

Public Meeting Mineral Withdrawal Supporter Info

The Smith, Rogue, and Illinois Rivers are threatened by proposed industrial nickel strip mining that could decimate these remarkable, important watersheds. The delegation, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Dept. of the Interior have all taken actions to protect these threatened areas.

The Forest Service and BLM are asking the Department of Interior to protect roughly 100,000 acres of public land by withdrawing the land from mining for five years while Congress considers legislation—the Southwest Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act—for more lasting protection. The mineral withdrawal will protect against new mining claims and require existing claims to undergo a test to determine validity.

Federal Register Notice: 06/29/2015 began a 90-day comment period and two public meetings.

Gold Beach Meeting

Wednesday, September 9, 5-8pm

Curry County Fairgrounds

Docia Sweet Hall, 29392 Ellensburg Ave

Gold Beach, OR 97444

Grants Pass Meeting

Thursday, September 10, 5-8pm

Anne G. Basker Auditorium

600 N.W. Sixth Street

Grants Pass, OR 97526

It is recommended that you arrive a little early to the meeting. There will other supporters wearing blue and “I LOVE WILD RIVERS” buttons and will happily assist you with any additional questions.

Talking points for public hearing: COMMENTS WILL BE LIMITED to 2 minutes

State your name & **that you support the withdrawal** and thank Senators Wyden and Merkley and Representatives DeFazio and Huffman for working to protect our beautiful rivers and the Kalmiopsis region and the BLM and Forest Service for proposing interim protection and providing this opportunity to comment.

Describe your connection to Rough & Ready Creek, Baldface Creek, Smith River, and/or Hunter Creek & Pistol River. Discuss your use of these places: recreation, fishing, business, etc.

Example: “I live in the Illinois Valley near the proposed mine. I grew up swimming at Rough and Ready Creek and walk there all the time. Add one of the below talking points and a closing point:”

Suggested Talking Points:

Our local area is known for its wild rivers, clean water, and salmon runs; the pristine headwaters of our most special rivers is NO PLACE for a polluting nickel mine.

I'd like to us move in the direction of a more sustainable economy; not toward a polluting, extractive economy. Metal mining is the most polluting industry in America, and I am concerned that pollution of our local rivers would wreck our clean water and salmon runs.

Now clear rivers supply drinking water to thousands of people in Del Norte and Curry Counties; proposed mines would be located upstream of the water supply intakes for Crescent City and Gold Beach, and also upstream of wells of hundreds of residents in Hunter Creek.

Mining claims are held principally by mining corporations, including the foreign-owned Red Flat Nickel Corp.; such corporations shouldn't have carte blanche to our public lands. The companies get the minerals for free and too often leave the public with polluted rivers and groundwater. The small number of jobs that might be created for a short period of time is not worth the long-term damage to our watersheds.

The constitutional rights of miners are not an issue: if miners or mining companies have a valid claim, they will be able to move forward with mining plans and will have all rights to due process.

I enjoy recreating in these areas, and I am concerned that development of private mining operations will wreck the landscape and cut-off access for hiking, hunting, and driving.

The areas proposed for mining have remarkable rare plants that are found nowhere else on earth. I support conservation of these extraordinary botanical resources.

Currently, 41 percent of nickel is obtained by recycling; we should be getting more of our metals from recycling rather than by devastating special landscapes and rivers.

I enjoy fishing in these rivers, and the idea of allowing a potentially polluting mine upstream when we've invested so much public money and effort into restoration of salmon habitat is outrageous. It's in the public interest to protect our rivers and salmon runs.

Recent mine accidents in British Columbia and Colorado and have caused devastating pollution to rivers and downstream communities; these accidents demonstrate that the unintended consequences of mining.

The outdated Mining Law of 1872 makes mining the highest use of public lands, and public lands agencies have no way to safeguard the special values of our National Wild and Scenic Rivers, our clean water, wild rivers, salmon runs, and rare plants --and so we need a mineral withdrawal to give Congress time to more permanently protect the area from mining.