

Kurt Newcomb

I would like to say that I am a lifelong Alaskan and have been recreational gold mining in Alaska for decades. I believe recreational mining is a great way for families to connect and enjoy our outdoors.

As to the dredging, I have been getting permitted for recreational dredging for decades in the south central area mainly in the areas from Girdwood south to Hope and the Cache Creek / Petersville area.

I firmly believe that, with existing regulations, the public interest is protected while still giving the opportunity to recreate. Dredging for gold has been a great hobby while keeping the anticipation of "striking it rich" and experiencing the outdoors has been fun and on the rare occasion prosperous.

I never get tired of seeing the fish surround my dredge hole looking for bits to eat. It feels like being in an aquarium. Soothing to mind and body. I'm almost 69 years old and still look forward to my summer dredging trips.

I also believe that what little volume of material a dredge might move around the natural actions of the river and spring runoff is by far greater. I have seen Cache Creek run like chocolate milk in the spring or after several days of hard rain.

Of course there are the occasional "bad eggs" that may flaunt the rules but by far most people follow the rules of the existing permitted uses. I don't believe more conditions put on small dredgers would stop the small percentage of "bad eggs".

Therefore, I would like to say existing permitting is adequate in regulating small scale / family type dredging.