

From: Mike Nelson
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 11:13 AM
To: Reiley Beth; Lutman Jennifer
Subject: SB 838 & SB 401-5

I am writing in support of SB 838 & SB 401-5, or any efforts, to curb the process of suction dredge mining on Oregon's rivers. I hope my experiences as a river-user over the past two years particularly will help shed light on the urgent need to pass these measures.

More and more of these so-called "miners" are showing up on the Rogue River each summer. These suction-dredgers run on lawnmower-like gasoline powered motors which are loud and emit a cloud of exhaust as they buzz from morning 'til night. I have to weave through dozens of them on one stretch of the Rogue right below the former Gold Ray Dam site when I take my drift boat out. It is so loud we stop talking as we can't hear anything except these machines which suck up the gravel and leave a cloud of sediment behind them, fouling the river for fishing or any other type of recreation. It is a surreal scene and we sometimes avoid that stretch of river because of them. This is a shame as it's a primary stretch of salmon and steelhead fishing I have enjoyed since my grandfather took me on my first float there nearly more than three decades ago. It is heartbreaking to see the damage left in the wake of dozens of these dredgers each day: they damage the trees and bushes on the banks, foul the riverside and parking lots with piles of garbage, and leave used toilet paper on the river banks.

Common sense dictates this damaging process of suction-dredge-mining should not be allowed on Oregon's most beautiful and pristine waterways such as the Rogue River. I urge swift and immediate passage of SB 838 & SB 401-5.

Thank you,
Mike Nelson
Talent, Or