

February 3, 2016

Robyn Janssen  
615 Oak St.  
Ashland, OR 97520

**RE: Robyn Janssen's testimony for SB 1530: a bill to enact strong regulations on motorized mining in rivers in Oregon to protect these rivers and their fish.**

Dear Senator Edwards and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

I am a native southern Oregonian and currently live in the Rogue Valley. I have spent the last 19 years of my life as a river guide on rivers in southern Oregon, northern California, Idaho and beyond. I now work for a river conservation group and continue to guide part time in the summer. Healthy rivers are my passion and my livelihood and the reason I continue to live and work in southern Oregon.

I am here today representing many of the river guides and outfitters in southern Oregon. These small business outfitters depend on clean water rivers, healthy fish populations and the scenic, quiet beauty that the river environment provides. Southern Oregon is blessed with a multitude of wild rivers and fisheries that draw people to the area from all over the world. The Rogue River alone brings people from across the country, and the globe, to raft, fish, and experience all that it has to offer. It sustains numerous outfitters in both rafting and fishing as well as hundreds of guides and other employees.

However, the rivers and fish that we depend on for our livelihood and quality of life are being pushed to their limits. We are seeing lower water levels during hot, dry summers, more pollution from cities and agriculture, lower snow packs during our winters and the continued impacts from mining practices like suction dredge mining. I am here today to voice my support for senate bill 1530 which would take the 5-year moratorium or "breather" to construct a solid regulatory system for suction dredge mining in order to protect Oregon's rivers and fish.

As a river guide, it is my job to introduce people to the beauty and adventure of the river. I also do my best to educate people about the history and cultures that have utilized the river over the years. Much of the history of southern Oregon rivers involves gold mining. Many times I am able to point out present day gold mining practices with the presence of suction dredges on our rivers. However, I am also quick to point out the harmful effects that suction dredges have on our rivers, streams and fish and guests are able to experience these effects first hand.

California placed a moratorium on suction dredge mining in 2009. That coupled with high prices of gold brought huge numbers of dredges and miners to the rivers of southern Oregon. Impacts to the river became more pronounced and turned an

otherwise lovely day on the river into a noisy, polluted, sometime dangerous and unpleasant experience. To me, this is the last thing we want happening in the naturally beautiful areas that entice people to visit Oregon.

I think that most of us know now that suction dredge mining effects fish habitat, specifically sensitive salmon habitat and spawning redds. But what a lot of people don't know is that it effects non-extractive forms of recreation as well. Rafting and fishing on the Rogue alone is said to bring in over \$30 million a year in revenue to local economies. What I don't understand is how the state and its taxpayers can spend millions of dollars on restoration efforts for salmon and steelhead while continuing to allow this practice of hobby mining when we know it to be negatively impacting the very things we are trying to rebuild.

I am not for banning things outright that I don't like or agree with but I am for making sure we are all using our natural resources wisely, equally and fairly. Fishermen pay significant fees which go towards things like the preservation and enhancement of habitat for fish and wildlife. Rafting outfitters pay commercial outfitting fees and have to follow by specific rules for each river they run. Suction dredge miners should have to do the very same thing, especially considering they are an extractive recreational activity that has negative impacts on the clean water, quiet recreation and healthy fisheries that belong to all of us. The practice of suction dredge mining should be regulated and limited so as not to impact sensitive salmon habitat, other recreational activities (like rafting and angling) and should have a reasonable permit fee structure that helps protect our salmon and that requires miners to pay for using and affecting our public resources.

I urge the Senate Environmental and Natural Resources Committee to support Senate Bill 1530 and place needed regulations and limitations on suction dredge mining in order to protect our rivers, streams and fish for us and for the future.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robyn Janssen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robyn Janssen  
River Guide, Momentum River Expeditions