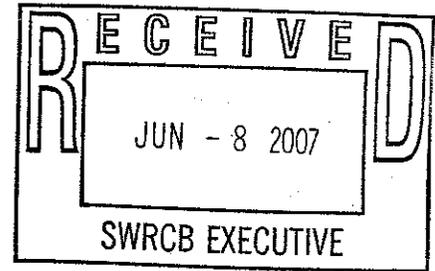


6/12/07 Workshop  
Suction Dredge Mining  
Deadline: 6/22/07 Noon

**From:** "Todd Ackley" <ackley5467@comcast.net>  
**To:** <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>  
**Date:** Fri, Jun 8, 2007 12:44 AM  
**Subject:** Comment Letter - Suction Dredge Mining



To whom it concerns,

I am a recreational gold miner from Oregon. It sounds like some politicians in California are trying to shut down the very thing that brought a good many people out west, gold mining. We're not talking about the gold mining of yester year. We're talking about recreational gold mining and I stress recreational. This is not something that people do for a living. If they did they sure wouldn't get rich at it. This is something that families plan vacations around. Families in RV's bonding, doing something the children will remember for the rest of their lives. It's teaching these young children that there can be something more than just video games, pizza, and the mall. And to see the expression on their faces when they find gold is priceless.

But the subject of whether or not dredging has an impact on the streams and rivers has been brought up. I could quote many professionals in the field of dredging but I'll put it simply like this. When a recreational dredger is restricted to in-water times to minimize the "stresses" to fish and he/she moves river materials from one location to another within the same stream, where is the harm? The fish? I can't remember the last time I saw a salmon sitting on the side of a stream waiting for the winter currents and turbidity to subside? It just sound absurd that we are going to kill the salmon population exclusively my recreational mining.

I can see that some uninformed people can get confused about the type of gold mining and they believe they are trying to help by making recreational dredging nonexistent. Dredging does not put toxic materials like mercury in to the stream. That was the 1849'ers that have done that. But current day dredging does not do that. In fact dredging cleans up that mercury that the original miners used. So we are cleaning our streams for the fish. Up near the mouth of the Columbia river dredges have been used to clean up debris from the bottom of shallow areas or the river. The dredgers were even asked to come back again!

I am against this action to stop dredging activity in California because it will be a short while before someone in Oregon makes the same uneducated/uninformed decision to stop dredging here. Lets continue to regulate recreational mining as is and let the families enjoy their vacations in the beautiful and great outdoors.

A concerned Oregonian,  
Todd Ackley