

From: "ballfour60@outlookexpress" <ballfour60@sbcglobal.net>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Fri, Jun 8, 2007 10:11 AM
Subject: Gold Dredging/Prospecting

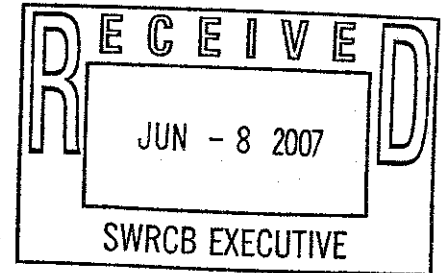
6/12/07 Workshop
Suction Dredge Mining
Deadline: 6/22/07 Noon

June 8, 2007

R.B. Vezzani
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Pahrump, NV. 89048

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Quality
P.O. Box 100 Sacramento, California 95812-0100

Attention Board Chairperson:



Again environmentalists and other groups opposing suction dredging appear to be using data gleaned from reports that studied effects of environmental perturbations that are occurring on a system-wide basis. The California Department of Fish and Game (1997) described typical dredging activities as follows' "An individual suction dredge operation affects a relatively small portion of a stream or river. Why do we have this question before the water board again? Study after study in California, Oregon, Montana and Alaska have had studies done for years, and find there are no effects to fish or vegetation or the creek, stream, or river. These organizations would characterize the affects of turbidity from a suction dredge as if it would impact downstream organisms. The effects are no worse than the high water runoffs of flooding streams. Here is an example of an Oregon study:

In the Oregon Siskiyou National Forest Dredge Study, Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences, some perspective is given to small-scale mining. "The average claim size is 20 acres. The total acreage of all analyzed claims related to the total acres of watershed is about 0.2 percent. The average stream width reflected in the analysis is about 20 feet or less and the average mining claim is 1320 feet in length. The percentage of land area within riparian zones on the Siskiyou National Forest occupied by mining claims is estimated to be only 0.1 percent." The report goes on to say, "Over the past 10 years, approximately 200 suction dredge operators per season operate on the Siskiyou National Forest" (SNF, 2001).

Here is a recent study done by California in 1997. This is very recent and is important in the way that you will spend your time and money on this situation.

The California Department of Fish and Game stated in its Draft Environmental Impact Report that "Department regulations do not currently limit dredger densities but the activity itself is somewhat self-regulating. Suction dredge operators must space themselves apart from each other to avoid working in the turbidity plume of the next operator working upstream. Suction Dredging requires relatively clear water to successfully harvest gold " (CDFG, 1997).

Studies like this take time, cost money, and prove very little with regards to what these groups real agenda is. I hope that you consider just these couple of studies and draw a favorable conclusion with regards to us members of organizations like the New 49'ers Prospecting Club and the Gold Prospectors Association of America. Please note that both of these organizations are headquartered in California.

All members of these fine organizations know how to explore the opportunities and privileges afforded to us as members. Prospecting is enhanced by these organizations and with very high dredging fees here in California the loss of those fees would be a big loss.

FYI: Have prospected now for over 13 years in Alaska, California, Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, and of course Nevada.

Dick Vezzani

CC: "Dave McCracken" <dcmmcra@attglobal.net>