



Senator Dembrow
Chair, Senate Committee on
Environment and Natural Resources
900 Court St. NW, S-407
Salem, Oregon 97301

Senator Olsen
Vice-Chair, Senate Committee on
Environment and Natural Resources
900 Court St. NE, S-425
Salem, Oregon 97301

February 3, 2017

RE: Will Johnson of Ashland Fly Shop's Testimony in Support of SB 3

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Olsen, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Ashland Fly Shop, a small southern Oregon based fly-fishing shop dedicated to offering a creative space for today's fly fishermen and anyone who is interested in learning how to fly fish. The Ashland Fly Shop supports SB 3 which supports the current 5-year moratorium and would put in place a permanent regulatory framework that will limit suction dredge mining in Oregon's rivers.

The Ashland Fly Shop opened in Ashland in 2007 choosing our location due to the close proximity of the Rogue River and the world-class fly fishing that it offers. The Rogue is home base for many of our classes and clinics and is where the majority of our clients go to fish. We employ a staff of 6 and are all avid fly fishermen as well.

In 2007, when we opened our doors, we enjoyed and promoted sections of the Rogue that were quiet, accessible, close in proximity, and free of impacts. However, a few years later, some of those same sections of river became inundated with suction dredges ruining the ability to peacefully fish in our home river. The presence of these dredges deterred myself and many of my fellow fishermen from visiting these areas in turn taking our money and support of the local economies elsewhere.

I've seen the impacts that dredges have on the Rogue River first hand and have many patrons who've told stories of their negative experiences with suction dredges as well. One of my patrons actually fell into a pit that a dredge left in the river while wearing his waders, struggling to get out safely.

You don't have to be a scientist to see that suction dredge mining has an impact on the river environment and the sensitive habitat that many of the Rogue's fish species

depend on. Salmon and steelhead need clean, stable, flat, gravels to spawn in. They need big rocks and woody debris for protection. And they need clean, clear water for their survival. Impacts from suction dredging can eliminate all of these things therefore harming our iconic salmon and steelhead species. And as fishermen and promoters of fly fishing, we want those species to thrive so that we may thrive as well.

In this current day in age, we must look at everything we do and ask ourselves whether or not it negatively impacts anyone else. If the answer is yes, we must do what we can to limit those negative impacts so that others (including fish!) may prosper.

On behalf of the Ashland Fly Shop and the thousands of people we serve, I urge you to support SB 3, which supports the current moratorium and would place further permanent protections to limit suction dredge mining in Oregon's rivers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Will Johnson, Owner

Ashland Fly Shop