

From: Paul Lipscomb
To: Sen.MichaelDembrow@state.or.us; Sen.AlanOlsen@state.or.us; Sen.HermanBaertschiger@state.or.us; Sen.Roblan; Sen.FloydProzanski@state.or.us
Cc: Raszka.Shelley; [SENR Exhibits](#)
Subject: SB 644: Testimony in Opposition
Date: Tuesday, March 28, 2017 10:11:32 AM

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

Please accept these written comments as my testimony in opposition to this bill. I live outside Sisters Oregon, and I have work commitments that prevent me from testifying in person.

Frankly, aside from a few members of a small special interest group that would benefit from unregulated mining in Eastern Oregon, I cannot figure out why anyone would support this bill. Nor is it apparent why the sole sponsor of this bill is a Senator from the Willamette Valley.

First, it would violate the principal of encouraging local control over local land use activities. Let me explain.

Currently surface mining activity is already allowed in Eastern Oregon and throughout the State of Oregon. It is already allowed even on lands zoned for exclusive farm use. The only restrictions on siting surface mining activities on exclusive farm use lands is that this use is subject to a conditional use permit. The conditional use permit allows the locally elected county officials to review the application and apply common sense conditions on the proposed surface mining activities so as to limit the proposed mine's conflicts with other pre-existing activities on neighboring farms and residents. Yet Senate Bill 644 would prevent those locally elected representatives from conducting any review at all of the proposed surface mining activities, and those local officials could not require the proposed mine to comply with any safeguards to reduce adverse impacts on adjoining property owners.

Second, it would wipe out years of collaborative work by both proponents and opponents of motorized dredge mining.

Currently there is a legislatively imposed moratorium on motorized mining in rivers and streams providing habitat for salmon and bull trout until 2021. In the meantime, common sense parameters for the future of dredge mining in these streams are being thoughtfully discussed with the goal of achieving an acceptable compromise. This bill would repeal the terms of that moratorium upon passage, and instead simply ban additional users, but allow existing users to go about their mining activities without any restrictions at all. SB 3 is a far better bill on this issue.

I am surprised that this bill even got a hearing. Please let it die in committee.

Thank you,

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