

Hans Oaks
C/o Helena Ranger District
2880 Skyway Drive
Helena MT 59602
hans.oaks@usda.gov
<https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=303864>

Dear Mr. Oakes,

I am writing to ask the United States Forest Service (USFS) and Falcon Copper to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed exploration of the Blue Copper project. This proposed mine is located within the Little Blackfoot watershed, a beloved wild trout stream with substantial groundwater influences near to the project area. The site is also crossed by the Continental Divide Trail, and is adjacent to, or within, crucial habitat for native westslope cutthroat trout and many wildlife species that Montanans and those of us from out of state highly value. The current Environmental Assessment lacks significant information about potential risks to these resources.

Specifically I ask the USFS and Falcon Copper to:

- Conduct an independent modeling of groundwater, including how drilling might impact groundwater, and ground-to-surface water connections.
- Provide a more robust assurance that measures to prevent stormwater, especially historic rain-on-snow events (20-year or even 100-year events), will not result in sediment, drill fluids, or other potential contaminants entering streams.
- Provide any information about the risk of creating acid mine drainage or releasing other toxins, such as arsenic, lead or mercury into ground or surface water.

Without answering these questions or providing this additional baseline data, the USFS should not permit this mining activity.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,


Samuel R Casne