

**PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY****CARRIER:**

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

**REVENUE: No revenue impact (-3)****FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued (-3)****SUBSEQUENT REFERRAL TO:****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:****Prepared By:** Beth Reiley, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 4/16, 4/20

**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Directs Environmental Quality Commission to adopt by rule consolidated permitting program for motorized in-stream placer mining and motorized upland placer mining. Requires adoption of certain rules related to review of applications, issuance of permits and conditions on permits. Authorizes Department of Environmental Quality and certain other state agencies to enter memoranda of agreement assigning department duties related to permitting of motorized in-stream placer mining and motorized upland placer mining. Repeals moratorium on mining using motorized equipment. Requires operating permit to engage in motorized in-stream placer mining or motorized upland placer mining. Prohibits motorized in-stream placer mining or motorized upland placer mining in certain protected areas. Imposes civil penalties of not more than \$1,000 per day for violating permit provisions. Establishes violation of permitting provisions is Class A violation. Becomes operative January 2, 2016. Authorizes Environmental Quality Commission to take certain actions prior to operative date. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** (Proposed -3 Amendment) Replaces measure. Directs Environmental Quality Commission to adopt consolidated permitting program for motorized in-stream placer mining and motorized upland placer mining. Repeals moratorium on mining using motorized equipment. Limits combined total number of permits for motorized in-stream or upland placer mining to no more than 850 annually and authorizes establishment of management zones. Requires adoption of certain rules related to review of applications, issuance of permits and conditions on permits. Requires Department of Environmental Quality and Department of State Lands to enter memoranda of agreement assigning department duties related to permitting of placer mining. Requires operating permit to engage in motorized in-stream placer mining or motorized upland placer mining. Prohibits motorized in-stream placer mining or motorized upland placer mining in certain protected areas and certain watersheds. Imposes civil penalties of not more than \$1,000 per day for violating permit provisions. Establishes violation of permitting provisions is Class A violation. Authorizes Environmental Quality Commission to establish fees for operating permits. Establishes operative date of January 2, 2017. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2013 the Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 838 which imposed certain restrictions and conditions on placer mining between January 1, 2014 and January 2, 2016 and set a limit of 850 permits that Department of State Lands may issue for placer mining during this period. The restrictions are repealed on January 2, 2016, when a moratorium is imposed until January 2, 2021 on placer mining in specified rivers containing essential indigenous anadromous salmonid habitat or naturally reproducing populations of bull trout. Senate Bill 838 also directed the Governor's Office to work with state agencies and other interested parties to conduct a study and make recommendations for a revised regulatory framework for suction dredge mining.

4/20/2015 11:45:00 AM \*

***This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.***

Committee Services Form – 2015 Regular Session

Senate Bill 830 directs the Environmental Quality Commission to adopt rules establishing a consolidated permitting program for motorized in-stream placer mining and motorized upland placer mining and repeals the moratorium on mining using motorized equipment.