



Resolution #11

Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs
Approved, September 10, 2006

SUPPORT FOR MONITORING MERCURY EMISSIONS FROM GOLD MINES IN NEVADA

Large amounts of mercury have been found in the streams and lakes of Utah, Idaho, and eastern Nevada, causing grave concern about the effects on fish. Mercury can cause defects in the fetus of pregnant women and can also have deleterious effects on the health of children and the elderly. The heap-leach process in the enormous gold mines of the Carlin trend are the cause of these emissions of mercury into the air. Mercury occurs naturally in the soil, but is released into the air when large amounts of soil are dug up, which occurs in the heap-leach process.

The Nevada Department of Environmental Protection has recently passed regulations requiring yearly monitoring of mercury emissions from gold mines. However, these regulations are not sufficient to catch mercury emissions before they do damage to the fish in the lakes and streams lying east and north of the mines and eventually to humans who consume the fish. Environmental groups in the three states have called for monthly monitoring of the emissions.

The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs requests monthly monitoring of mercury emissions from heap-leach process gold mines in Nevada and asks the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection to strengthen its regulations to require monthly monitoring of mercury emissions from these mines and immediate remedial action if large amounts of mercury are emitted.

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