

Dear Forest Supervisor Jackson,

As an individual who values the rivers, mountains and spectacular recreational resources of Idaho, I am writing to urge the Forest Service to protect the Salmon River watershed and reject the stibnite mine plan. I hope that you can see through the proposed mine as a restoration project and see it for what it really is, a massive open-pit cyanide-leaching gold mine presented

Over the last twenty years I have had the opportunity to spend time recreating in and around the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon river throughout all of its seasons. This area has provided me with world class kayaking, snowmobiling, skiing, biking, hiking, fishing, and camping. The DEIS fails to take into consideration the economic benefit of these recreational activities, that in the long run, will far outweigh a boom and bust mining operation. I feel we need to invest in these recreational opportunities by protecting the water and air quality, fish, wildlife, and soils.

The South Fork Salmon River is finally healing from the scars of past mining activity and the impacts of expanded mining activity represents an unacceptable risk to this watershed. The Stibnite Gold Project would undermine all the time, effort, and money that the Nez Perce Tribe, Fish and Game, and Forest Service have put into restoring the land, air, and water quality of this area.

Traffic through our communities is going to increase. It is probable that recreators will avoid Warm Lake Road/Johnson Creek Roads because of an increase in heavy equipment mining traffic and road closures. This means a larger volume of traffic will be routed through McCall and out Lick Creek Road. Increased traffic through the town of McCall will cause excessive wear and tear on the roads. Who will pay for the increase in repairs needed from a high volume of traffic? This will ultimately lead to more accidents within the community. Lick Creek Road is already busy on summer days. Traffic displaced from Warm Lake Rd. will clog trailheads, dispersed camping, and cause more erosion on roadways throughout the forest, another added cost at the taxpayers' expense.

The SGP will have adverse effects on Chinook salmon and bull trout. Given the billions of dollars spent on Snake River salmon recovery, this project represents a severe risk and flies in the face of this investment and effort to restore these species to a sustainable population. Stream temperatures are predicted to be elevated for up to **100 years** within the mine site boundary and the habitat for these sensitive species will be for the worse, not better, as a result of this project.

As proposed, this project will result in the loss of over 120 acres of high-functioning wetlands. It will negatively impact the general water quality of streams found within the site from additional sedimentation and the potential release of additional contaminants mobilized by mining and construction.

Although Perpetua prefers to present the SGP as a 'restoration' project, it is a massive industrial mine that will leave the landscape unrecognizable and degraded for lifetimes to come through the creation of three open pits, the permanent storage of over 120 million tons of toxic mine tailings above previously undisturbed wetland habitat, and an expanded footprint that more than doubles the previous disturbance of the Stibnite mining district.

The effects of climate change will exacerbate the impacts the SGP will have on the environment and were inadequately incorporated into the SDEIS. While briefly acknowledged, the compounding impacts of a warming climate were not taken into consideration when predicting stream temperatures or other environmental impacts that are intrinsically linked to the climate.

Throughout the life of the mine, hazardous materials will be transported to the site through the communities of Valley County, but there are no risk analyses on local communities if a hazardous spill were to occur and the potential exposure of a hazardous spill is much larger than the SDEIS portrays and must be addressed by the Forest Service.

As proposed, the SGP raises numerous concerns for rivers protected under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA). The project itself is located at the headwaters of the suitable South Salmon River, which feeds directly into the designated Main Salmon River. However, the scope of analysis does not include any potential impacts that extend downstream of the site boundary to review these sections of river. Additionally, Johnson Creek and Burntlog Creek, both eligible under the WSRA, will both face degradation and risk of a catastrophic toxic spill if this project moves forward.

Finally, the SGP will negatively impact the treaty-reserved rights of the Nez Perce and other indigenous peoples of Idaho. The SDEIS clearly states that "Adverse impacts to tribal rights and interests under either alternative, including preventing access to traditional lands, harming traditional fishing and hunting rights, impacting endangered salmon and concerns that it would harm the tribe's salmon restoration efforts".

The South Fork Salmon River is finally healing from the scars of past mining activity and the impacts of expanded mining activity represents an unacceptable risk to this watershed. The Stibnite Gold Project would undermine all the time, effort, and money that the Nez Perce Tribe, Fish and Game, and Forest Service have put into restoring the land, air, and water quality of this area. For these reasons, I urge the Forest Service to protect the Salmon River watershed and reject the proposed Stibnite mine plan.