

From: Jan Alexander
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 4:09 PM
To: Reiley Beth
Subject: comments on SB401 and SB838

Hi Beth-Vern Michaels and his wife are retired, and mine near the North Fork Burnt River. They do not have a computer, but asked me to send these comments. I hope this is acceptable.

Jan Alexander

Dear Senators:

We are opposed to SB 401 and to SB838

My wife and I are partners with another retired couple, Charley and Geneva Booth, and we have placer gold claims near the headwaters of the North Fork Burnt River, one of the rivers SB401 targets. We mine off-channel on a very small scale, are careful to protect the water quality and always do our reclamation. The Forest Service oversees our little operation, and we have detailed Plans of Operation that outline what we can and can't do in our mining operations.

Now we find out about SB401. We just don't know what to do. We have put our meager life savings into a small motorized wash plant to separate out the gold. My wife recently suffered a stroke, and our finances are very limited, with medical bills to pay every month, and fuel costs to and from the doctor. We are counting on producing some gold this summer to help pay the bills.

Our claims only extend along the river, we have nothing to mine and no water for processing ¼ mile away. Please vote no on this bill. Mining does not make us rich, it simply helps pay the bills and gets us through the winter months.

There are many small scale miners like us that don't hurt the land or the water quality. We work with the Forest Service to ensure our operations are in compliance and we do reclamation of mined areas every fall. SB838, which prohibits mining within 300 feet of streams and rivers until 2018 or later, will also hurt a lot of people. I don't think SB838 applies directly to our operation, but it is hard for me to tell since it does mention DEQ 303(d) listed streams, and the North Fork Burnt River is one of these streams.

These bills take from us our private property right in the minerals. Not only will these bills have a great financial hardship on us personally, but the hardship will be felt by all Oregon miners along these waterways. The resulting litigation from taking miners' private property will also hurt the state budget.

Thank you for letting us provide these comments.

Sincerely;

Mr. and Mrs. Vern Michaels
15934 SE Yurok St.
Prineville, OR 97754-8913