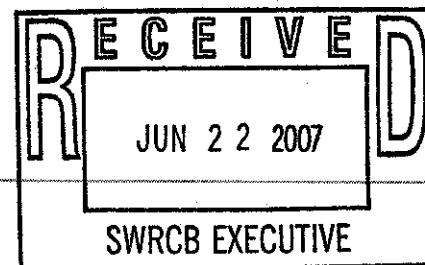


commentletters - State Water Resources Control Board

From: "ronald wilson" <ronald392@centurytel.net>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 6/22/2007 8:30:53 AM
Subject: State Water Resources Control Board



In reference to the recent hearing on suction dredging effect

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

Dear Sirs;

My name is Ronald Wilson. I reside in Washington State. My son and family live in Livermore California. I also belong to an organization that has several mining claims in California. I am also a member of a mining organization that is presently involved in pre rulemaking on suction dredging in Washington State and up to date on various mining issues and water quality studies done here in Washington and other locations. One such study is a Washington State Department of Ecology, "Effects of Small- Scale Gold Dredging on Arsenic, Copper, Lead, and Zinc Concentrations in the Smilkameen River" March 2005. Briefly, their conclusion is the discharge from small scale suction dredges are not a significant toxicity concern for aquatic life. It would take a very large number of dredges to effect a 10% change of arsenic levels even at low flow. This was conducted in a heavy arsenic laden river due to arsenic from Canada.

We miner's here in Washington are involved in a mercury turn in program and are a positive effect on the environment. As indicated in several studies, our dredging activity has only a short effect on the stream environment and has positive effects of introducing dissolved oxygen into the water and also loosening impacted gravels that then can reorganize into gravels that have space between them for aquatic life to survive and thrive in.

It is my belief that what little NTU effect we may create is of no significant level and has little or no effect on fish life from our operations. I only am told that it could happen. To illustrate the confusion in all of this, I am told that the streams need shade along the edge to keep the water cool among other things. As I am told this, I find that the State of Washington wants docks to be grated to allow sunlight to get to the water. As you can see, I am torn in two directions.

I hope that you can come to a conclusion that suction dredging is an activity that has no detrimental effect and considering the removal of mercury, lead, and the introduction of dissolved oxygen, and a positive resorting of gravels is all on the positive side of this issue. I also think that we being in the forests might also help to prevent meth labs being set up and wastes discharged to the streams. Perhaps your agency in the future could work more closely with the suction dredging community and have a flow of education in both directions to further improve the aquatic environment.

Thank you
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