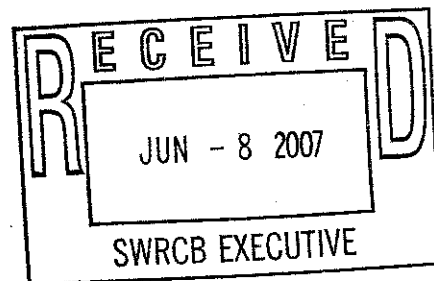


6/12/07 Workshop
Suction Dredge Mining
Deadline: 6/22/07 Noon

From: Paul LaRocque <larocquejr@comcast.net>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Fri, Jun 8, 2007 12:44 PM
Subject: Comment Letter - Suction Dredge Mining



Dear Sirs,

While I am not a scientist, environmentalist or even more that an occasional dredger, I would like to add my voice to this discussion. I could site specific reports and studies but I am sure that you have access to the same material that I have access to. My review of the available study material on this subject indicates that the environmental impact of suction dredging on water quality is very minimal and even that is localized. I am not sure how an honest review of the available material can come to any other conclusion. While I am sure that a party with an agenda to stop suction dredging can cherry pick enough material to make it appear that dredging has a negative impact, I am also sure that an honest review of all of the available material will not support that conclusion.

My personal experience is that only short distance downstream it is hard to tell that suction dredging activity is even taking place. To a layman the water quality appears unchanged, clarity appears unchanged, fishing appears unchanged.

Since a river/stream is a dynamic system, the environment within is adaptable to changing conditions and anyone who has observed a river/stream in the normal seasonal flood stage and then again afterwards begins to appreciate how little effect even a large diameter suction dredge can have on such a system. While I am sure that there are, or at least can be, extreme or unusual circumstances where some harm may be caused, I believe that if the current regulations and limitations are enforced, and lived by, there are not any realistic circumstances where the vast majority of dredgers will cause any measurable impact on a river system, let alone any damage.

On another aspect of the question: as a resident of another state I like to think that my economic impact on the local/state economy through shopping and licensing adds to the ability of the local population to support research and maintenance on the local waterways which bring myself and other interested parties into their communities. I am very much looking forward to the next opportunity that I have to return to your beautiful state and contribute to your local and state economy.

You can rest assured that if I observe, or learn of, any activity that is damaging the resources that I treasure, I will most definitely be acting to notify the appropriate authorities to stop that activity. And if I feel that any activity as a whole is damaging to the river system I would most definitely support regulation to stop or curtail that activity. In this case I do not feel, nor has my research led me to believe, that suction dredging, at least on a non-commercial level, has a negative impact on the water quality of a river/stream system.

Sincerely,
Paul LaRocque
2334 N. 2350 W.
Clinton, UT 84015