



State of California – Natural Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
Region 1 – Northern  
601 Locust Street  
Redding, CA 96001  
[www.wildlife.ca.gov](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov)

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor  
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



September 21, 2015

Bureau of Land Management  
Oregon State Office  
P.O. Box 2965  
Portland, Oregon 97208-2965

**Subject: 2015 Mineral Withdrawal Proposal: Rough and Ready and  
Baldface Creeks Withdrawal Area**

To whom this may concern:

The Smith River is unmatched in California for its free-flowing status, botanical diversity, renowned anadromous fisheries, and Wild and Scenic status. It also provides vital habitat for numerous State and federally listed species. The Smith River is California's fourth largest coastal river, with a watershed area of approximately 610 square miles in California and 115 square miles in Oregon.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is concerned that large scale industrial strip mining proposed in southern Oregon will have significant irreversible downstream effects on the Smith River. Because of the documented substantial environmental risks to aquatic resources associated with strip mining, the Department is strongly opposed to strip mining in the Smith River watershed.

The Department strongly supports the five year mineral withdrawal in aid of legislation, currently in process by the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Further, the Department strongly supports the Southwest Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act of 2015 and is hopeful the United States Congress will enact this legislation.

We appreciate the opportunity to support this important interim step and look forward to permanent protection of the north fork Smith River as proposed by the Southwest Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act of 2015. Please contact Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Michael van Hattem at 707-445-5368 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

**Neil Manji**  
Regional Manager

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