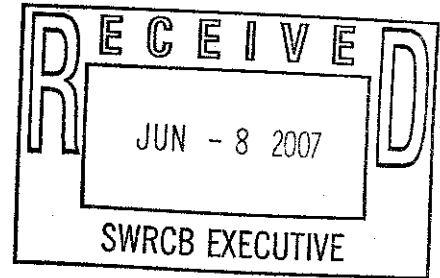


From: "Romaine, Garret" <Garret_Romaine@kentrox.com>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Fri, Jun 8, 2007 8:35 AM
Subject: Comment Letter - Suction Dredge Mining

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

Dear Water Board:

I am writing to request that you do not make any serious changes to the current suction dredging regulations. Small-scale suction dredging is an enjoyable family-oriented activity that has coexisted with fisheries for decades. The actions of a few gold miners cannot be a serious threat to fish, especially in comparison with the existence of dams, pollution discharges, and dairy farms.



My primary experience in California has been on the Klamath River above Happy Camp. I found it to be an entirely disagreeable undertaking. The water smelled badly, reeking of cow manure and slightly green. The visibility was poor, and I was reluctant to get my head under the water. When I did, I ended up with an ear infection.

Please note that gold miners coexist with fish in many ways. We often see fish at the bottom of our riffles, picking bugs and food out of the water. Note also that gold settles in the opposite end of a gravel bar from where salmon deposit their eggs. Finally, gold miners continually extract mercury left behind from the "bad old days."

If fish protection is such a high priority, I would suggest putting into place a two-year fishing moratorium on the streams and rivers in the worst shape, rather than attacking gold mining. We are not the problem.

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