Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/17/2017 6:00:00 AM
First name: Richard
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Comments: Dear Payette Forest Supervisor Keith Lannom and staff,

Pollution, destruction of a natural working ecosystem and persistent environmental toxins are no legacy fit for Idaho's wild river systems and dependent, severely imperiled salmon runs, migratory birds and other species. This massive, persistent mining proposal will destroy the surrounding valleys with toxic mining waste and mountains of tailings.

Why risk this eminent destruction of a world class river ecosystem with giant toxic pit lakes. Time bombs of toxic sludge, hovering over not only the wild species dependent on the ecosystem, but over the heads of Idaho citizens and future generations.

This plan in no shape or form is compliant with federal mandates to protect the spawning habitat of threatened and endangered salmon. The plan by Midas Gold to restore fish passage to their spawning streams would include burying over a mile of spawning habitat under hundreds of feet of mining waste and tailings. A ridiculous and absolutely contraindiced oversight by the USFS. Stop this plan and find an alternative for storing tailings so that spawning habitat is protected and not risked for decades.

The USFS should take extreme measures to eliminate the very likely scenario of water contamination from heavy metals and acid mine drainage. Do your managers not realize we have been down this road before as previous mining projects in this area devastated fisheries with polluted water.

The project must not create a permanent legacy of pollution, needing treatment at the expense of tax payers and wildlife in perpetuity. The risks far out weigh the benefits and the eminent contamination to the headwaters of S. Fork Salmon should not proceed.

Although restoration of such mining sites is important, America's rivers are riddled with many paltry restoration attempts by mining companies. More the norm, these unfortunate and historically reproducible lackluster commitments inevitably end in suspending clean-up operations and then abandoning the site followed by bankruptcy.

The USFS should look at ways to restore the site independent of mining activities if Midas Gold is unable to restore the site in a timely manner.

The proposed project will require undoing over $13 million of taxpayer-funded restoration work. If the site is eventually restored as envisioned by Midas Gold, the USFS needs to describe how these investments will be protected in the future and not simply undone by the next mining company.