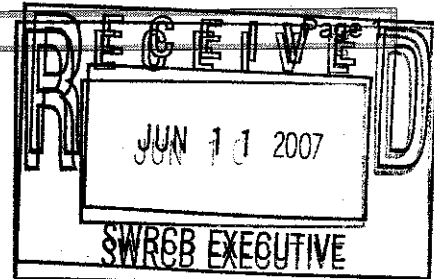


6/12/07 Workshop
Suction Dredge Mining
Deadline: 6/22/07 Noon



From: "Ken bedford" <michwolf@twin-valley.net>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Mon, Jun 11, 2007 12:01 PM
Subject: Comment Letter - Suction Dredge Mining

My son and I started prosepcting a few years ago. We were on the Salmon river learning dredge mining from a local person who while dredge mining was recovering alot of mercury in his sluice box . My son then proceeded to snorkle with a turkey baster and in 5 hrs of snorkeling he recovered almost a 1/4 ounce of gold which was trapped in mercury .

Taking mercury out of streams benefits the environment. Efforts to collect mercury from recreational gold miners in the past, however, have been stymied due to perceived regulatory barriers. Disposal of mercury is normally subject to all regulations applicable to hazardous waste.

Mercury occurs in several different geochemical forms, including elemental mercury, ionic (or oxidized) mercury, and a suite of organic forms, the most important of which is methylmercury. Methylmercury is the form most readily incorporated into biological tissues and is most toxic to humans. The process of mercury removal by suction dredging does not contaminate the environment because small-scale suction dredging removes elemental mercury. Removal of elemental mercury before it can be converted, by bacteria, to methylmercury is a very important component of environmental and human health protection provided as a secondary benefit of suction dredging.

Also While learning to dredge mine we were witness to alot of fish actually feeding right behind the dredge as it was running . Being a witness to this and reading the studies performed

Effects from elevated levels of turbidity and suspended sediment normally associated with suction dredging as regulated in the past in California appear to be less than significant with regard to impacts to fish and other river resources because of the level of turbidity created and the short distance downstream of a suction dredge where turbidity levels return to normal.

We hope you do a complete study of this and weigh all the facts before determining an outcome
Ken Bedford