang Boos

October 11, 2019

Ashley Schaffer

To: mlabargeward6@aol.com

Subject: Sylvester Road farm fields

Merridith, and wayne.

Hi Ms. Labarge,

I'm writing to you as a neighbor and community member.

I live on Sylvester Road and have town-owned farm fields right in front of my house, on either side of my long driveway.

I'm writing to you, wondering what can be done about the fact that the farmers who lease this land from Northampton, spray these fields with Round Up in order to grow their Monsanto corn.

I'm aware that we live in a Right to Farm community. I also know that the plight of the small farmer is not an easy one. My neighbors and I have tried to appeal to the farmers (the Parson of Mayval Farm who are also on the Agricultural Commission). The farmer's wives seemed to empathize with our argument: that we do not want these chemicals being sprayed in such close proximity to our homes and families. But the farmers cite research from Monsanto that Round Up is harmless. We not only disagree with this practice, but we live here and will suffer the consequences of these toxins. This stuff is banned in the EU. There are court cases coming up around the US from people exposed to glyphosate, the main chemical in Round UP. Products are starting to be labeled "glyphosate-free" to let consumers know these products are safe to consume.

I'm kind of shocked that our community would allow Round Up to be sprayed in such close proximity to family homes. I had to go before the Conservation Commission to get my organic garden approved so near a wetlands area on my property. I found this quite ironic, considering that my organic garden is adjacent to a Monsanto corn field. There is a stream that connects the Mineral Hills Conservation Area to the Sawmill Hills South Conservation Area. This stream is RIGHT NEXT TO these farm fields. Why does the Conservation Commission seem to care about the preservation of the wetlands EXCEPT when it comes to farming practices on town land that are basically in my front yard. When I moved in, these farm fields were hay. Not sprayed. Then they changed their practice and there's seemingly not much I can do about it.

I do know that there was a City Pesticide Select Committee established this past summer. I am curious what they think about the use of Round Up/Glyphosate on town land in such close proximity to families.

I'm wondering what you think about this topic.

Thanks so much for reading.

Ashley Schaffer
138 Sylvester Road
Northampton

October 13, 2019

Wayne Feiden, AICP

Subject: Re: Sylvester Road farm fields

Dear Councilor,

Thanks for copying me on that email. I think Alisa heard most of this from me when I presented before her pesticides reduction committee.

First, as Ashley mentions in her email, we have a strong Right to Farm Ordinance, which I think you were a co-sponsor of. That ordinance spells out that farmers have a right to farm with normal farm operations, which certainly includes herbicides.

Second, the Northampton Agriculture Commission, whose creation you were also a co-sponsor of, has always supported both the right to farm and our farmers' frustrations with people who "come to the nuisance," that is they move to a farm field and then want a change in practices. I don't know the farm practices when Ashley moved in, but my understanding from when we did our original due diligence in purchasing that land was that it had a history of herbicide use, so we were not surprised when the farmer used herbicides.

Third, the Northampton Agriculture Commission, which advises my office and the Conservation Commission on agriculture practices, has strongly advised that we should create room for all agriculture practices, both organic (which we have at our other large farm parcel right on the floodplain of the Connecticut River) in inorganic, which this parcel has.

Fourth, the Agriculture Commission is especially strong that we should give priority to farmers who are already farming our land, such as Parsons who was farming the Sylvester Road land before we purchased it and has been the only farmer ever there. This is especially true in the western portion of the city where there is not much farmland and where if Parsons lost the ability to use this parcel he might not have as many other options.

Fifth, we and the Agriculture Commission are aware that at least on our conservation properties, and I have no idea whether this is true on other parcels in the city or nation, the rate of lease failure (farmers who break a lease and leave mid-term) on city property has been zero while it has been much higher with young organic farmers. This is part of the reason that the Agriculture Commission believes that we should do all that we can to hold onto our existing farmers, even if it means continuing inorganic farm practices.

Finally, the Agriculture Commission has advised us that the cost of herbicides is significant and their use is self-limiting. That is that the cost is high enough that farmers don't overapply, especially compared to the far more common use of herbicides on private residential properties.

