



TU Celebrates 50 Years of Protecting Cold, Clean, Fishable Water.

Oregon Council Trout Unlimited

April 14, 2013

Chair Dingfelder and Committee members-

I am Tom Wolf, chair of the Oregon Council Trout Unlimited. We support both SB 401 and SB 838, and feel that both these bills will help in protecting wild native fish habitat in this state. Trout Unlimited Senior scientist Jack Williams has already presented some very valid science for the impact suction dredge mining has on salmon and trout riparian habitat. I would like to spend my time in front of you looking at this matter from two other perspectives.

First of all, according to a 2009 Dean Runyan study commissioned by ODFW, fishing brings almost a billion dollars a year into the Oregon economy in travel, recreational and equipment revenues, many of it in depressed rural communities. Recent data by Travel Oregon shows similar results, as do other studies. All these documented studies shows very clearly that recreational fishing brings a lot of money into our state's economy. Currently, ODFW, Travel Oregon and the recreational fishing businesses are working to improve advertisement to bring more out of state anglers into Oregon for their vacation fishing trips. Fishing is a business which brings lots of money into our state-and it is a sport which requires stream habitat which is healthy and undisturbed. Suction dredge mining, as evidence presented today show, has a negative effect on stream habitat.

Blaise Pascal, the co-founder of the mathematical school of probability, created a philosophical thought called "Pascal's Wager". It pertained to religion but it can and has been applied to other uses. Basically it said that one should also err on the side of caution in one's course of actions. As this pertains to passing a bill that would authorize a suction dredge mining moratorium, if we choose to be cautious, per the evidence presented by Jack Williams, AFS, and others, there is enough evidence that should cause us to be worried warrant passing SB 838. We need to make a choice that would protect ecological important fish habitat and a booming economic business, as fishing is in Oregon, and therefore we should pay attention to the evidence and pass a moratorium. This will allow study to determine the real impact of suction dredge mining.

We owe that to our native wild fish and the people in Oregon who depend on recreational fishing as a business. It is the wise and safe thing to do.