

SUPPORT STRONG PROGRAMS TO MONITOR AND CONTROL EMISSIONS OF MERCURY FROM GOLD MINING OPERATIONS IN NEVADA

Background:

Gold-mining operations in Nevada to recover ore of low concentrations are the largest source of mercury emissions in the west. Dangerous levels of mercury have been found in the streams and lakes of Eastern Nevada, Utah, and Idaho (locations which are down wind from the large mines in northern Nevada.) and in the fish which inhabit these waters. Mercury is particularly dangerous to children and to pregnant women.

The Nevada Department of Environmental Protection issued a regulation last year which called for yearly monitoring of these emissions. However, many environmental organizations and health experts felt that this regulation was not strong enough. Consequently, the Nevada State Legislature passed a bill in 2007 requiring monthly monitoring of mercury emissions by the mines and requiring corrective actions to reduce any large emissions.

Resolution:

The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs strongly supports the action taken by the Nevada State Legislature to require monthly monitoring and control of mercury emissions and requests that a yearly report be issued by the state showing such compliance.