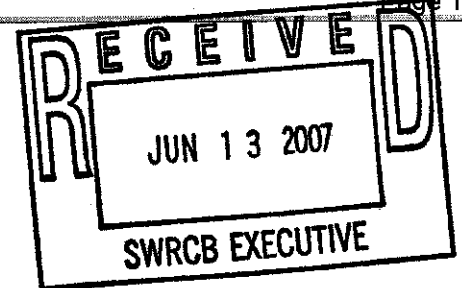


6/12/07 Workshop
Suction Dredge Mining
Deadline: 6/22/07 Noon



From: Jocelyn & Michael <jocemike@yahoo.com>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Wed, Jun 13, 2007 4:31 PM
Subject: Comment Letter - Suction Dredge Mining

Hello there and thank you for the opportunity to comment on Suction Dredge Mining.

My name is Mike Swinnie and I have been suction dredging in Washington, Oregon and California for many years. I am currently working a claim with my suction dredge in California.

The issue of suction dredge mining has come up many times over the years. Each time there have been studies that clearly show, that the suction dredge and the small area that a recreation dredge can work does very little. if any, damage to the environment and the stream or river that is being worked.

One report stated that on the average a person is in the water using the suction dredge for 3-6 hours a day spending the rest of the time cleaning the box or working on the dredge parts. This is an accurate statement. (CA Dept. of Fish & Game report, 1997)

A comment that I have heard involves the sediment that the suction dredge stirs up being environmentally damaging. Yet studies have concluded that only a local effect occurs and decreases rapidly downstream. Additionally, I want to mention that within any waterway, sediment is primarily carried in suspension during periods of rainfall and high flow. This is important, as it indicates that a dredging operation has less, or at least no greater effect on sediment mobilization and mobility than a rain storm. (CDFG Environmental Impact Report, 1997) (Harvey, BC 1986) (Harvey, BC; K. McCleneghan; JD Linn and CL Langley 1982)

To illustrate my position further, a press release from the U. S. Geological Survey stated, in part, the following, "The water quality of the Fortymile River-a beautiful, ... has not been adversely impacted by gold placer mining operations according to an integrated study underway by the U.S. Geological Survey and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources." (USGS Survey 10-27-98)

The issue against suction dredge operations in the streams of the United States appears to be less an issue of environmental protection and more of an issue of organized individuals and groups being unwilling to share the outdoors with others without like interests. Suction dredges do not add pollution to the aquatic environment. They merely re-suspend and re-locate the bottom materials (overburden) within the river or stream.

I am available to talk with you further if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Mike Swinnie
1440 Fetlock Court
Eugene, OR 97401
541-654-0273
jocemike@yahoo.com

Yahoo! oneSearch: Finally, mobile search that gives answers, not web links.

RECEIVED
JUN 13 2003
SWRCB EXECUTIVE