

DFO/BCE GUIDELINES

for

THE USE OF SUCTION DREDGES TO "SNIPE" FOR GOLD

The following guidelines apply to the use of portable suction dredges to "snipe" for gold in bedrock canyon areas. The general prohibition on suction dredging in B.C. is not waived; rather, the Regional Placer Mining Coordination Committees may allow portable suction dredges to be operated for sniping on a site specific basis. The following guidelines are offered on an interim basis and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and B.C Environment (WLAP) will follow up these guidelines to assess their applicability and compliance.

- a) Canyon site selected for sniping must be true bedrock based, not clay or hardpan.
- b) DFO and BCE may limit the number of suction dredges that are operated in a given area.
- c) The potential site must be well mapped and photographed. This information must accompany the application. The operation must be confined to the delineated area.
- d) Timing on the operation may be confined to after freshet, and prior to fall rains. Site-specific restrictions on timing may be applied to reflect sensitive fish life history phases.
- e) To facilitate agency monitoring the portable suction dredge should be painted a fluorescent red/orange in colour. The permit number, clearly visible from the air **shall** be displayed.
- f) Equipment is restricted to hand-operated, portable units, including suction dredges with intake valve diameters of not greater than 6".
- g) No entrainment of fish, under any circumstances, is permitted. While the nozzle may remain unscreened, all other intakes must be screened in accordance with DFO guidelines.
- h) During sluicing, a tailings bag, approximately 2 m x 1 m in dimensions and comprised of a nylon type material must be attached to the sluice outfall.
- i) During sluicing, the tailings bag and tailings, must be deposited on the stream edge outside the wetted perimeter with no discharge to the stream.
- j) Gravel tailings must be contoured to the natural bank above the wetted perimeter.
- k) Removal or shifting of large boulders that may be in the stream bed, or any alteration of the bedrock is strictly prohibited.
- l) All fuel and oil products must be stored in a *secure* manner well removed from the wetted perimeter.
- m) Fuel tanks on the suction dredge should be confined to approximately 4 litres capacity.