



14 March 2019

Mr. Kim Carstensen, Director General  
Forest Stewardship Council  
Adenauerallee 134, 53113 Bonn, Germany  
(By email to [dispute.resolution@fsc.org](mailto:dispute.resolution@fsc.org))

Dear Mr. Carstensen:

This letter is to express the support of Rainforest Action Network for the complaint made against Roseburg Forest Products (RFP) on behalf of Water for Citizens of Weed CA (WCWC).

Water for Citizens of Weed CA — working on behalf of the residents of Weed, California — submitted a very detailed complaint to the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) on February 27, 2019, concerning Roseburg Forest Products. Roseburg is currently an FSC-certified company. We feel the evidence presented in that complaint clearly demonstrates that RFP has violated the community's basic rights of free expression and their right to clean drinking water.

We strongly oppose tactics employed by RFP in this dispute, namely the filing of a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation or SLAPP suit. This lawsuit is a cynical attempt to silence activists through oppressive litigation rather than attempting to reach resolution in good faith. The deployment of SLAPP suits is not only an abuse of the legal system but also a clear violation of human rights.

The 2017 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association describes SLAPP suits against activist campaigns as "...based upon ambiguous and elastic provisions of law... to exhaust resources, campaign capacity and morale... They often target individual campaigners, as well as the organizations they work for, to maximize the SLAPP's capacity to intimidate; They generally include exorbitant claims for damages and allegations designed to smear, harass and overwhelm the campaigners."

Rainforest Action Network is a founding member of Protect The Protest — a nationwide coalition of organizations committed to fighting back against the growing abuse of SLAPP suits as a tactic of large corporate interests to harass and silence those who are trying to exercise their right to free speech as they confront injustice.

We urge the FSC to take a stand for responsible behavior and adherence to community engagement principles within the forestry sector and investigate these actions by RFP.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Lindsey Allen  
Executive Director  
Rainforest Action Network