

April 15th, 2013

Senator Dingfelder, members of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Jon Alan Becker and I am here to speak as a citizen of Oregon. I strongly oppose Senate Bill 838 & SB401, These proposed acts is an unnecessary moratorium that would enact much harm on many small-scale suction dredge mining businesses in Oregon.

I am retired from the computer industry with over 32 years. I am a member and past President of the NorthWest Mineral Prospector's Club, an organization of over 600 members. I supplement my retirement income from gold that I mine on my Federal Mining claim here in Oregon.

SB838 & SB401 are bad legislation! SB401 will take away private property rights from landowners with the designation of the proposed additional rivers that will be included in the list of wild and scenic rivers. These additional rivers are in historical mining areas and it is another blatant attempt to shut down mining in the State of Oregon. SB838 is the Environmentalists imported version of the California moratorium to ban suction dredging in Oregon.

There are many studies and reports that show suction dredging is not harmful to fish or the environment. Suction dredging is NOT allowed in the waterways when fish are spawning or the fish eggs are hatching. In-water work times are regulated by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the normal dredging season is approximately 3 months when sensitive life stages are NOT present and mining is safe to resume.

Gold mining, be it large-scale or small-scale, is currently one of the most regulated industries in the United States. Miners must follow the rules and regulations of many Federal and State governmental agencies (Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of State Lands, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Forest Service and US Bureau of Land Management, to name a few). If miners do not know and follow the current rules and regulations already in place then they run the risk of being cited, arrested, tried and if found guilty, fined and imprisoned or both. Enforcement agencies are OSP, FS & BLM Officers and Sheriffs. Mining groups and associations stress to their members, to follow good management practices in their mining association rules. Mining Associations also inform non-members of correct practices if they are found using practices deemed in violation of State & Federal Mining rules & regulations.

Small scale mining, in Oregon, is a \$10.5 million industry. In these times of economic hardship in many of the rural communities in this state, why on earth would you want to destroy an industry that brings this kind of revenue to our state? I, alone, spend several hundred dollars every year in gasoline, food, lodging, equipment and other supplies in rural communities to prospect and mine for gold. These rural communities depend on miners for the continuation of their livelihoods.

In closing, I ask you to consider this: If it can't be grown then it MUST be mined! If gold or other metals & minerals can't be mined in the State of Oregon then it will have to come from

some other State or Country. If they come from another country it is will most likely be from some third-world country that does not have the same environmentally friendly regulations the United States has and it will undoubtedly increase the cost of those imported metals and minerals here in the USA.

Therefore, I urge each one of you on this committee to vote NO on these two ill-conceived bills.

Thank you.

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