

The South Fork Salmon drainage is one of my favorite places to appreciate the outdoors with my friends and family. I spend many weekends throughout the year recreating in this beautiful river basin. From east to west, north to south, this basin is a vast area of mountain streams, lakes, and rivers. The water quality in this basin is what makes it so special. Clean water is a main ingredient to a healthy ecosystem. **The potential to harm clean WATER is why I am writing to demand the USFS take alternative 5, “No Action Alternative” to Midas Gold’s proposed mining project.**

The project, with its size and scope, presents many possibilities for a catastrophic accident to occur. This is not limited to the actual site where 162.5 acres of wetlands as well as 630.3 acres of riparian areas will be destroyed, which extends further throughout the forest. Construction of new roads and access to existing roads that are required to make the mine successful present a significant threat to 71 different streams. Each of these waterways are at risk of hazardous material spills and increased sedimentation.

Processing and storage of tailings on site is also a major concern. The generation of 446 million tons of potential acid generating and metal leaching materials could easily leach or drain into waterways.

The SF Salmon basin provides critical habitat to wild chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. These fish populations are protected under the ESA. Any spill of hazardous material directly affects the survival of these fish. Further sedimentation from road traffic, landslides, and road erosion will disrupt the gravels that are required for spawning fish. These disturbed natural habitats will then prevent these fish populations from the ability to successfully reproduce.

Based on this evidence the USFS must take *Alternative 5, “No Action Alternative!* To protect this precious river basin. Clear water and healthy fish populations are much more important than profits for a Canadian mining operation. The environmental impact of this project outweighs the financial gain. Simply, it is not a safe plan!

Thank you,

Nathan Todd