

Hi Beth,

Below is my submittal for SB 838. Thank you for hearing my concerns from Southwest Oregon;

Testimony of Greg A. Walter before the Oregon Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee in support of Senate Bill 838 relating to suction dredging

April 15th, 2013

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

My name is Greg A. Walter and I am here to speak as a citizen of Oregon. I am in support of Senate Bill 838, enacting a moratorium and to create a new regulatory framework involved around suction dredge mining in Oregon's streams and rivers.

My wife and I have a small business in Cave Junction, Oregon and we spend much of our free time leading hikes and taking people to historical areas here. We see the damage firsthand caused by the dredgers that are allowed to camp all summer in one place and not only create a noise pollution level in an otherwise quiet place, but also are usually armed and at times very inhospitable. Not to mention the mess many of them leave in their wake of garbage and spilled fuel next to the river. Combine this with reduced law enforcement and this reckless attitude that they own the land and it is troublesome especially given the spike in dredgers in our streams and rivers. We believe Oregon should not allow this type of destructive recreation that also drives away visitors to our region and impacts our waterways. Please help us to care for our tourism and fisheries by passing this and Senate Bill 401.

I support the goals of SB 838 and urge members of the committee to vote in favor of this bill as well as amendments to require the implementation of the new regulatory framework. Thank you.

Greg Walter

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