Jamie Laidlaw

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Stibnite Gold FEIS; Forest Supervisor Matt Davis, Payette NF

The forest Service response (General Negative: "No further response required. General in nature or position statement. It is acknowledged and understood that concerns regarding potential long-term environmental impacts, ecological integrity, and the well-being of potentially affected communities are valid and important to consider. During the decision-making process, the Forest Service will seek to identify the best possible balance between environmental protection, community needs, and sustainable forest management.")

 to my comment letter #18849 submitted on 1/10, 2023 is insufficient and does not address my concerns. My concerns are about the risk avalanches pose to mine and transportation personnel as well as recreationists, as outlined below in my letter:

“

1. The Avalanche Hazard Assessment Reports mischaracterize the snow climate along the proposed Burnt Log Route and greatly underestimate snowfall.
2. Significantly higher snowfall totals will increase avalanche frequency and possibly their destructive potential.
3. Wind, a significant contributor to avalanche occurrence, was not considered when calculating avalanche frequency.
4. Burnt Log Route road cut was not considered when assessing avalanche path location and frequency. The Burnt Log Route will require a significant (26’ wide) road cut, thus creating new and steepening current avalanche paths as well as increasing avalanche frequency.
5. The proposed Burnt Log Route and all of its alternatives cross several avalanche start zones, which will further increase avalanche frequency.
6. The increased danger of the road way acting as a terrain trap was not addressed.
7. All of these oversights greatly increase risk to personnel and vehicles as well as hazardous material spill.
8. The alternative Cabin Creek winter OSV route poses significant dangers to the public and needs further assessment. “

The remedy for this violation is for the Forest Service to withdraw the FEIS and DROD and not issue any decision or take any action based on the inadequate FEIS. The Forest Service must not take any action until a revised FEIS and revised DROD demonstrate full compliance with each and every law, regulation, policy, Treaty, and requirement noted. The Regional Forester must withdraw the FEIS and DROD with instructions to the Payette National Forest to correct all errors noted before approving or taking any actions.

Thank you for your time.

Jamie Laidlaw