



# American Fisheries Society Oregon Chapter

OR Chapter AFS: PO Box 8062 Portland, OR 97207-8062 [www.orafs.org](http://www.orafs.org)

To: Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair  
Senator Alan Olsen, Vice-Chair  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: TESTIMONY ON OREGON SENATE BILL 3**

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Olsen, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (ORAFS) represents over 700 fisheries and aquatics science professionals from federal, state, and tribal agencies, colleges and universities, diverse private employers, college students, and retirees. ORAFS was established in 1964 as a chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Our mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of Oregon fishery resources and their aquatic ecosystems for long-term public benefit by advancing science, education and public discourse concerning fisheries and aquatic science and by promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

During the 2013 and 2015 legislative sessions, ORAFS submitted a white paper (2013) and supplemental white paper (2015) focused on suction dredge mining effects on Oregon's fishes and mollusks, aquatic habitats and river geomorphology, and mercury mobilization. In anticipation of suction dredge mining legislation during the 2017 legislative session, ORAFS completed a comprehensive review of recent peer-reviewed literature to provide an up-to-date and thorough analysis of suction dredge mining effects on river ecology and human health.

As you address the challenging task of balancing the health of the state's aquatic systems with the other interests, we ask that you study our findings and use the information to inform your decision-making. Based on our scientific review, we find that there are significant net-negative effects of suction dredge mining on stream morphology and habitat, federally-listed fishes and freshwater mussels, and potentially on human health related to legacy mercury mobilization. We believe that the likely impacts of suction dredge mining warrant strong policy protections.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue. We would be happy to follow up with you in person to address any questions you have about our results.

On behalf of ORAFS, respectfully,

Troy Brandt – Past President, ORAFS, 503-307-8367, [pastpresident@orafs.org](mailto:pastpresident@orafs.org)