

# Press Release for CAROL VAN STRUM, recipient of PIELC 2018 David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Longtime Lincoln County Resident and Activist Receives International Lifetime Achievement Award**

Five Rivers Valley resident Carol Van Strum, author of “A Bitter Fog”, “No Margin of Safety”, “The Politics of Penta”, and “The Oreo File”, has been awarded this year’s international David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition for her outstanding environmental and social justice work.

The award ceremony is being held **6-6:30pm on Thursday, March 1, 2018, in the ballroom of the ERB Memorial Union building** on the U of O campus in Eugene, Oregon. Media representatives are welcome.

The international David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by co-directors of the 36<sup>th</sup> annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference honors David Brower, one of the founders of the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, and the Earth Island Institute. The award is presented to activists, community members, and attorneys who exemplify David Brower’s spirit and the spirit of environmental awareness he sought to awaken in people. The list of past winners of the award includes singer Pete Seeger, who led a successful campaign to clean up the Hudson River in New York State, and tirelessly inspired environmental work with his songs throughout his long life.

Carol Van Strum’s achievements include leading participation in the fight to stop the spraying of Agent Orange and other herbicides in the Five Rivers Valley of Lincoln County, Oregon in the 1970-80’s, which she wrote about in her book “A Bitter Fog”. This fight put Lincoln County and Oregon on the map after a successful lawsuit against the U.S. government which banned aerial pesticide spraying on federal forests.

The ban led to a complete reversal of national forest policy, favoring selective harvest without need for herbicides, enabling a diverse, much healthier, resilient forest that still produces lumber while protecting the many animal species dependent on it. Carol’s book “A Bitter Fog” tells the tragic stories of families affected by aerial pesticide spraying in the Five Rivers area,

including Carol's own children, and exposes the fraudulent studies and corruption that allow continued use of poisons in state and private lands nationwide.

Over a period of 40 years, Carol accumulated literally tons of documented evidence of fraudulent studies and false data used by the chemical industry and government regulators to approve poison products for industries such as industrial logging. These documents have now been scanned and digitalized with the help of publisher Peter von Stackelberg, and are available to the public worldwide under the title of "Poison Papers." Carol has also been fighting the U.S. Navy's continuing attempts to weaponize our coastal waters and take over our national forests and other public lands for weapons testing and war games.

In 2017, Carol joined the efforts of Lincoln County Community Rights, a chapter of the Oregon Community Rights Network, to defend the first-in-the-nation voter-approved, county-wide ban on aerial pesticide spraying to protect people and our natural world from aurally sprayed poisons. A lawsuit to overturn the people's vote has been brought by representatives of the timber industry, who claim a legal right to spray those poisons for profit over the right of people and ecosystems to protect life, health, and safety.

In this as yet unresolved lawsuit, Carol is speaking up for the legal rights of the Siletz River ecosystem and representing all other Lincoln County ecosystems suffering from the harms caused by aerial pesticide spraying. Debra Fant, a member of Lincoln County Community Rights says of Carol, "We honor her for her endurance, good heart, and will to defend the truth no matter at what cost. She is a most worthy recipient of the David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award!"

In 2016 Jericho Hill published Carol Van Strum's novel, "The Oreo File," a mystery for readers young and old who feel the sorrow of our age for all creatures and ecosystems that are now rapidly disappearing or gone forever.

#### ABOUT LINCOLN COUNTY COMMUNITY RIGHTS

Lincoln County Community Rights is a public benefit organization that seeks to educate and empower people to exercise their right of local community self-government in matters that pertain to their fundamental rights, their natural environment, their quality of life, their health and their safety. Given the harms that people and ecosystems suffer from the practice of aerial spraying of industrial forest land with pesticides, the group drafted an ordinance to ban aerial pesticide spraying in Lincoln County, Oregon. Measure 21-177 was adopted by voters in May 2017, making Lincoln County the first county in the United States to ban aerial pesticide spraying through the vote of the people. [www.lincolncountycommunityrights.org](http://www.lincolncountycommunityrights.org)  
<http://www.lincolncountycommunityrights.org/press-info/>