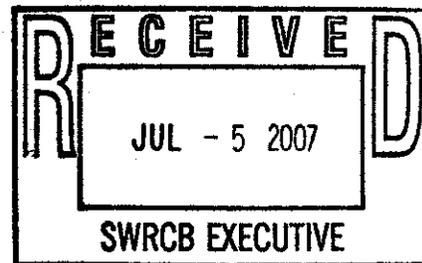


6/12/07 Workshop
Suction Dredge
Deadline: 6/22/07 Noon

07-04-07



California State Water
Resources Board

Years ago I was hurt on the job. At this time I am totally disabled, 14 back surgery's to keep me going. I started going after gold when I was only 12 years old with my grandfather. Threw the years I moved up to gold dredging.

At the end of winter it is hard for me to walk and I have a lot of pain. I am on a pain program to hold some of my pain back. Every summer I head for the rivers of California with myself and a person to help me. Years ago it was my kids but they are grown now and have their own lives to live. I work slow and have so much fun. By the time I go home I can walk better and have less pain. That's what being in the water does for me when summer comes around.

I don't worry about how much gold I may get I just think about how much better I am going to feel when summer comes to a end and I head for home.

Years ago around 1978 I was taken to Denny California to look for gold. I remember being down about 10 feet and looking at the fish swimming by me. The river was full of people with their gold dredging. As the years went by I would see more and more fish year after year. All the gold dredges over the years never has hurt that river. The salmon and steel head go clear up and into new river. The miners have not hurt anything.

Being on disability is not fun. Really not much I can do. I can tho get into the water and do good things for my back. Sure I love the gold I get but my body is the number one reason I gold dredge.

I can camp in a place for 30 days and when I move out you can't even tell I had a camp in the area. True not all people are that way but most are. No matter what you do you always have a bad one or two.

Please keep in mind that gold dredging has a number of good things about it. The Government has done a number of tests on their own and found no damage to the river due to gold dredging.

I have found the bottom of a river so hard that I had to use big pry bars to get the rocks to move.

The next year when I came back I found all kinds of little fish in the gravel. At times I will hit a area of mud. Yes it makes the water a little dirty for a sort period of time. Other than that I don't hurt the river at all. I am 61 so you can see I have done this for years and years.

Myself I see no reason why anything needs to change. Plus the state makes a lot of money off the people that work the rivers.

Thank you very much for your time.

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