



Sent email to: mathew.weaver@idwr.idaho.gov

December 18, 2017

RE: Comments on South Fork Clearwater River Suction Dredge Regulation

Dear Mr. Weaver,

Please accept the following comments from Trout Unlimited regarding the proposed changes to the South Fork Clearwater River (SFCR) Special Supplement Permit. The South Fork Clearwater River is an important Idaho fishery and treasured by not only our membership in Idaho but anglers throughout the Northwest.

Trout Unlimited represents 300,000 members and supporters nationwide and is the nation's oldest coldwater fisheries conservation organization. Trout Unlimited's mission is to conserve, protect and restore coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. In Idaho, we have 2,175 members and nine local chapters that have a passion for the conservation of coldwater fisheries in Idaho.

Recreational suction dredge mining can have a detrimental effect on stream habitat. We support the Department of Water Resources in instituting sensible regulations for the South Fork Clearwater River, while also limiting the number of permits issued as well as limiting the season of use. The South Fork Clearwater River and its tributaries provide important spawning habitat for Steelhead as well as cold, clean water for the mainstem Clearwater River.

Trout Unlimited has reviewed the permit conditions and do not feel that these regulations prohibit the activity of suction dredge mining nor are they overly onerous for suction dredge operators. We support the department keeping these regulations in place with no further changes.

Sincerely,

Michael Gibson
Idaho Field Coordinator
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