

FORUM DECISION

Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum Meeting: August 3, 2017

Topic: Suction Dredge Mining Reform

Background:

Members of the PDC have expressed long-standing concern about impacts of suction dredge mining on State aquatic habitat.

A coalition, led by Trout Unlimited, seeks to reform WDFW regulations and seeks better enforcement mechanisms rather than an outright ban, as has been done elsewhere. Other NGOs have issued an NOI to sue the state on this, as violating both the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act.

The SBPP addresses this issue in section **4.2.9 Gold Mining and Fish Hydraulic Project Approval** (pp 4-34-36).

The following policies are recommended:

- Limit use of mechanical tools allowed in small-scale mining based on impacts to stream or fish life.
- Prohibit the practice of high banking in streams with unstable banks or endangered fish use.
- Improve WDFW's ability to enforce the Gold and Fish Pamphlet by changing enforcement to a civil penalty.

Background resources:

Reform coalition: <http://www.tu.org/tu-projects/suction-dredge-mining-reform-in-washington-state>

Notice of Intent: https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2017/suction-dredge-mining-01-10-2017.php

Oregon ban: <http://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/politics/2017/05/31/oregon-legislature-puts-permanent-restrictions-suction-dredge-mining/346166001/>