

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE
COUNTY OF AMADOR, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF:

RESOLUTION URGING THE)	
CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE)	RESOLUTION NO. 10-012
AND GOVERNOR ARNOLD)	
SCHWARZENEGGER TO RESCIND)	
OR AMEND SB670, A BAN ON SUCTION))	
DREDGING ON THE WATERWAYS)	
IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA)	

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 670 designates the issuance of suction dredge permits as a project under CEQA, suspends the issuance of new permits, and prohibits previously permitted dredging until the Department of Fish and Game completes an environmental impact report; and

WHEREAS, as a County immersed in land resource issues and Gold Rush history, we are confident that the environmental and economic benefits of suction dredging have been hastily overlooked in this legislation; and

WHEREAS, the California Department of Fish and Game's Final Environmental Impact Report on Suction Dredge Mining dated April 1994, based on several peer reviewed, scientific studies on suction dredge mining states repeatedly that suction dredge gold mining has little, if any, negative impact on fisheries and aquatic habitat; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Robert N. Crittenden, an expert with an M.S. in Marine Biology and a Ph.D. in Fisheries, did a Post-Doctoral on the fellowship of salmon habitat and concluded that the recreational mining activities of panning, sluicing and dredging enhance the salmon habitat, and these activities should be encouraged as they provide one of the most cost-effective enhancement techniques as a beneficial side-effect of private recreation; and

WHEREAS, suction gold dredge operators are conscientious stewards of the environment and consistently clean up debris in the stream beds of the rivers including, but, not limited to, household trash, fishing apparatus, boating apparatus, clothing, mercury and other heavy metals as a beneficial by-product of their endeavors and are the best equipped user group to accomplish a deep in stream clean up; and

WHEREAS, on August 20, 2009, in a letter by Claudia Wise, a retired physical scientist/chemist with the United States Environmental Protection Agency, refers to the California State Water Board's Water Quality Division report (Humphreys, 2005), which indicates that suction gold dredging effectively removes at least 98% of the measured mercury processed through the dredge, and suggest it is right to look to the suction dredge community for help in locating hotspots and removing mercury from the river systems; and

WHEREAS, Joseph C. Greene, a retired Research Biologist from the United States Environmental Protection Agency stated in a letter dated June 6, 2007, to the California State Water Resource Control Board that suction dredging moves a miniscule amount of in-stream material such as sand, gravel and silt compared to any high water event in a given year and has little if any negative effects on our rivers and streams; and

WHEREAS, Amador County being the center of California's Mother Lode Gold Country, we are deeply dependent on tourism and local mining; and

WHEREAS, Amador County is rich in mining history and is home to several of California's largest gold mines such as the Argonaut, Kennedy and Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, the Amador County Board of Supervisors recognizes this time of severe economic crisis and feels strongly that a proactive approach to help our economic state is wise and does not support further legislation that will hamper economic recovery.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amador County Board of Supervisors strongly implores the State of California and its Governor to immediately suspend SB670, which has banned suction dredging in California, and allow the California Department of Fish and Game to continue its appropriate regulation of this economically beneficial and environmentally harmless activity, which generates over ten thousand jobs and over \$65 million dollars worth of industry for our great state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Amador County Board of Supervisors encourage other stream and river user groups, in recreation and business, to support and embrace the suction dredging community which is best equipped for the clean-up of deeply embedded in-stream toxic metals and miscellaneous trash as a byproduct of their prospecting activities, thereby helping to restore the water quality of our local streams and rivers for the benefit of all.

The foregoing resolution was duly passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Amador at a regular meeting thereof, held on the 26th day of January 2010, by the following vote:

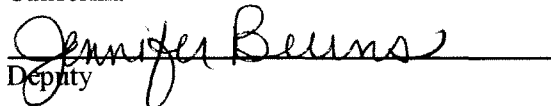
AYES: Theodore F. Novelli, Richard M. Forster, Louis D. Boitano, Brian Oneto and John Plasse
NOES: None
ABSENT: None



Chairman, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

JENNIFER BURNS, Clerk of the
Board of Supervisors, Amador County,
California


Deputy