

From: Charles Gehr
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 9:31 AM
To: Reiley Beth
Subject: written testimony

I am writing you to support the passage of SB 838 and SB 401-5.

As an avid angler and river boater ensuring clean water, healthy runs of anadromous fish and quality recreation experiences on our local rivers is of the utmost importance to me.

As a fly fishing guide and booking agent for fly fishing trips throughout the Pacific Northwest I have a vested business interest in clean rivers and healthy populations of fish as well. In fact, the outdoor recreation industry is a major economic force in this state. A much greater economic force than 2,000 people dredging our precious rivers. The Outdoor Industry Association has recently released a report estimating \$12.8 million per year in consumer spending on outdoor recreation in Oregon, generating \$955 million in state and local tax revenue. I think it's time that our lawmakers protected an industry that doesn't extract natural resources. Resources that belong to all of us.

I am becoming increasingly concerned about the number and density of suction dredge mining operations on our Oregon rivers, specifically the Rogue, Applegate and Illinois rivers here in my area. This practice, to me, seems to be in direct opposition to clean rivers and minimizing our impact on anadromous fish. What is even more alarming is the exponential increase in suction dredge mining in the last few years since California instituted their moratorium. As a local resident and a member of a user group the suction dredge mining operations are a nuisance. As a businessman I will simply send my clients elsewhere. None of the clients I represent wish to spend their precious fishing time in the vicinity of suction dredge mining.

All preliminary research on suction dredge mining operations has shown some amount of negative impact to anadromous fish (salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, etc.), particularly on small creeks and feeder streams. We have already witnessed the catastrophic decimation of salmon and steelhead runs here in the Pacific Northwest and are standing on the verge of total annihilation of wild anadromous fish. How can we allow unregulated/unmonitored suction dredge mining on rivers like the Rogue, where coho salmon are already listed as threatened? And for the sake of 2,000 or so individuals who pay mere dollars per year for their permits. I pay more for a fishing license, where I will end up putting most of the fish back.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Charles Gehr
Fly Water Travel
479 Russell Street #103
Ashland, OR 97520
800-552-2729
www.flywatertravel.com

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