

Testimony of Greg and Carol O'Neal before the Oregon Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee in support of Senate Bill 838 relating to suction dredging April 15, 2013.

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

We strongly support Senate Bill 838 to establish a moratorium and create a new regulatory framework for the practice of suction dredge mining in Oregon's streams and rivers.

On a personal note, when we moved to Oregon in 2005, we looked forward to a peaceful and quiet life along the Rogue River. Unfortunately, we have found that peaceful and quiet enjoyment of our home is not possible for much of the year. The dredging issue is even more poignant for my wife who thought she had found a permanent home after moving thirteen times across the globe during a thirty year career in the Navy.

Dredgers can operate **all day, everyday, all summer long** with little regard to how their operation negatively impacts the environment, homeowners, campers and outdoor enthusiasts. (And for only a \$25 permit fee at present)

There is no place to escape the noise. The droning noise of dredgers can be heard even inside our home with doors and windows closed. We can only imagine the impact to our local fish and their spawning areas.

From our point of view, environmental and public policy can be much improved with passage of Senate Bill 838. We urge you to limit or eliminate recreational dredging within or near fish spawning areas as well as within or near residential and camping areas.

Thank you for your service and best regards,

Greg & Carol O'Neal
8701 John Day Drive
541-855-2572