I am copying both John Omasta and Rich Jaescke, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Agriculture Commission respectively, and both farmers who are far more knowledgeable on herbicides than I am, in case they want to add anything.

Wayne



Wayne Feiden, FAICP, Director Planning & Sustainability

October 14, 2019

Karen Lombard
Florence, MA

Subject: To the Northampton Committee on Pesticide Reduction

I am writing to express my opinion on the use of pesticides on Northampton public lands. I am advocating for the thoughtful use of pesticides under certain circumstances to restore ecosystems and where they threaten other values (human or other animal health, agriculture etc). They should be used under the auspices of a management plan which also considers alternatives available at that time.

As many of us are aware there are legitimate concerns about the overuse of pesticides in the United States and around the world. For example, agriculture has become over-reliant on the use of these petroleum-based chemicals to grow food to the detriment of soils, water, and animal/human health. The amount of pesticides used to maintain the American lawn are also a concern. The companies that produce these chemicals have also used many questionable practices to encourage use around the world.

However, I am writing to express my concern about a complete ban on pesticides on Northampton public lands due to another threat to our environment, invasive plants. Invasive plants are one of the top risks to our natural systems and are impacting ecosystem functioning and the existence of individual species in many ecosystems in the U.S. They can kill soil microbes, alter ecological processes, reduce carbon sequestration, out-compete native species, as well as provide less nutritious food to our birds and pollinators. Often these processes occur out of sight of most people (many of whom do not have skills in plant identification) so that folks are unaware we are losing important native habitats as these plants march across the landscape. Human beings also excel in creating the disturbed habitats where invasive plants thrive and have introduced many of them through gardening and other disturbances on the land. In some cases, these plants threaten human health and safety as well (for example certain invasive plant species are associated with increased numbers of ticks).

Due to human actions, invasive plants have spread widely on the landscape and there is no hope that we can control all of them. And unfortunately, more invasive plants are coming due to increased introductions with global trade as well as to climate change. Conservationists are targeting important habitats for restoration (both for the goals of restoring these habitats and for making them more resilient to climate change) and one of the most effective and economical tools available are chemicals such as glyphosate. While there are many concerns about glyphosate it is still one of the safest chemicals available for restoration and has been invaluable in restoring native systems. The amounts that are used in restoration are much less than are used in agriculture, both because conservationists are restoring relatively small areas relative to agriculture and because they are careful to target just the

invasive plants with only as much active ingredient as is necessary to kill the plant. Unfortunately, due to the tenacity of invasive plants, often several years of control are necessary, but follow-up years usually require a fraction of the original application.

We hope in coming years that there will be more options to control invasive plants. Biological control technologies are being developed for many species and this may change the need for pesticide applications. For example, several beetles are now used to control purple loosestrife and this has totally changed the need for chemical control on this specie. Purple loosestrife is now just a relatively well-behaved member of our flora.

Many people think that mechanical techniques are the answer. Unfortunately, mechanical control is only possible on small scales and with certain species and is resource and labor intensive, while also disturbing the soil, making it easier for other invasive species to move in.

While there are risks and hazards to using pesticides there are risks and hazards to not using them that merit consideration. Due to all of these factors and our lack of options in many cases, I advocate for careful consideration of, but not a complete ban on, pesticides on public lands in Northampton.

Northampton has protected a significant amount of conservation land as part of its public lands, some of which provides important ecosystem services such as fresh water and carbon sequestration. These lands also provide important habitat and corridors for plants and animals. Some of these areas are very vulnerable to invasive plants while others are not. For example, restoration of the Mill River corridor and the Pine Grove golf course are likely to need herbicides to be successful. There are also other public lands where it may not make sense to control invasive plants (e.g. next to highly developed areas, ballfields etc). There are also cases where invasive plant control should not be attempted due to the low chance of success. I advocate that instead of banning pesticides that Northampton incorporate both an evaluation of feasibility as well as an evaluation of available control techniques when invasive plant control is contemplated (such as a management plan). This would include a discussion of the invasive species needing to be controlled, and the options available for control at that time. In that way new ideas and methods for controlling invasive plants can be incorporated into management when new projects are proposed.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Lombard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Lombard