



QUESTION: Can I pan, sluice or dredge on the Middle Fork?

ANSWER: No.

**INFORMATION FOR PERSONS INTERESTED IN
RECREATIONAL PANNING, SLUICING OR SUCTION DREDGING
(PLACER MINING)**

The Middle Fork Salmon River, its tributaries, and the whole Salmon River drainage have a long and storied mining history...



However, the Central Idaho Wilderness Act of 1980 withdrew the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Area from mineral entry and prohibits all forms of placer mining in the Middle Fork drainage. Further, relevant Forest Service regulations (36 CFR 228) make no distinction between "mining" and "recreation" and provide penalties for disturbance of National Forest System lands (36 CFR 261). The Central Idaho Wilderness Act states:

"... Subject to existing rights of the State of Idaho, including the right of access, with respect to the beds of navigable streams tributaries or rivers, dredge and **placer mining in any form** including any use of machinery for the removal of sand and gravel for mining purposes **shall be prohibited** within the segment of the Salmon River designated as a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System by this paragraph; within the fifty-three-mile segment of the Salmon River from Hammer Creek downstream to the confluence of the Snake River; and **within the Middle Fork of the Salmon River; and its tributary streams in their entirety...**"

So mining truly is history on the Middle Fork. Please enjoy learning about previous mining in this area, but refrain from engaging in these types of activities.

If you have questions, please contact the Middle Fork Ranger District: (208) 879-4101

