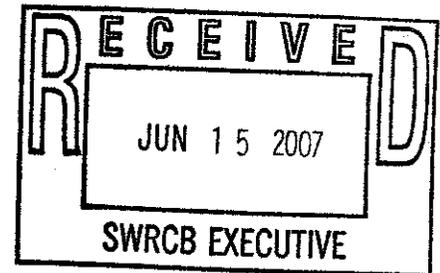


5/12/07 Workshop
Suction Dredge Mining
Deadline: 6/22/07 Noon

From: "Robert Sonnenburg" <robertsonnenburg1@bendbroadband.com>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Fri, Jun 15, 2007 6:15 AM
Subject: Comment Letter- Suction Dredge Mining

Dear Sirs,

My name is Robert Sonnenburg. I own two mining claims on the Salmon River in Northern California. My claims extend for approximately two miles along the river. I have a suction dredge permit from the Dept. of Fish and Game and operate a six inch dredge.



When I dredge I work in an area about the size of a kitchen table in about two cubic yards of river bottom. From my personal experience I have not seen any impact of suction dredging on water quality. This observation is reflected in a report on water quality and suction dredging in the Alaskan Chugach National Forest:

"The results from water quality sampling do not indicate any strong cumulative effects from multiple placer mining operations within the sampled drainages." "Several suction dredges probably operated simultaneously on the same drainage, but did not affect water quality as evidenced by above and below water sample results. In the recreational mining area of Resurrection Creek, five or six dredges would be operation and not produce any water quality changes." (Huber and Blanchet, 1992)

Environmentalists would have you believe that suction dredging increased water temperature, turbidity and alkalinity. Study after study has shown this not to be the case: Thomas (1985), Lewis (1962), Hassler (1986), CDFG (1997). The real issue is that environmental groups and individuals do not want to share the waterways and land with groups and individuals of unlike interests and activities. Shutting down the suction dredge industry would not only be unfair, but would also be unjustified given the research. The negative impact of such actions would cause serious financial harm to many rural northern California communities as well as the California tourism and recreational industries.

Please consider my concerns when you make your decisions about small scale suction dredging.

Thank you,

Robert Sonnenburg

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