

From: Jim Haight

Date: April 6, 2013, 1:58:57 PM PDT

Subject: Comments on SB401 - Designates certain rivers and creeks as scenic waterways. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

I am concerned about SB401, which adds "mineralized waterways" to Oregon's State Scenic Waterways. For many rivers, like the Rogue in Southern Oregon, and the North Fork Burnt River in Northeast Oregon, hundreds of miners, who currently work within the ¼ mile buffer, would be very adversely affected. When a miner locates a claim on federal lands, the minerals within the claim become a private property right. Miners who are prevented from fully exploring, evaluating and being able to make sound mining decisions by this change will surely litigate. Such litigation will be expensive for both the miners and the state.

The mining industry is only now beginning to recover from a long period of low gold prices. Mid-sized placer operations are coming online throughout the mineralized areas of Eastern and Southern Oregon. These operations provide much needed jobs, and they support the local communities with hundreds of thousands of dollars spent.

I was born and raised in Northeast Oregon. As a geologist and as a miner, I worked in that region for many years. I can tell you from first-hand experience that prospecting and locating new mineral deposits, and mining those deposits, are activities essential to the welfare of this state and its people. Shutting down the mineral industry in Oregon, at a time when jobs are scarce and when there is a national need for developing this nation's mineral resources and for providing jobs, makes no sense.

My father was a member of the Oregon State House of Representative. He also worked closely with DOGAMI as I have through the years. DOGAMI does an excellent job of minerals administration, and they, as well as the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), are self-supporting through fees. There is no emergency, and no rational justification for SB401. Please vote no on this bill. This bill is not good for Oregon.

Sincerely,

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