

Ms. Reiley,

Please enter this message into public record. I hope this can be viewed as a compromise to the satisfaction of both sides of the issue.

Dear Senators,

**SB 838**

I spoke at the hearing Monday April 15<sup>th</sup>, but with the 3 minute time limit did not get to state important facts about my case. I now write additional information that should be considered.

First the “moratorium” is a death sentence as 5 years of inactivity will close all the small retail gold equipment stores and most miners will have their investment in equipment as a loss. I also have a cash investment in my 20-acre private deeded mining claim and an expected annual gain from my mining, with no addressed recourse except to file suit for loss of property rights. This not an action I desire or think the state should expend tax monies for defense in courts.

I actively mine about 10 to 12 days PER YEAR and last year “removed” less than a TOTAL of 1½ yards of material. Reality, I “removed” about 3oz. of lead from Quartzville creek, 1/2 oz. of gold and 8 oz. of black sand. I relocated the 1 ½ yards of gravel material back into the streambed area. Removal of material is not an appropriate term for gold dredging.

IF a “moratorium” on suction dredging is to be considered, a blanket covering the entire state is overly excessive. The opposition claims the need to stop the mining is to protect salmon and protect stream water quality, what they don’t say is that many of the small mining claims are not on salmon habitat. Again, my mining claim is on Rattlesnake creek of the Cow creek drainage and at max flow stream width is about 4 or 5 feet. No salmon spawn in Rattlesnake creek. I also mined at Dad’s creek on a club claim that is east of Cow creek. This also is not a salmon spawning area as the highway created a diverted flow of creek through a culvert resulting in a vertical drop of nearly 25 feet from the culvert passing under the roadway, clearly an impassible stream flow blocking entry of salmon.

Could you **consider an amendment to SB 838** directing a **limited test area** of some major rivers and not stop all dredging? The amendment could designate areas: as private claims and especially non-salmon habitat streams as not included in the ban on power equipment mining. If large dredges are responsible for the visible intrusions as claimed, the amendment could limit the suction nozzle size to 4 inch or less. I mine in 3 areas, Quartzville, Rattlesnake and Dad’s creek; none of these are salmon bearing areas. It makes no sense to stop mining in areas that don’t have any remote connection to salmon.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Hunter  
503-502-2382