U.S. Forest Service public comment - Stibnite Gold Project EIS# 50516

I am a sixth generation Idahoan with over thirty years of public service to the State of Idaho. Among the Idaho values I hold near and dear to my heart is being good stewards of our natural resources. I am a true nature lover and take so much pleasure and pride in our beautiful wilderness areas, clean air, clean water and abundant wildlife. The proposed open pit Stibnite Gold Project threatens many of these core qualities for generations to come.

The adverse long-term effects are broad and significant and are not limited to the duration of proposed mining operations, as evidenced by prior mining activities that have required Superfund remedial clean-up. The disruption and contamination of land, water and air cannot be contained or returned to its original state. Once habitat is destroyed and access restricted, reclamation of wilderness areas cannot be achieved through subsequent habitat restoration efforts. The designation of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness Area was to protect this pristine and secluded primitive space. Strict enforcement of “leave it as you found it” rules for limited visitors have been successful for decades because people want to preserve what they have experienced there.

Foreign companies can buy studies that recommend experimental solutions to placate stakeholders, but the proven science suggests all fish habitat in the area of impact will be reduced, water temperatures increased and water levels decreased. These actions are in direct conflict with the objectives of the Species of Greatest Conservation Need outlined under Idaho’s 2022 State Wildlife Action Plan. The land alterations necessary to begin mining operations will scar over 14K acres of public lands. The dramatic influx of personnel and related noise will have an intense negative impact on wildlife in the surrounding area. It is my opinion that the significant environmental impacts affecting so many people outweigh the financial gain of a few. I appreciate the opportunity to comment and I am opposed to the Stibnite Gold Project.